

WRENCH & WOOD

Wood, Pulp and Paper Workers News



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Local W33 PCA Bargaining Prep

From January 11-16, 2026, the bargaining committee representing workers at PCA paper mill in International Falls, MN, local W33 prepared for upcoming contract negotiations by participating in the W3 Center's Negotiation Prep for Bargaining Committees program.

The program began by examining the importance of team dynamics and tasked the committee with developing a set of internal ground rules by which their interactions, discussions, and decision making would be governed. The rest of the six-day program saw the committee examine strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities, contract costing, writing proposals, the law, development of strategic plans, and strike preparation.



The committee is made up of (pictured from left to right) International Representative Billy Barnwell, Rebecca Joslyn, Chad Williams, Terry Schultz, Darrell Lines, Dickie Conat, District 5 Directing Business Representative Jeff Hoopman, and Gabe Hanson. The W33 Committee will begin negotiations in early April.

The preparation program delivered at W3 is a vital element to a successful negotiation and puts our committees on a strong foundation to face companies at the bargaining table. If your local would like to be part of a similar program, reach out to your representative, who can work with you, your territory, the Woodworkers Department, and the W3 center to develop a program tailored to your needs.

IAM District W24 Woodworkers are United, Ready to Negotiate with Weyerhaeuser

IAM Union leaders and members representing four locals in Oregon and Washington recently convened at the District W24 office to prepare for upcoming contract negotiations with Weyerhaeuser. This strategic gathering focused on training bargaining committees and fostering collaboration among representatives to ensure they are equipped to secure fair wages and benefits for the next four years.

[Watch the video here.](#)

The Negotiating Committee emphasized the importance of early preparation and unity, specifically learning from the past negotiating experiences, including their strike in 2022, improving communication with their membership, and growing our strength for this year's contract bargaining.

The diverse group, covering 13 contracts, includes log truck drivers, mill operators, maintenance workers, and logging equipment operators who are dedicated to achieving an equitable agreement that supports both current employees and future generations of woodworkers.

By coordinating with strategic resource experts and local leadership, the bargaining committee intends to present a professional, well-informed front when formal discussions with the company begin the first week of March.

Chris Wagoner Grant

For the second consecutive year, a Woodworker local has been awarded a Chris Wagoner Leadership Grant. Local W130 in Raymond, WA is not only the second Woodworker Local in two years, but also the second Woodworker Local in District W24 in two years to win the Grant.

"I'm excited for the opportunity that this local will now have to send a member through our outstanding Leadership program where they will learn the skills needed to grow and support their membership," said District W24 DBR Brandon Bryant.

When asked about two consecutive locals from District W24 being selected, he added, "It speaks to the Locals in our District really wanting to be educated and to know what they are doing. It also says a lot about our District staff who pushed hard to get our Locals to apply for this grant."

The Chris Wagoner Leadership Grant was established at the 2024 Convention and selects one Local from each Territory every year. The Grant covers all reimbursable costs of sending one member through all four phases of the IAM Leadership Program at the William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center.

IAM's Georgia State Council Mobilizes Members for Critical Election Engagement

The Georgia State Council of Machinists met February 16-20, 2026, in Atlanta, GA. Business began on the 16th with an Executive Board meeting and was in full swing Tuesday the 17th. Speakers included U.S. Congressmen Samford Bishop and Hank Johnson, as well as six candidates for Governor of GA, and two candidates for GA Labor Commissioner.

Wednesday the 18th, the Council took the delegates and guests on a tour of the GA Civil Rights Museum. Said Council President James Clements (Local 2699 Albany, GA), "Our bylaws state clearly that one of this Council's primary purposes is to educate our members. This trip is a great way to expose our delegates to the Labor movement's history of civil activism."

Thursday the 19th, the Council delegates joined the GA AFL/CIO for Labor Lobby Day. The delegates first attended a lobby training course at the AFL facility, then traveled by bus to the State Capitol to meet with legislators about issues important to labor. The GA State Council has for decades aligned their February meeting to participate in this event. Said Woodworkers Department IR Billy Barnwell, "As a Georgia IAM member, it makes me very proud to see the work that Brother Clements and his entire Executive Board put in to make this one of the most substantive Conferences that I have the pleasure to attend."

Georgia is home to many Locals with interests in the wood, pulp, and paper sectors. Delegates from our sector who attended were from Local 1034 in Macon, GA and District 243.

It is critically important that all Woodworker locals become active in your respective State Councils. This is the forum where we hold our elected officials accountable for legislative decisions impacting our work either positively or negatively. If you are not aware of your State Council's meeting times, reach out to your Business Representative to find out how to get involved.



Bio-Corner



Gabe Hanson joined the Union on November 16, 2020, when he began working at the Packaging Corporation of America Paper Mill in International Falls, MN. He started in the Pulp and Bleach department as a reclaim operator and has since worked his way up to Bleach B Operator.

Gabe began his union leadership journey about a year ago when he became a Shop Steward in the Pulp and Bleach department. Six months later, he was elected to the Bargaining Committee and will help represent members during the March 2026 contract negotiations. He also donates his time as a Communicator for Local W33 and serves as a Delegate for District 5.

Before joining the mill, Brother Gabe held several jobs starting at age 15, including line cook, cashier, telemarketer, and non-union machinist making medical equipment.

Outside of work, Gabe enjoys snowboarding, hiking, climbing, gaming, and traveling with his wife, friends and family.

WOODWORKERS ON-THE-JOB

Picture by: W130 President, Jason Williams

SAVE THE DATE!



Join us for our 7th Annual Chillin' & Grillin' Virtual BBQ for Guide Dogs of America, taking place August 15-16.

More details and event information will be shared soon—stay tuned!

Published by:

Woodworkers Department

9000 Machinists Place Upper Marlboro, MD

301-967-4555 ; fax 301-967-4763

www.goiam.org/index.php/headquarters/departments/woodworkers