



# 'ANGUS BARKS'

By Jeff Francis  
AEG Executive Board

## *Forewarned is Forearmed*

**GATE SECURITY-** Improvements in security allow closer monitoring of traffic in and thru the plant. In several recent incidents, the Company used enhanced video to make 'off-the-property' allegations against our members.

**TIMECLOCKS-** Several areas report timeclock terminals bogging down, due to hardware (is obsolete) and software (responsibility went overseas). The terminals have both a visual alert and audible beep when your punch is accepted. If your timeclock is down often, request your supervisor provide a posted sign-out sheet.

**VOUCHERING-** Sometimes terminal problems cause operators to miss entering their time. This is a problem for the Company when good direct labor time is missing and not credited to the plant. In this situation, it is better to record your time on paper vouchers.

**OPERATOR SCORECARDS-** Over the years, management has used many ways to track productivity. Computerized summaries can't measure the obstacles you overcome to produce a quality part. As long as you are making your best effort, not abusing Company time, producing quality parts, following the job sheet, the Union can defend you.

**ATTENDANCE-** Whatever form the Company's revised policy takes, unpaid absences resulting from a chronic or serious illness of yours, or your immediate family, can be protected. If you are in this situation, discuss with your steward your rights under FMLA. The Company needs to streamline and simplify FMLA applications, in light of HIPPA regulations.

**DEPENDENT INSURANCE-** Corporate GE's current effort to scrub the rolls of ineligible dependents is legally correct but morally brutal. Those forced into expensive individual plans, or onto Mass Health, will include divorced spouses, 19-24 year-olds taking a break from college, and grandparents doing the right thing by raising their grandkids.

**LTDI CONTRIBUTIONS-** These rates increased dramatically Jan 1. This coverage protects you in case of disability longer than 6 months. If you cancel the coverage it's virtually impossible to get back in. But you can drop to a lower option at any time.

**SHUTDOWN SCHEDULE-** With no shutdowns scheduled currently, it's in your interests to arrange with your supervisor now, any scheduled vacations you have planned this year with your family. Be aware the Company could change its mind and declare a shutdown period, if they notify the Union formally at Step II prior to April 1.

## *Wind Power Petition*

Stewards returned 719 signatures out of 886 union members in Plants I & II, representing 80% participation from our area. That's tremendous support for the Union's effort to advance the Cape Wind project and new work for the Gearplant. If you work in Plant I or Plant II and you did not see the petition, you are either way out of touch, or you need to nominate a steward in a nearby area.

Members expressed many different reasons to support Cape Wind. But *everyone agrees this old manufacturing plant needs new work*. The skills and size of the Gearplant fits nicely into GE's plans to capitalize on the world-wide demand for ocean based windmills.

