

## Faulty Equipment Blamed For Oil Disaster

Emergency shut-off valves that could have prevented the Gulf of Mexico oil spill were plagued by leaking hydraulic fluid, malfunctioning parts and poor maintenance, Congressional investigators said last month. The problems with the blowout preventer on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig could explain why it failed April 20, allowing a spout of oil and gas to explode and kill 11 workers, according to documents released by the House energy committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

"The safety of its entire operations rested on the performance of a leaking, modified, defective blowout preventer," said Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich., chairman of the subcommittee. House investigators also revealed that the well had failed at least two pressure tests in the hours before it blew, raising questions about whether cement recently poured into the well could hold back the high-pressure oil and gas.

"The more I learn about this accident, the more concerned I become," said Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., Energy and Commerce Committee chairman. Evidence about precisely what happened on the rig remains "murky," Waxman said, but the committee released the most detailed account to date.

The blowout preventer, a massive device that sits atop the well opening on the floor of the Gulf, was activated by the crew aboard the floating drill rig as the emergency unfolded. But the preventer did not stop the surge.

In the days after the explosion, crews

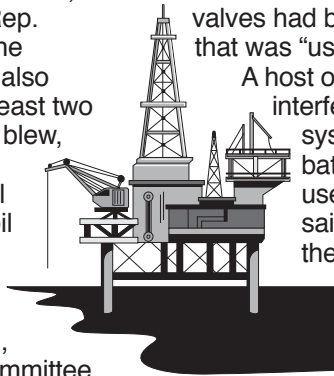
operating underwater robots tried again to activate the blowout preventers. However, they discovered that there was a "significant leak" of the hydraulic fluid, Stupak said. The fluid is meant to activate a part of the blowout preventer designed to shut off oil in an emergency.

Employees of Cameron, which manufactured the blowout preventer, told the committee the leak was coming from a loose connection, Stupak said. Blowout preventers are equipped with a variety of different valves that can help shut off a sudden surge. Only after the accident did workers discover that one of those valves had been replaced by testing equipment that was "useless," Stupak said.

A host of other problems may have interfered with the emergency shut-off system, Stupak said. At least one battery used to trigger a critical valve used in emergencies was dead, he said. A 2001 document obtained by the committee from Transocean, the drilling company that owned the rig, identified 260 separate ways that the blowout preventer could fail.

"How can a device that has 260 failure modes be considered fail-safe?" Stupak said. Steven Newman the CEO of Transocean told the committee that crews had not seen evidence of problems in tests prior to the accident.

Energy giant BP, which owns the well and had hired Transocean, said it relied on the blowout preventer to ensure safety. "We do expect those to work, absolutely," said BP America's Chairman Lamar McKay.



## President Calls For End Of Oil Company Tax Breaks

In the air of growing disgust surrounding the ongoing oil spill crisis in the Gulf of Mexico, President Obama urged Congress to repeal billions in tax breaks for oil companies. He went on to call for the passage of legislation to help America kick a dangerous "fossil fuel addiction."

As crews of workers and volunteers endure the ongoing battle to minimize damage along the gulf coast, Obama's argument for new legislation seemed to seek opportunity in a crisis. With a major energy bill stalled in the

Senate that would attach a cost on carbon emissions, the President urged lawmakers to use the tax-break money for clean-energy research.

"Our continued dependence on fossil fuels will jeopardize our national security," state the President. "It will smother our planet, and it will continue to put our economy and our environment at risk."

In the speech given at Carnegie Mellon University, Obama cited the risks that are

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The meeting was called to order by President Jack Dodson. All Board members present. Opening prayer led by Juanita Edwards followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 86 members present.

The name of Roosevelt Scott, Jr. was called for the attendance prize. He was not present, therefore, the prize at the next business meeting will be for \$70.00.

Benny Toler, Pension and Insurance Committee, gave a report on VEBA.

Brenda Scarce gave a report on future bus tours. There will be a trip to the NASCAR HALL OF FAME in Charlotte, N.C. on August 16. A trip to Bear Creek, N.C. for a tour of the Fruitcake Factory is planned for December 6, 2010. Call Brenda at (434)724-7158 or (434)489-3705 for details.

Door prizes won by the following:

Oil, filter & lube change from Goodyear Piney Forest Store --Brenda Scarce

Oil, filter & lube change from Goodyear Mt. Cross Rd. Store-- Irma Osborne

50-50 - Willie Fitzgerald

There WILL NOT be a meeting at the Union Hall in July. Instead we have a picnic on Thursday, July 8, 2010 at Dan Daniel Park, oven #17 at 5:00 p.m. followed by attending the Braves ballgame. Members are requested to bring a dessert.

Motion made by George Stewart to adjourn seconded by J.C. Hudson. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Nancy Guill**, Secretary

# PENSION & INSURANCE

By Gloria Gravely

## WORKERS COMPENSATION (DOCTOR OF CHOICE)

If you are claiming a worker's compensation accident resulting in an injury to you or are claiming an occupational illness, Goodyear is required to offer you medical treatment from one of the physicians listed on the panel. They will be responsible for the cost of the treatment given you by your chosen panel physician if your claim is determined to be compensable under the Worker's Compensation Act of Virginia.

An employee may choose another physician not listed on the panel provided the physician is experienced to treat the allowed condition and you notify the employer at the time the panel list is presented to you. Once pursuing treatment with a physician, you have been considered to exercise your choice of physician. You cannot pick another doctor once you sign the panel form and start treatment. The only way that you can get to another doctor is if the doctor of choice refers you to someone else.

If you choose to seek medical attention from a health care provider without prior notification to the employer, the cost of that treatment may be your own responsibility.

Please make sure that you read over all forms that are presented to you in the plant hospital before signing them. It is your responsibility to read and ask questions on anything that you do not understand.

## DELTA DENTAL UPDATE

The Delta Dental contract expires on June 30, 2010. There are about 5 vendors who have put bids in for the dental contract (Delta Dental is one) and Goodyear is in the process of selecting the vendor that will get the business. Once the vendor is selected the P&I Policy committee will meet with them to negotiate a contract and all of the locals that are covered under the contract will have to vote to approve it. Updates will be given on the vendor chosen and when the negotiations will start.

The new plan year starts July 1, 2010 and the \$2000.00 maximum per person on Class I, minor restorative services, and Class III benefits will start over also.

Active employees currently pay \$ .40 cents per hour for dental benefits thru C.O.L.A carve out. It may sound like a lot of money to be paying for a dental plan, but please remember that it allows our retirees to continue to get dental benefits at no cost.

## British Petroleum's Safety Record Raises Questions

With the 24 hour news circus surrounding the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico continuing daily, many are questioning how this could have happened. As more light is shed on British Petroleum (BP) and its operations, many are questioning if BP should even be allowed to operate in the United States at all. Here's a quick glance at BP's safety record prior to the current crisis:

- In 2007, a BP pipeline dumped 200,000 gallons of crude oil in the Alaskan wilderness. That resulted in BP being fined 16 million dollars.
- In order to avoid prosecution on charges that the company conspired to manipulate the propane gas market, the Justice Department required BP to pay approximately 353 million dollars.
- 30 BP workers have been killed and more than 200 have been seriously injured in two separate disasters prior to the Deepwater Horizon explosion.
- According to the Center for Public Integrity, BP refineries in Ohio and Texas have accounted for 97 percent of the OSHA citations labeled "egregious" and "willful" in the last three years.
- OSHA statistics show that BP was slapped with 760 "egregious, willful" safety violations. By comparison, Sunoco and Conoco-Phillips each had eight, Citgo had two and Exxon Mobile had one citation.

Given these facts, it isn't difficult to conclude that perhaps the foreign owned BP has a lack of regard for our country's laws and regulations. As that appears to be the case, then perhaps the valid question is, "Why was BP allowed to operate under these circumstances leading up to the current situation?"

# June Membership Meeting Minutes

USW Local 831 held its regular membership meeting on June 3, 2010 with President Danny Barber presiding. These are the highlights of the meeting:

- Prayer led by Dennis Saunders followed by pledge of allegiance.
- Roll Call of officers.
- Brenda Miles presented the minutes from the May regular membership meeting. They were approved as read.
- Executive Board report for June was approved as read and it contained the following:
  - Grievance Appeal--Motion to uphold Grievance Committee.
  - Motion to purchase a full-page (color) ad for \$265.00 for the Pelham Fire

Department Annual Pork Jam BBQ Festival.

Motion to purchase a full-page ad for \$200.00 for Virginia AFL-CIO Jim Leaman Retirement Program and Celebration.

Motion to purchase a 3 ton Trane 13 SEER heat pump with new pad, R-11 line flush & indoor matching coil & transitional duct work with a 10 year warranty for approximately \$3,503.00

- Financial report for the month of May was given by Greg Gammon and was approved as read.
- P&I report given by Gloria Gravely (see P&I).
- Point of Information

- President Barber informed membership about Goodyear's intent to return the Goodyear Danville plant back to a 7-day continuous operation.

- Kevin Gauldin/Steven Moser/William Knight won the 50/50 raffle.
- The name of William Bill Needy, dept#2541, cc#4038 was drawn for the attendance drawing. He was not present. The July door prize will be \$350.00
- Motion to adjourn. The next union meeting will be held on July 8, 2010.

## Welcome Back

On May 13 we voted to bring our union brothers and sisters (you notice I did not say \$13 people) back to help us through the summer months. As I am writing this article 61 union brother and sisters are now in our plant. To me this is a win, win for everyone. Our people are back at work, some drawing 7-9 dollars an hour more than when they left, better benefits and hopefully with their help we can meet our customer's needs.

Some will be returning to their old jobs while others will be learning new jobs to help us as vacation relief. Our brother and sisters returning to work have no doubt experience some difficult times while being on lay off. I am one of the lucky ones as many of you are. I have been with Goodyear Danville for 40 years and never been laid off. If you want to know how important it is to wake up and have a job to go to just talk to these brother and sisters who have returned to work.

The first thing they will tell you is there are no jobs out there. With all the changes we have seen over the years Goodyear Danville is still the best place to work. I think when we come to work every day we sometimes forget that. I think when we talk about our union we sometimes forget how much worse it could be if we did not have one. I think when we talk about our union we forget we are not talking about a building we are talking about our brother and sisters. I think we sometimes forget we are only as strong as our weakest member.

We owe a great gratitude to the men and women who fight every day to make sure our contract is honored. I know we get upset when things don't turn out the way we want. Our problems are always the most important. Since taking the role as union training coordinator I learned to respect the job our leaders do even more. I talked to a former union official the other day and he told me he did not realize the stress he was under until he gave up his division chairman job. To be able to come to work, do his job and leave. No phone calls in the middle of the night. I must tell you he felt it was a privilege to serve this union and its members.

I guess I am writing this for two reasons. First, if you are training one of our brother and sisters from recall teach them all the knowledge and skills you know and have. They are our future. Take a moment to welcome them back. Many of them feel like outsiders. They are our union brothers and sisters who will one day be leading our union. Second, support your union leaders. Their strength lies in us. Remember, if you want to know the full story of what is going on in our union and plant, attend your union meetings.

**Ronnie Crane**, Union Training Coordinator

## SAFETY AND THE INTERNAL CUSTOMER

Each day we come to work with the mindset of producing the best products on the market, and, in the safest way possible. When we look at what we make we have to come to the realization that our product line impacts billions of people on a daily basis.

Children everyday (our very own) ride on School Buses with tires built right here in this plant, and everytime we choose to take a plane trip for pleasure or for business, we should often ask ourselves if the tires were made by the men and women of Goodyear Danville! If by now you're wondering why the safety guys are talking about the internal customers, then, I will gladly get to the basis of this story and share with you some of the problems/concerns that we heard at one of the safety rep. meetings.

As we listened attentively to the reps. explain what was causing problems in their areas we begin to wonder (and then ask questions) if there was a line of communication being established to address the concerns.

Too many times we think that people just don't care, which in turn leads to frustration, and in some instances, a lack of desire to perform at the highest level.

Communication amongst each department in this plant to address the

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## Annual Picnic Raffle And The Winner Is . . .

The fifth drawing for the annual picnic raffle for the \$250 VISA Card was held at the June membership meeting. And the winner is Calvin Calloway. At the annual picnic, first place prize is a 4 day Carnival Cruise to the Bahamas, second prize is a 4 night-Pigeon Forge (1 bedroom cabin w/hot tub) and third prize is a \$500 VISA Card. After each monthly drawing all winning tickets will be put back in for chances at future drawings. Tickets are still available and still only \$5 each. The annual picnic will be held on Saturday, October 9, 2010 the gate will open at 10 am, lunch will be served from 10:30 – 2:30.



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## President Calls

involved with deep water drilling to find oil. The crowd gave jubilant applause when he declared, “We have to acknowledge that an America that runs solely on fossil fuels should not be the vision that we have for our children and grandchildren.”

The President faces an uphill battle in getting the Congress to enact such legislation and the debate will likely be a heavily partisan fight. Making the issue even more difficult is a shrinking legislation window in a divisive election year in which the idea of putting a price on carbon pollution is extremely contentious.

## USW Local 831 CREDENTIALS

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Danny Travis - *Senior Writer*  
Sandra Hairston - *Associate Editor*  
Michael Scott - *Associate Editor*

Mike Fox - *Communications Coordinator*



## EDITOR'S COLUMN...

### *It has worked for me*

I have worked at the Danville plant for nearly 35 years. I just turned 55 and life is good. In those years, I have paid for a home, provided an education for my daughter, bought cars and trucks and even managed to save a little money. The older I get, the more I appreciate what God has done in my life. I would like to thank Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. for giving me an opportunity to come to work here. I would also like to thank the Union for negotiating wages and benefits. For I know without this representation, I would not have been able to provide the life that my family deserves.

One of the proudest moments of my life was when my daughter started college, a dream of mine since the day she was born. Another proud moment was knowing that I could pay for it! This was something that my parents would not have been able to do for me. I have Goodyear and the Union to thank. Providing an above-average standard of living for my family is one of the most gratifying things I have ever experienced. I have been able to take care of my family and for that I am humbled and grateful. Goodyear provided me an opportunity to make a living; the union did its best in providing me a better life in my quest to make a living.

I realize that all the benefits that I have received was paid for with blood, sweat and tears shed by union brothers and sisters that came before me. We must never forget the significant sacrifices that they made. In solidarity and with purpose, we must follow in their footsteps to protect this way of life for future generations.

I feel my time running out as an employee and as an active union member. I'm a little scared of what my life will be like without Goodyear and the Union. Some of the best friends I have are the ones I have worked with, laughed with and even cried with. I will miss them the most!

I don't know exactly when I will retire but I know that it will not be long. I feel pretty good about my service to Goodyear and the Union. I went to work everyday and tried to do a good job, but I was also a hard-headed union man that would strike and stay out on strike when called upon. I think this combination worked for me and I believe it will work for us all in the future.

Danny Travis - Senior Writer



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## Safety And The Internal Customer

bottlenecks that are causing the headaches is paramount if we are to achieve our goals of “no one getting hurt,” and us becoming “World Class.” An example of what we heard is this: sling trucks being parked at the tire machines jammed together, causing the builders to have to pry the trucks apart, and possibly leading to an injury where a sprain or strain occurs.

Foreign material being left in stock (i.e. blades, loose wire) causing lacerations or punctures, or traps being used when they have been tagged out as defective; just to name a few. We all have a stake in the final product that goes out of this plant; and, safety, production, and quality regardless of what order you put them in must go hand in hand to keep us all employed, and being able to go home to our families every day with our bodies intact!!!

**Safety Committee**

# Questions & Answers

If anyone has a question for *The Informer*, please submit it to Danny Travis, Sandra Hairston, Mike Fox or your Division Chairman.

## What is the criteria needed to receive the Social Security Supplement, also known as “the kicker” when an employee retires?

You must have at least 30 years of service and be 55 years or older.

## Stanley Furniture Cutting 530 Jobs In Henry County

Large-scale furniture manufacturing in Martinsville and Henry County finally came completely unglued. Many were shocked, while others weren't.

Stanley Furniture Company announced in May that it would end furniture production in Henry County by year's end and move all adult furniture manufacturing to Southeast Asia. The company's sprawling factory, which occupies 1.7 million square feet, will be converted to the warehousing and distribution of imported furniture.

Stanley said 530 employees would be jobless by December. It cut loose about 190 workers in Henry County late last year. Stanley still operates a factory in North Carolina that makes nursery and youth furniture. The company has built furniture in Henry County for 86 years and has continued domestic production well after neighboring competitors such as Pulaski Furniture, Hooker Furniture Corp. and Bassett Furniture Industries gave it up to embrace imports.

Not too long ago, furniture workers in Henry County or Martinsville could lose or quit a job one day and find another the next. Those days are gone. Today, Martinsville's jobless rate, which was 22 percent in March, is the state's worst. And manufacturing jobs in any industry are scarce.

Waddell Giles, 65, labored the following afternoon in a sanding and machining room. Giles said he has been with Stanley for 48 years. "It's the only furniture factory I've ever worked in," he said. Giles said he would probably retire when production ceases unless he remains hired.

His supervisor, Rocky Mount resident Elbert Foley, 54, learned that his own job definitely will end. About 10 years ago, Foley left Lane Furniture in Rocky Mount to work for Stanley. Lane Furniture closed its factory there shortly thereafter.

"I was kind of expecting it in a way, but I was hoping it wouldn't happen," he said. "I talked to a lot of people afterwards, they were proud. They said, 'We hung on longer than anyone else.'" He is unsure about his future. "I am just kind of ... (long pause) ... figuring out my options," Foley said. He said Coy Renick, president of The Renick Group, a recruiting and staffing services

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# Dr. Dorothy Height

## *“Godmother of the Civil Rights Movement”*

1912-2010

At a point in history when Black Americans were disenfranchised and women had few job options, Dorothy Irene Height spoke up for her people. She respectfully disagreed with the status quo and demanded civil rights for women and African Americans.



Dr. Height discussed civil rights issues with first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, urged President Eisenhower to desegregate schools, witnessed President Kennedy sign the Equal Pay Act in 1963 and was the only woman standing on the stage while Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.

She was a political insider who met with decision makers, and as George W. Bush once noted, “She’s told every president what she thinks since Dwight Eisenhower.” President Obama called her the godmother of the civil rights movement and, after her death at age 98 on April 20 he ordered that flags fly at half-staff on the day of her funeral.

She grew up in Rankin, Pennsylvania, yet a Richmond, Virginia native she stood out as a talented young lady. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degree from NYU in four years. By age 21, she started her ascension to the top ranks of the civil rights movement as the leader of the United Christian Youth Movement of North America. She dedicated her time to issues such as desegregation of the military and preventing lynching.

As the assistant executive director of the Harlem YWCA, Dorothy Height met and befriended first lady Eleanor Roosevelt as well as the National Council of Negro Women founder Mary McLeod Bethune. Ms. Bethune was impressed with her and recruited

her to join the organization’s fight for women’s rights. In 1957, she was elected as president of the NCNW, a position she held for 40 years. Dr. Height was dedicated to improving the lives of others and strengthening the Black family.

One of Dr. Height’s many unforgettable qualities was her vivid memory, while some people can’t remember what happen yesterday, she shared stories from 80 years ago with names and great detail. She wasn’t shy about reminding people that women weren’t allowed to step up to the mic at the historic March on Washington. “She embodied the memory bank of our struggle,” stated Rev. Jessie Jackson “When her eyes closed, the vault closed. She knew (W.E.B.) DuBois and Marcus Garvey and Thurgood Marshall and Adam (Clayton) Powell Sr. and Jr. and Martin Luther King Sr. and Jr. and Paul Robeson. So her memory bank was the greatest reservoir we had of living memory.”

This ability made Dr. Height a walking historian who never forgot what the struggle for civil rights was about. While some may think the struggle ended when Afro hairdos went out of style, Dr. Height always saw more work to be done—from teen pregnancy to equal pay legislation to childhood obesity. And she never quit. Our hats are off to Dr. Dorothy Height, Godmother of the Civil Rights Movement.

### Highlights from Career of Service:

**1933:** Led the United Christian Youth Movement of North American. She worked to prevent lynching, desegregated the armed forces and reform the criminal justice system.

**1938:** Dr. Height was one of 10 American youth invited by Eleanor Roosevelt to spend a weekend at her Hyde Park, New York, home to plan and prepare for the World Youth Conference.

**1944-1977:** Served on the staff of the National Board of the YWCA of the USA

**1947-1956:** National president of the National Council of Negro Women.

**1960:** Dr. Height was the only female team leader in the United Civil Rights Leadership along with Martin Luther King Jr., Whitney H. Young, A. Philip Randolph, James Farmer, Roy Wilkins and John Lewis.

**1965:** Founded the YWCA’s Center for Racial Justice. The YWCA had once turned her away from a swimming pool in Pittsburgh because she was Black.

**1974:** Dedicated a statue of Mary McLeod Bethune in Washington, D.C.’s Lincoln Park. It was the first statue of a woman and the first statue of an African American on public land in the nation’s capital.

**1986:** Established the Black Family Reunion Celebration.

**1994:** Received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bill Clinton.

**2003:** Released her memoir, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates*.

**2004:** President George W. Bush presented to her the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian and most distinguished award presented by the United States Congress.

-source:ncnw.org

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## Stanley Furniture Cutting 530 Jobs In Henry County

business in Roanoke, is a longtime friend. "We discussed going back to school," perhaps pursuing training in computers or a medical field, Foley said.

Stanley's workers will likely be eligible for federal Trade Adjustment Assistance, which provides a package of benefits designed to help workers who have lost their jobs because of foreign competition.

Several Henry County residents and a regional businessman interviewed Thursday lamented foreign competition's role in gutting regional manufacturing. "We're losing

so many jobs here in Henry County, and it's just terrible," David Rakes said. "The jobs are all going overseas and nothing is coming back, if this country keeps sending jobs overseas, how are people going to afford to buy what comes back?" Rakes described Wednesday's announcement as "heartbreaking to see because they really put up a good fight. You kind of have to give them an 'A' for effort."

Senator Mark Warner's Reaction "Well it brought back memories of when I was governor and we lost 800 jobs overnight at Pillowtex and I went down to Martinsville and stood

for the day in the rain with all these workers who were just looking for what's next." He went on to say, "I know how hard hit this community has been time and again. We keep taking small steps forward with 50 or 100 job announcements, but then you lose these large major employers. My heart goes out to the community."

"It's just challenging when you've got countries abroad that can offer wage rates that are a third of what we offer, and we have to find a way to deal with that," stated Warner.

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# RETIREES

Congratulations to the following retirees. We wish them much success in their future endeavors and hope they can fully enjoy their union negotiated retirement benefits.

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**Michael Huemoeller** Dept.# 2541 CC# 3221

**Louis Jeffers** Dept.# 1110 CC# 5335

**Leon Kendrick** Dept.# 1110 CC# 3750

**Brian Martin** Dept.# 1320 CC# 5215

## *We Send Our Sincere Condolences To*

Marcus Brogan, Charles Clarke, Charles Clay IV, James Davis, Timothy Knowles, Carl Marilla, Kerry Oliver, Kerry Oliver, Andrew Thompson, Barry Tuck, Delta Williams and Jonathan Wilson


To the families of retirees:  
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<b>JULY 2010 CALENDAR</b>						
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>  Independence Day	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Exec. Board Meeting 7:30 AM	<b>7</b> SOAR Exec. Board Mtg 1:00 PM	<b>8</b> Union Meeting 7:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM SOAR Picnic - 5:00 pm Dan Daniel Park - Oven #17	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> FMLA Conference Raleigh, NC	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>