

Fighting a Battle on Two Fronts

After United Space Alliance (USA) proposed a substandard contract offer last June, Joe Tidwell and his fellow members of Local 2061 and District 166 in Cocoa, FL, put down their tools, climbed down from their cranes and walked off the job.

Tidwell has been walking the line like most everyone else. Unlike most everyone else, however, Tidwell is also battling for his life. Fighting prostate cancer since 1992, and diagnosed with colon cancer in 2004, Tidwell is undergoing chemotherapy treatments, but he still walks the picket line.

Tidwell's forty-year career with NASA goes back to the Apollo program where he was a swing-arm mechanic. Since then, he's worked for TWA, Bendix, Boeing Services International, Lockheed and now USA, the launch service joint venture formed by Lockheed Martin and the Boeing Company.

Stick Together

When the strike at USA was evident, Local 2061 President Lew Jamieson offered Tidwell alternative strike duty because of his ill-

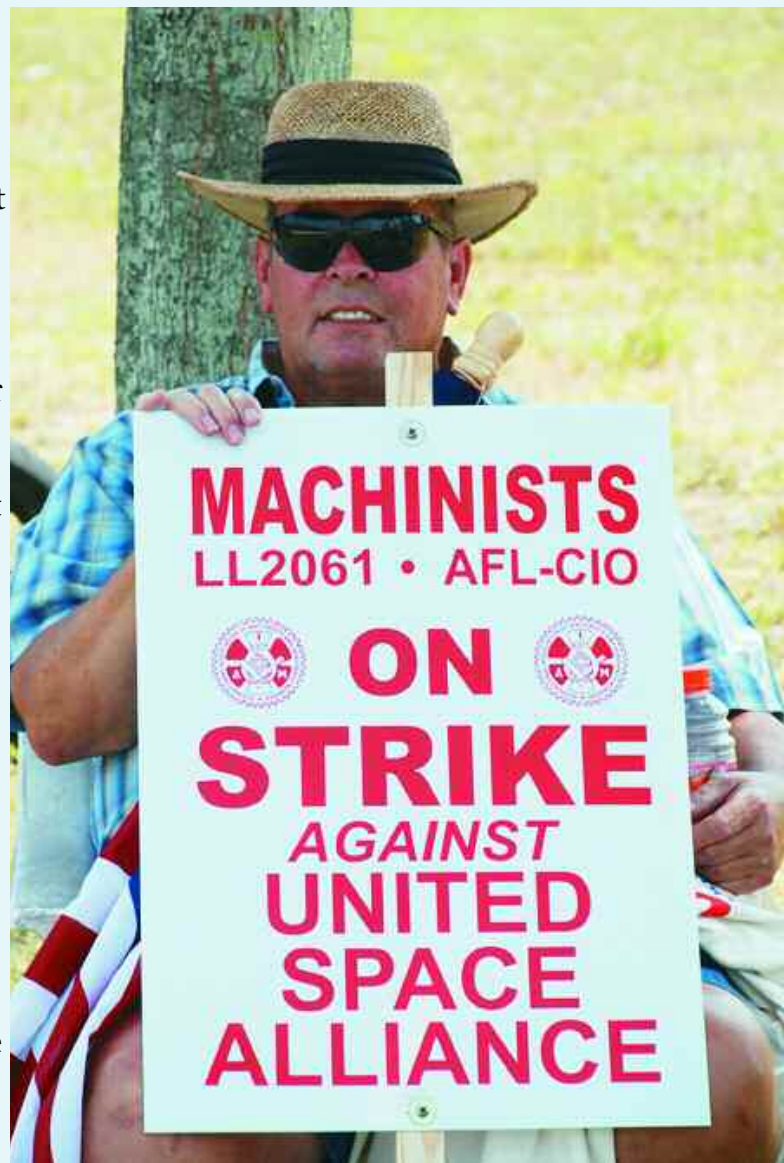
ness. But Tidwell wouldn't hear of it. "After forty years and six strikes, it's not in me to cross a picket line or not serve picket duty," said Tidwell. "I want to support and encourage the rest of the folks. I want to tell them companies come and companies go, and no matter the outcome, we stick together because all we got is each other."

"Every time we see Joe out on the line," said Jamieson, "it makes us proud to be a Machinist and proud to be his brother."

As the *IAM Journal* went to press, the strike at USA continued. Key issues include job security and retirement concerns as NASA transitions from the Space Shuttle to the Aries/Orion program.

"Joe Tidwell and his fellow members are making a stand to win a contract that protects their

jobs, their families and their retirements," said Southern Territory GVP



Battling both cancer and the United Space Alliance, Local 2061 member Joe Tidwell has been an inspiration on the picket lines.

Bob Martinez. "Shoulder to shoulder, they're standing together and setting an example that will endure for years."