



*Left, members of District 776 in Fort Worth, TX get information and then cast ballots, below, on a new contract with Lockheed Martin that provided increased pay and pension benefits.*

## Members Win New Contract at Lockheed Martin

District Lodge 776 Machinists at Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth, TX ratified a three-year agreement by an 82.5 percent “yes” vote in April, 2006. The new agreement covers nearly 4,000 Machinists including Production workers, Firemen and Nurses working on the F-16, F-22 and F-35 fighter aircraft.

Negotiations for the current agreement opened on February 21, 2006 with both sides expressing hope for a satisfactory agreement. Neither side forgot that the two previous negotiations included work stoppages before reaching a settlement. Job security, health care costs, prescription drug coverage, pensions, wages and work rules were the top issues at the bargaining table.

“We intend to protect our members’ healthcare benefits,

their pensions and make sure their jobs are secure,” declared IP Tom Buffenbarger at the initial meeting with Lockheed representatives. Buffenbarger was joined by Headquarters GVP Bob Thayer, Southern Territory GVP Bob Martinez, Aerospace Coordinator John Crowdis, District 776 President Pat Lane, and the entire IAM District 776 negotiating committee.

### High Expectations

In an era of increased defense spending, Lockheed-Martin was thriving and members had high expectations for a fair agreement. “Lockheed Martin has strong sales, record profits and expects to continue that trend,” said Thayer. “Our members have every right to a contract that reflects the success the company is now enjoying.”

### Hard Bargaining

Highlights of the agreement include raises of four percent the first year, three percent each following year, a \$2,000 signing bonus and a ten-dollar bump on pension, bringing the pension benefit up to \$68 per month per year of service. The contract also holds a strong line against health care increases, with only a minor rise in employee costs.

“We expected hard bargaining from Lockheed and I know they expected the same from us,” said Crowdis. “The members here deserve nothing less. This is a very sophisticated and knowledgeable membership.”

“Strong unions make for strong contracts, and the strength of the members at Lockheed won the day,” said Martinez. “Congratulations to everyone for a great contract for the members of District Lodge 776.”

