BENEFITS WON BY LOCAL UNION 000, UW, AFL-CIO

Here are the benefits that have been won by Local 000 for all workers in the _____Company since the local was organized in _____.

1. Organized method of taking up grievances and complaints.
2. Protection of a union contract with numerous guarantees and with choice of arbitration if company refuses to follow contract.
3. Six wage increases totaling 69¢ per hour.
4. Vacations with pay. 1 week for one year's service, 2 weeks for five years' service and 3 weeks for 15 years' service.
5. Six paid holidays.
6. Pension plan. Guaranteed minimum of $100 including social security.
7. Health benefits for yourself and family.
8. Thousands of individual and group grievances settled satisfactorily for the membership.

Attend regular union meetings at union hall_____ street. (4th Monday of every month) at _____p.m.

NEW MEMBERS WILL FEEL differently toward your local union if you give them a background on the history of the local and the gains which the local union has made for the membership. The leaflet to the left shows eight gains made by a local union.

DOES THE HISTORY OF your local union show equivalent gains? Have you prepared an attractive leaflet for your new members or planned an anniversary program on the "birthday" of your union in which you dramatize these gains?

Date_____

Dear Brother _____:

Welcome and congratulations on becoming a member of Local 000 of the United Workers, AFL-CIO.

We're glad to have you join us in one of the oldest (and one of the best!) unions in the AFL-CIO. Local 000 includes all the workers in the _____Company. It is dedicated to representing you and your fellow workers, to see that you get fair treatment on the job.

You are now protected by a union contract which has been developed over many years, so that it gives real protection to the workers. The benefits which your union has won for its members are listed on the attached leaflet. Read this carefully.

As you work on your job, you may have complaints about unfair treatment or mistakes that the company may make in regard to your job or pay. You are entitled to see your shop steward who is experienced in handling such cases and will take them up for you as provided by the union's contract with the company. Your steward is _____; he works in Department_____.

Fraternally yours,

John Q. Unionman
President, Local 000
United Workers, AFL-CIO

TO THE RIGHT IS A SAMPLE letter for new members which local unions could easily prepare. Many, of course, do. In this case, the letter stresses the service which the local provides for its members and indicates who the shop steward is as well as emphasizing the role this steward will play in representing the new member with management.

SOME INTERNATIONAL unions like the Building Service Employees Union and the Rubber Workers Union have prepared national leaflets which can accompany a local union letter welcoming the new member.

interest your members: something on the union, the town you live in, the possibilities are endless. When you invite a speaker, give him a realistic estimate of the number of people who'll attend and the time available to him. Explain ahead of time, so the speaker can plan his talk accordingly, that you want a short talk, with plenty of time for questions from the floor. And enforce the time limit on the talk.

Have the members themselves do the talking at some meetings. Schedule short talks on subjects such as "How Dues Are Spent," "How to Make a Motion," or a short review of a union pamphlet.

Union movies come in many sizes on many subjects. If you can get projection equipment, rent a movie from time to time. Write to the AFL-CIO Film Division for a catalogue of rental films.

You've probably already tried refreshments or entertainment and found that, alone, they don't bring many people to meetings. Don't try them at every meeting; you can't compete with TV in the living room and TV snacks in the kitchen. But now and then they vary the routine of the meeting, especially if you're opening the meeting to families or the public.

(For more details about union meetings see AFL-CIO Publication No. 81, HOW TO RUN A UNION MEETING. 20¢ a copy; 10 to 99 copies, 17¢ each.)

2 Reach the Membership through the union stewards or committeemen

"Stewards," "shop chairmen" or "committeemen" are the key to building a strong local union.

Whether your union calls them "stewards," "shop chairmen," "committeemen," or some other title, these are the people who can be most helpful in reaching the membership. There are two big advantages to this method: The stewards are a small group, relatively easy for the union to keep in touch with. They are also the key people in the union; they blanket the shop in all departments, and they are in daily touch with the members.

The problem is how to make the most effective use of the shop stewards, without working them to death.

Train Stewards to Do Their Job

Both old and new stewards should attend steward training sessions. You can hold classes once a week, have a weekend conference, or run classes in connection with your regular stewards' meetings. Help them understand the contract, teach them how to handle grievances, give them basic information about the union.

When a new steward takes over, the union officers should take time to show him the ropes and go over the contract and the grievance procedure with him. Make a special effort to help him until he can take a steward training course.

(A *Teaching Guide* for a six-session stewards' training course is available from the AFL-CIO Education Department. It is based on the new AFL-CIO stewards manual and sells for $1.00.)

Hold Regular Stewards' Meetings

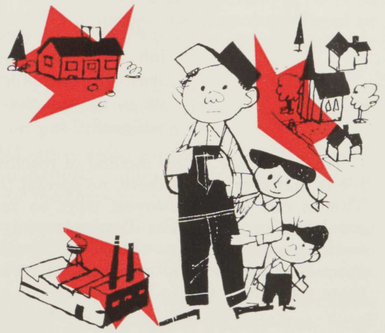
Monthly stewards' meetings give stewards a chance to discuss grievance problems and to learn more about the union. There are many ways to run these meetings. You can plan a detailed discussion of one section of the contract at each meeting. Or invite a guest speaker on labor laws, political action, or some other union issue. At another meeting schedule an informal talk on some part of the union's program. For example, on the steward's responsibility in getting members out to meetings, first try an impromptu skit of a steward telling a worker about the next union meeting and urging him to come out. That should bring a reaction from the stewards present, who can exchange ideas on how they'd handle the same situation.

Give the Steward the Prestige He Deserves

If you're going to keep stewards on the job and get them to attend training meetings, you've got to make the job desirable, give it prestige. Have you tried these suggestions in your union?

Hold an annual banquet for stewards and their wives, free of charge, as an expression of the union's gratitude.

If your local union has a newspaper, by all means give the stewards credit by name for grievances they have successfully processed, etc. Publish feature stories on your stewards and the jobs they're doing.

Where possible, bring the steward involved in at higher grievance steps and top management meetings. Let him participate.

Send press releases to your community newspapers when stewards are elected; give their names and union responsibilities. Most papers (except in large cities) will print them.