

Camillus News Articles

Camillus Cutlery to close its doors

Updated: 2/27/2007 10:04 PM
By: Web Staff

Wednesday will be the last day on the job for workers at Camillus Cutlery. The knife maker will close its doors for good.

About 35 people work at the plant, which employed nearly 200 just ten years ago.

A representative from United Steelworkers says the employees were told about the closing Monday afternoon.



Union workers at Camillus Cutlery spent months battling with the company over a new contract. Workers approved a contract in November, only to find out the next day a majority of them were being laid off.

Camillus Cutlery workers approve contract

Updated: 11/16/2006 8:43 AM
By: Web Staff

Striking workers at Camillus Cutlery say they approved a new contract Wednesday night, but workers we spoke with Thursday morning say they expect the company to cut many of their jobs.

Workers gathered at the company, attempting to go back to work.

Nearly 80 workers have been on strike for six months. In May, workers voted down the company's contract offer, saying it did not guarantee jobs to a majority of the workers, and it cut wages for workers who remained with the company.



At the time, the company said they needed to make cuts because of a financial crisis.

Camillus Cutler workers reject contract

10/10/2006 11:46 AM
By: Staff

Striking workers at Camillus Cutlery will stay on the picket line, after rejecting the companies latest contract offer. Nearly 80 workers have been on strike since May.

Workers voted down the contract after saying it did not guarantee jobs to a majority of the workers, and cutting wages for workers who remained with the company.

Workers first went on strike in May after rejecting a contract offer from Camillus Cutlery. At the time, the company said they needed to make cuts because the company faces financial crisis.

No word if new contract talks have been scheduled between the union and the company.

Talks continue at Camillus Cutlery

Updated: 9/21/2006 6:13 PM
By: Staff

Nearly 80 workers said they went on strike when the company tried to reduce wages and cut back benefits. Company officials claim they needed to make cuts because the company is facing a financial crisis.

Workers filed unfair labor charges against Camillus Cutlery, but they were dropped last month. They said the strike has been tough for all of them.



"It's been very stressful. There have been some people that have more stress. They have children, and it has been very stressful on these people because financially they may not have had another income. We have some people inside that are husband and wife that work together, so that's two incomes that have been cut," striking worker Maria Latone said.

Camillus Cutlery had no comment on the negotiations, but Camillus Mayor Edward Fletcher said he is very hopeful for a resolution.

Unfair labor charges against Camillus Cutlery dropped

Updated: 9/2/2006 9:56 AM

By: Staff

Unfair labor practice charges against Camillus Cutlery have been dropped. The announcement comes almost two weeks after the National Labor Relations Board ruled that the charges against the company were without merit.

Almost 80 workers have been on strike at the plant since May. The United Steel Workers Union filed charges that Camillus Cutlery bargained in bad faith three times since then. Camillus Cutlery officials say there is still work to be done and they are willing to work with the union for a more productive bargaining relationship.



Camillus Cutlery workers to resume contract negotiation

Updated: 6/18/2006 5:44 PM

By: Staff

Camillus Cutlery and the union representing 78 striking workers are returning to the bargaining table on Monday to resume contract talks.

The workers have been striking since mid-May after rejecting a contract offer from the company.

Workers said the company wants to cut wages, paid vacations, and holidays and make employees pay more for health insurance.

Camillus Cutlery claimed the cuts are necessary because the company faces a severe financial crisis



Camillus Cutlery strike continues

Updated: 6/2/2006 6:37 PM

By: Staff

The strike at Camillus Cutlery continues for another week. Seventy-eight union workers began striking in mid-May after rejecting a contract offer from the company.

Workers say the company wants to cut wages, paid vacations and holidays and make employees pay more for health insurance. Camillus Cutlery says the cuts are necessary because the company faces a severe financial crisis.

Union workers say they are frustrated with the negotiation process.

"Absolutely nothing has changed, the company refuses to negotiate with us at all, with the union. They refuse to talk to the committees, so nothing has changed," said striking worker Hazel Seeber

The union turned down a contract proposed last month.

The factory remains open and supervisors are filling in for the missing workers.



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Workers and company officials resume talks

Updated: 5/22/2006 11:21:28 AM

By: News 10 Now Staff

Union workers at Camillus Cutlery and company officials return to the negotiating table today. Nearly 80 workers remain on the picket line.

Union members voted down the new contract offered by the company last Tuesday. Employees say the new proposal asked for a 40 percent pay cut, an increase in health care payments and the elimination of severance pay. The company says that's not true and that they've presented the union with its last best offer.

Camillus Cutlery released a statement saying the company is facing a severe financial crisis and asked the union for certain cost reductions.



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Camillus Cutlery workers on strike

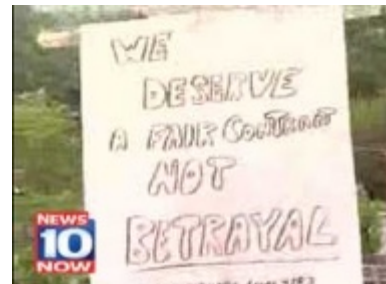
Updated: 5/17/2006 2:03:40 PM

By: Narmeen Choudhury

Camillus Cutlery is one of several companies in Central New York who've had workers walk out and strike since the beginning of this year. Like most, workers at Camillus Cutlery are concerned over wages and healthcare plans.

"They want a 40% reduction in wages, which is ridiculous. They want to boost the healthcare payments for us way up. They want to give us no severance package, no severance language," said striking worker Sharon Brown.

News 10 Now spoke to the company's president, Jim Furgal, but he



declined to comment. The contracts expired last month, but the company allowed them to continue working under the prior agreement. On Tuesday, Camillus Cutlery offered a new contract to the workers. Union members unanimously voted against it because they said the company was asking them to give up too much.

"The company is being very unfair and it's about time we stood our ground and do what we think is right, and I think I speak for everyone here we've had enough," said Brown.

"There's no respect at all. They're just trying to take everything away from us. Most of us have worked here for 30 years or more. It's just outrageous what they're trying to do," added Deborah Austin, Local United Steelworkers president.

Camillus Mayor Edward Fletcher said he heard rumors of problems circulating around the company, but he had no idea a strike was in the works until he came into work Wednesday morning.

Fletcher said the company holds a strong historical value to the community, and a strike doesn't look good for the town's image.

"This strike surprised me tremendously. I didn't know anything about it. I hope they negotiate. I hope things don't go on for too long for their sake and the company's sake," said Mayor Fletcher.

The mayor also made repeated attempts to reach Furgal, but said he has yet to receive a call back.

Workers said they'll continue to strike until representatives from Camillus Cutlery agree to return to the negotiating table.

Late Wednesday the company released a statement saying the company is facing a severe financial crisis and asked the union for certain cost reductions.

They also said they are not asking the union for a 40% cut in wages, or a discontinue existing severance benefits.

The company says its willing to return to the negotiation table with the union.

From News 10 – Time Warner Cable

History of Camillus Cutlery

Updated: 2/28/2007 6:35 PM

By: Joleene Des Rosiers

Tom Williams worked for Camillus Cutlery for 30 years. Collecting knives and information is his hobby.

Below is a synopsis of the history of the company as he told it to News 10 Now reporter Joleene Des Rosiers.

"The original Camillus Cutlery began in 1876, and it was known as A. Castor and Brothers. And, A. Castor and Brothers operated out of New York City as an importing company, and they brought knives in from Germany and from England."




Tom Williams

"In the 1890s, tariffs were enacted that made the bringing in of imported goods prohibited. So, Mr. Castor looked for a domestic supplier, and he heard about a small cutlery company in Camillus, New York known as Sherwood Cutlery. And, he contracted with Sherwood Cutlery, which began in 1894 as a struggling company with only 20 employees and eventually bought the company in 1902, and the name was changed to Camillus Cutlery from Sherwood Cutlery."

"After the acquisition by Mr. Castor, the company was greatly expanded, and by 1910, there was more than 200 employees in the small Camillus factory."

"Much of Camillus' success can be attributed to Nilo Miori, who assumed the presidency in 1963 after the Camillus Cutlery was sold to the Kaufmann and Shwartz family. And under Mr. Miori's direction, he renovated all the buildings, and the business thrived through the '60s, '70s and '80s until his retirement in 1987."

"It's unfortunate, and the way it is today with the labor costs overseas, American knife companies are having a very hard time competing."

WATCH THE VIDEO 

Story of Camillus Cutlery

The closing of Camillus Cutlery brings with it the end of an era. News 10 Now's Joleene Des Rosiers talks to the company's historian, Tom Williams.

