



“Man can will nothing unless he has first understood that he must count on no one but himself; that he is alone, abandoned on earth in the midst of his infinite responsibilities, without help, with no other aim than the one he sets himself, with no other destiny than the one he forges for himself on this earth.”

Jean Paul Sartre

HEALTH CARE REFORM

- 1.) January 1, 2013—higher deduction threshold for medical expenses—increase from 7.5% to 10%.
- 2.) Medicare insurance—higher rates for those earning more than \$200,000, \$250,000 for couples.
- 3.) January 1, 2014—insurance companies will not be able to reject those with pre-existing conditions.
- 4.) Health Insurance Exchanges will be available to comparison shop.
- 5.) Individuals who do not get health insurance from an employer must buy coverage. (This is being challenged in court.)
- 6.) Business owners with more than 50 employees must offer coverage.
- 7.) More access to Medicaid.
- 8.) Small business tax credits—up to 50% of

- their contribution toward employee premiums.
- 9.) Excise tax on Cadillac plans begins January 1, 2018.
- 10.) Beginning January 1, 2012—reporting of health care cost on W-2 Forms.
- 11.) Drug companies will be paying more fees—January 1, 2011.
- 12.) Unless repealed—there is a mandate to increase 1099-Misc reporting—form must be provided to any vendor that provides items you need to operate—if the cost exceeds \$600 annually a 1099 must be issued. (This item needs to be repealed.) With the changes made in the last election there is a better than 50/50 chance the “Obama” bill will get repealed or there could be major changes to the existing law.

Source: COSE/Medial Mutual

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2011

*Mike Joyce (Zenith Systems)—President/
Governor*

Gerry Higgins (Firelands)—Vice-President

Tom Morgan (Harrington)—Treasurer

The remaining Board of Directors are:

David Haines (London Road)

Ron Ullman (Ullman)

Duke Benevento (Herbst)

Kevin Vayo (VIP)

CALENDAR FOR 2011

- 1.) Made In America Benefits Conference—January 22-25 in Las Vegas.
- 2.) CIR—February 14-16 in Washington, D.C.
- 3.) Eastern Regional Spring Meeting—March 20-23 in Puerto Rico.
- 4.) District Two Council—January 31-February 2.
- 5.) Association Executives Institute—March 7-9 in San Diego, California.
- 6.) Annual Convention—October 22-25 in San Diego, California

GREATER CLEVELAND



FINANCIAL

- 1.) Copper prices continue to rise-the latest has been in the \$4.25-\$4.50 range.
- 2.) Unemployment levels appear to be stabilizing and declining a bit.
- 3.) Stock market optimism is at a record high. What will happen is anyone's guess.
- 4.) Stocks have been flat since early November.
- 5.) Estate tax exemptions are \$5 million for 2011 and 2012. Maximum tax rate is 35%.
- 6.) \$1000 child tax credit is still available.
- 7.) Two Year alternative maximum tax patch.
- 8.) Two percent (2%) employee payroll tax cut for the year 2011.
- 9.) Marriage penalty relief included.
- 10.) Portability between spouses-the \$5 million exclusion amount. Any unused upon the death of the first spouse can transfer over to surviving spouse.
- 11.) Consumers have been reducing debt over the last two years.
- 12.) U.S. manufacturing is rallying. Since 1978-U.S. manufacturing jobs declined from 19.4 million to 11.6 million workers but U.S. industry has maintained its relative percentage (21%) of total manufacturing worldwide.
- 13.) Some large companies are bringing some jobs back home.
- 14.) Once housing stabilizes the CPI will probably head higher.
- 15.) The size of the municipal bond market is approximately \$2.8 trillion.

NEGOTIATIONS

The Lake Erie Division has started to negotiate a new Inside Agreement. To date we have met five times for about 12 hours but the progress has been minimal. At this time we are preparing to go to CIR. It has been the position of the employers to be as upfront and realistic as possible but the reaction by the union committee has been to sit with the issues they started with.

With the economy in Northeast Ohio, Ohio and the country as a whole at recession levels, the work, work hours, situation has been at some of the weakest points experienced by those of us who have been around for 30 years or more. It is quite obvious to the employers that drastic steps need to be acted upon as soon as possible. Even the recent NLMCC report indicated that the market share for Local 129 has declined to about 39%-a drop of 10% since 2005. Some of the largest jobs have gone to our competition and none of our members were even close to the price paid. Manhours worked is the variable that im-

pacts the entire industry. When hours decline the employers suffer, the union members face unemployment with all the consequences that entails, the union itself suffers and the NECA Chapter suffers. Ideally we would like to see all the available employers working. ALL the available employees working and the industry growing. However, as I.O. President, Ed Hill has stated, we the IBEW/NECA have become an insignificant participant in the industry.

We will keep at negotiating with the goal to reach a reasonable conclusion.

LOOK FOR THE NEXT REVIEW IN FEBRUARY 2011!