

# It's up to you: discuss, debate, share and grow

By **JIM DOUGHERTY**  
President

In light of the recent tragedy in Arizona, our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families as they heal and grieve during this terrible time. I find it especially heartbreaking that this brutal attack took place while a Congresswoman was meeting with her constituents, coming together to discuss, peacefully debate and learn from one another.

That is what our democracy is all about, and it's time to get back on track.

When the Arizona catastrophe took place outside of a Safeway Supermarket, I am proud to say UFCW Local 99 members were first to rush to provide aid to the victims. Fortunately, no Local 99 members were injured, and not one member hesitated to help when the tragedy struck.

Local 655 members would have done the same thing, because as Union members we know the value of sticking together.

Last March, long before Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was shot, she was quoted by MSNBC as saying, "We're on Sarah Palin's targeted list... But the thing is, the way that she (Sarah Palin) has it depicted has the cross hairs of a gun sight over our district. When people do that, they've got to realize there are consequences to that action."

Over the past couple of years, violence in political dialogue has gotten out of control. There is no way to measure the influence of the outrageous rhetoric that's become all too common in our politics. But there is one New Year's resolution each of us should consider. It's up to us, to know right from wrong.

The extensive criticism and hate-filled commentary that we hear on radio and television has demonized many public servants and political candidates as "enemies." In the short run, these negative comments may inspire some passion and votes, but in the long run, it's toxic to the survival of rational discussion in our democracy.

In today's climate, people have every right to be angry. Our economy has betrayed us. But we cannot turn our anger into hatred.

Rather, we should channel that anger toward a positive direction of change instead of using it to foster hatred and violence.

It's up to us.

Here at Local 655 I propose we begin the New Year with three basic principles: Let's all work together to secure a better future; let's work to protect the laws and issues that will benefit working men and women in Missouri; and let's remember who our friends are and work with them

for the greater good.

It's up to us.

Merriam-Webster's definition of Democracy is a government by the people; rule of the majority; a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held elections.

We urge members of Local 655 to join us in weekly visits to Jefferson City where discussions are shared with Missouri's elected officials. Get involved with your Union and take advantage of these valuable opportunities for you to exchange ideas with your state officials. Let your anger over our economy and the overall malaise in the job market be directed toward positive actions. Get mad, but get involved. Our public servants are there to help. They are our link to government legislation, actions and assistance.

I hope you will become interested and active in your Union. You have a voice and it needs to be heard. There is a lot of room for new ideas and plenty of room for respectful and peaceful debate.

Criticism, hatred and violence move no one closer to solutions and growth. In the New Year we will find ways to discuss, debate, share and grow. I look forward to your participation in 2011.

*It is up to you.*



**DOUGHERTY**



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## UNION NIGHT WITH THE BLUES

Root for the home team or cheer softly.

Join the fun as St. Louis Blues Hockey hosts  
"Union Nights"

at

Scotttrade Center

1401 Clark Ave

St. Louis

Friday, Feb. 11 at 7 p.m. Blues vs. Wild  
and

Friday, April 1 at 7 p.m. Blues vs. Flames

Discounted tickets are available saving  
\$8 to \$25 per ticket for Union members.

For more information and special pricing call  
Tim Thurber at 314-613-1885

## Local 655 E-BLAST News in a Flash!

Local 655 E-BLAST is dedicated to bringing you the latest information from Local 655 via



your email. E-BLAST will include interesting news, actions and activities, News & Notes and information about rallies, the Local 655 Softball Tournament, scholarship

opportunities and much, much more.

If you are interested in News in a Flash sign up for E-BLAST by calling the Local 655 Membership Department to at 636-394-6500 or 1-800-882-6560. Your email will be added to our list.

## Help Your Union Grow

If you are interested in hand billing to Help Your Union Grow, join the Organizing Department at one of our training sessions. The training will be held at the Local 655

Union Hall on Jan. 26 at 6 p.m. or Jan. 27 at 6 p.m. For more information contact the Organizing Department at 636-394-6500 or 1-800-882-6560.

## Local 655's new 2011 calendars are in!

For easy access to membership meeting and new member orientation dates and times, check out our new calendars.

Local 655 also conducts quarterly new member and membership meetings in the out-state to accommodate our members outside of the metro area. Check the Labor Tribune for dates and times located on page 5.



## NO SMOKING

As of January 1, 2011 new laws went into effect prohibiting smoking in



public buildings. Be aware of your company's smoking policy.

## Lobby in Jefferson City with Local 655

This year our Local 655 "Weekly Lobby" visits will feature a **UFCW LOBBY DAY** on **Wednesday, Feb. 23**, when officers, staff, executive officers and active members will head to our State Capitol in Jefferson City.

Joined by UFCW District 2 out of Kansas City and UFCW International Union representatives, our team will proudly wear our "UFCW Gold" while visiting our State Legislators.

Issues to be addressed include: Right to Work (for less), Worker's Rights, Worker's Compensation, Congressional Redistricting and much more.

Interested?

Contact your Union Representative today at 636-394-6500 or 1-800-882-6560.

Participating members will receive lost time wages for their day in politics.



Kay Hall of Schnucks-Wentzville and a vice president on the Local 655 Executive Board (right) visits with State Representative Edward Schieffer, (D-Dist. 11), who represents her home district in the Troy, Missouri area.  
*Labor Tribune photo*

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