

Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing this report after Danny and I just returned from a short job visit on the Keystone project. From all accounts the work on these projects seems to be progressing as expected, and the overall attitude of the members was very positive. The members had a lot of interesting questions and shared some personal ideas they had with us. Probably the number one question I receive daily is, "When will the Ruby project get started?" As I write this report approximately two weeks before you receive it, I only hope it is in full speed by the time this report reaches you. It appears as if anyone who could possibly file a protest on the Ruby project did. In this day and time, it is almost impossible to please every special interest group that feels like they have an issue with large projects such as this one. Two months ago when I wrote my last Blue Light Report, I would not have imagined that this project would today be awaiting the full permit issuance.

With the Labor Day holiday upon us, I would like to share with the membership a powerful quote and a brief history of the holiday. "No business which depends for its existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country. By living wages I mean more than a bare subsistence level - I mean the wages of a decent living." Franklin D. Roosevelt

The birth of Labor Day dates all the way back to the late 1800's, at the time of the Industrial Revolution when a common workday was twelve hours long and lasted from Monday through the following Sunday. Due to these strenuous work hours for both children and adults alike, trade unions were founded which became, as we all know, a collective voice to not only improve working conditions but also to bargain for wages and benefits. Among those committed leaders of the trade unions were two men, Peter J. McGuire, who was the General Secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, and Matthew Maguire, a machinist who served as Secretary of the Central Labor Union and later became Secretary of Local 344 of the International Association of Machinists. Both men are synonymously responsible for the conception of Labor Day, the workingman's holiday that began with a street parade which was followed by a festival and many inspiring speeches.

More than 10,000 workers, most of whom had left their jobs without permission, attended the first event on September 5, 1882 in New York City. They marched from City Hall, past Union Square, and then uptown to 42nd Street. After marching, the workers and their families gathered at a nearby park for a picnic. This became a day to not only celebrate workers' accomplishments, but also to share tactics to obtain better wages and working conditions. And although many industrial cities held similar events each year, it was not signed into law until June 28, 1894 by President Grover Cleveland.

Due to not only the dedication and tenacity of two union leaders, but also the courage and bravery of thousands of strikers, the first Monday in September became a national holiday, a day to honor the enduring work of the common laborer and to recognize his contribution to our nation's prosperity and success. And although the holiday has evolved from a purely labor union celebration into a general last fling of summer festival, we must always remember to take a moment to pay tribute to the American worker and the early leaders of our Brotherhood, whom we can attribute much of this great nation's strength and success.

I hope to see many of you at the September Union meeting and if not, maybe in the field. Until next time, WORK SAFE, TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR WORK, and WORK UNION!

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

David L. Barnett

Financial Secretary-Treasurer