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USW/SOAR 1/08

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USW@Work

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A Powerful Voice for Workers



SOAR Members Endorse BARACK OBAMA for President

The Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) endorsed Sen. Barack Obama for President at its Ninth International Conference in Las Vegas.

The resolution endorsing Obama, passed at the SOAR meetings held June 27 and 28, voices displeasure with

the current Bush administration and the damage it has done to the United States and the world.

The 122 delegates to the conference also elected its leadership team for the next three years. International Vice President Fred Redmond administered the oath of office to SOAR President C.L. "Connie" Entrekin, Vice President Harry Hynd, Western Vice President, Al Becco and Secretary-Treasurer, Charlie Averill.

The resolution endorsing Obama highlighted the repeated failures of the current administration's domestic and foreign policy including the failure to adequately help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, the increase in our national debt and the ill-timed and mismanaged invasion of Iraq. Delegates also voiced frustration with the present administration's failure to meet the health and educational needs of the American people while continuing its calculated attack on Social Security and attempts to privatize Medicare.

Obama's Republican opponent, John McCain, offers a repeat of the same Bush administration policies that have assaulted the quality of life of working families and retirees, the delegates said. The November election, the resolution stated, is an opportunity to elect a president and Congress that can together stop the nation's deterioration and

rebuild an America that meets the needs of its people and restores our reputation as a leader in the society of nations.

The delegates pledged to commit SOAR to do all it can to elect Obama as the next president. They said Obama has demonstrated that he has a broad understanding of the situations we face, a vision of how change can be achieved and in what directions our nation must move, and an ability both to inform and inspire our people.

In addition to the SOAR officers, members elected to the SOAR Executive Board include William Moore (District 1); Milio Rinna (District 2); Gerald Edwards (District 3); Jim Bickhart (District 4); Robert Saumure (District 5); Daniel McNeil (District 6); Steve Skvara (District 7); Jack Casparriello (District 8); Jim Swindle (District 9); Denise Edwards (District 10); Dave Trach (District 11); Bob Rankin (District 12); Dan Henry (District 13); Jack Munro (IWA Division); and, Bill Gibbons (PACE Division).

Retired International President Lynn Williams serves as SOAR President Emeritus. Larry Spitz and George Edwards serve as emeritus members of the SOAR executive board. Ken Kovack continues in his role as Legislative Director and Bob Pryor advises the Board on benefit issues.

For more information on the Conference see page 2

Ninth International SOAR Conference

Bally's Hotel – Las Vegas, Nevada June 27- 28, 2008



Ninth International SOAR Conference

Bally's Hotel – Las Vegas, Nevada June 27- 28, 2008

SOAR kicked off its Ninth International Conference with welcoming remarks from District 12 Director, Terry Bonds. He thanked the leaders of SOAR for all their dedication and leadership while they were active members of the USW, and paid tribute to their continued involvement with the union and all of its activities. Director Bonds emphasized the need to stay focused on the November election. He stated, "America's been through a lot in the last seven years with the current regime in Washington; retirees understand that more than the rest of our union. It is time to change America. Retirees will play a big part in winning this election and taking back our country."

SOAR President C.L. "Connie" Entrekin, gave an inspirational address motivating the delegates to continue their efforts organizing new members and to carry on with their efforts to activate and mobilize their membership in all of the struggles facing retirees and the USW. He told the delegates, "The organization is growing, but not fast enough. It is imperative that we share our passion for the labor movement and SOAR and reach out to our most recent retirees, the 55-65 age group, to grow SOAR into the largest union retiree organization in North America."

He urged their continued support around legislative issues that are important for seniors and working families, such as stopping the privatization of Social Security in the United States and continuing the fight to preserve the National Health

Care program in Canada. President Entrekin encouraged the delegates, "When we leave this conference, let's set out to change our country this November by educating our members, children, grandchildren and communities on the importance of this election. We are the generation that will take back what years of corporate greed have stolen from the working middle class."

USW International President Leo W. Gerard, addressed the delegates and reviewed the state of the union with them. President Gerard paid tribute and honor to President Emeritus Lynn Williams as a mentor and leader, while acknowledging the continued good works of President Entrekin.

President Gerard told the delegates "This week at the USW Convention we will make history three times. By creating the first global union, Workers Uniting, we will take labor's fight for benefits, wages and the right to organize anywhere around the world. Wednesday morning we will send a signal that turns the corporate world upside down! Additionally, we will increase our strike benefit levels so that we have the resources to live up to a set of values created by your generation; the people who built this union would expect no less. The last, but certainly not least historical event to take place, will be the addition to the Union's Executive Board. We will create a new position of Vice President at-Large, to be filled by a woman. Speaking of our ability to set history together, this is our chance to elect and make history with the first African-American President and take back the White House! We owe the future to our kids and our grandkids! Because we sacrificed and stood to fight when it was time to fight, we can be proud of every minute spent building this union."

President Gerard thanked SOAR for all that it does on behalf of our union's retirees and active members, and urged their continued support of the union's political and legislative agendas.

USW Secretary-Treasurer Jim English addressed the delegation, thanking them for the tremendous work done and

SOAR in ACTION

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AT THE PODIUM



C.L. "Connie" Entrekin
SOAR President



Jim English
USW Secretary-Treasurer



Ken Neumann
National Director for Canada

that they continue to do. In his remarks he stated, “The future looks very exciting. After suffering under rule of the worst president of this country, we have the opportunity to create a progressive majority in the house and senate, to put in the White House a man who is not only a friend of labor but who will go a long way towards starting the last chapter in this country’s history of race relations. An important side effect is that this election has generated interest and activity among younger workers and if the election is anything like the primary, there will be a tremendous outpouring of minorities and young voters in this country. The USW has the best political operation in the labor movement and we will be more active than ever before.”

President Emeritus Lynn Williams, addressing the Executive Board, began his remarks by saying how thrilled he was that Connie accepted the position of SOAR President and advised of the great work Connie is doing. “SOAR offers a wonderful opportunity for everyone to serve regardless of their previous levels of participation,” stated President Emeritus Williams. “Many in the room found activism as retirees through SOAR, continuing the work of the labor movement and using this opportunity to shine.”

President Emeritus Williams encouraged the board members to share their passion for the labor movement and SOAR so as to inspire interest in the retiree organization by our younger retirees. “It is very important that we engage those who are full of energy and bring them into activism and leadership as well. SOAR is to be considered the Honor Roll of this union.”

National Director for Canada, Ken Neumann, spoke on the historical nature of the upcoming USW Convention with the creation of a global union, Strike and Defense Fund increase and a woman on the International Executive Board. Other speakers at the Conference were Vice President Fred Redmond; Vice President of National Paper Bargaining, Jon Geenen; district directors Michael Bolton; Steve Hunt; Bill Pienta; Jim Robinson; Stan Johnson; and, Mickey Breaux. Also addressing the delegates were: Holly Hart, USW Legislative Director; George Kourpias, President of the Alliance for Retired Americans; and a number of USW international representatives who spoke about the role of SOAR in the upcoming elections.

The 122 delegates adopted resolutions supporting the following actions on major issues facing SOAR members:

- ▶ Enthusiastic endorsement of Barack Obama for President of the United States.
- ▶ Renewal of our commitment to recruit former and retired USW members into our organization.
- ▶ Endorse, support, participate and partner with the Alliance for American Manufacturing’s effort for the mutual benefit of both SOAR and the AAM.
- ▶ Support and recognize the Alliance for Retired Americans as a viable and active retiree organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of retired workers.
- ▶ Strongly oppose the privatization of Social Security and the diversion of payroll taxes from the Social Security Trust Fund to private investment accounts.
- ▶ Repeal of the 2003 Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act if a viable alternative can be passed into law.
- ▶ Support legislation for a universal national health care system that will serve all Americans.
- ▶ Fight to preserve and improve the Canadian health care system.
- ▶ Labor Law Reform.
- ▶ Continue to oppose trade policies and trade agreements that do not include provisions to protect workers’ rights.
- ▶ Increase Political Action within our SOAR chapters.
- ▶ Fight to improve pension security and changes to the bankruptcy laws in both our countries that would guarantee workers priority over any other claims in bankruptcy proceedings.

The conference came to its successful end with USW Vice President Fred Redmond administering the oath of office to the newly elected Executive Board.

AT THE PODIUM



Lynn R. Williams
President Emeritus



Leo W. Gerard
USW International President



George Kourpias
President, Alliance for Retired Americans



Holly Hart
USW Legislative Director



Fred Redmond
USW Vice President

SOAR PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST

Calls for single-payer health care system

June 19, 2008—With the assistance of crutches, Steve Skvara District 7 executive board member walked with demonstrators gathered on Main Street across from Humana's corporate headquarters. An auto accident left the 61-year-old with a compound fracture in one of his knees and reliance on the crutches. While he has health insurance, he said his wife does not.

Skvara joined more than 50 demonstrators who want health insurance to be available for all Americans regardless of economic status or employment. He said the American people are at fault for letting the government fail to provide health coverage to all citizens

and instead give health insurance corporations too much power in deciding who gets health care.

The gathering was part of the National Day of Protest Against Health Insurance Corporations, an event sponsored by a collaboration of groups that support a national health insurance program. The demonstration was timed to coincide with America's Health Insurance Plans' national convention in San Francisco. The group is a "national association representing nearly 1,300 insurance companies," the group's Web site said. Demonstrations like the one in Louisville were planned in more than a dozen cities, including New York,

Stephen P. Skvara, USW District 7 SOAR executive board member addresses demonstrators in front of Humana's Corporate Headquarters in Louisville, Ky.



Chicago, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, according to a press release from Physicians for a National Health Program, one of the groups backing the events.

Steelworkers Reach Settlement with FreightCar America

To Provide Pensions and Severance Pay to Johnstown Workers When Company Laid Off Workers to Avoid Pension Eligibility

Johnstown, Pa.—The United Steelworkers announced June 26, 2008 that a tentative settlement has been reached with FreightCar America (FCA) that will provide pensions to 201 union members and severance pay to another 110 who were laid off in 2007. The settlement will resolve a lawsuit supported by the union which claimed that FCA unlawfully laid off employees in 2007 in order to deprive them of pension benefits, and will resolve an arbitration won by the union which found that the company violated the contract by laying off employees with 20 or more years of service.

Most of the affected workers were hired during 1988-89 and were nearing pension eligibility. FreightCar's CEO called the union committee into his office during the summer of 2006 and told them that he would not allow the workers to accrue enough seniority to qualify for pensions.

In addition to the mass layoffs, the company ceased rail-car production, removed equipment and assigned the work to other locations.

The union immediately supported an ERISA lawsuit asserting that layoffs motivated by a desire to prevent pension eligibility constituted unlawful discrimination. In January, Judge Kim Gibson of Johnstown federal district court ordered laid off employees reinstated. The order was

appealed by the company, which also sought to vacate the arbitration award.

The settlement will resolve all outstanding issues between the parties, and grant pensions to workers who would have worked until the end of 2009 and qualified for a pension. Most pensions include retiree health care as well as a \$400 monthly supplement until age 62. It also provides \$750,000 to be disbursed to union members; settles all outstanding grievances with monetary payments to individual members; and recognizes an official plant shutdown date of May 15, 2008 for the purposes of collective bargaining, providing vested pension benefits to additional employees.

"We've gotten justice for our members," said USW Local 2635 unit president Jeff Anderson. "My only regret is that we've lost jobs in Johnstown because the company took our technology and our processes and moved them to other locations.

"We've been making rail cars in Johnstown since 1901," he said. "History will record that we were noted for making two things—freight cars and company millionaires," he said. "Now, both are gone but we have salvaged fair treatment for our members with this settlement."

The settlement must be approved by the Court.

Bill Gibbons Appointed to SOAR Executive Board



USW International President Leo W. Gerard appointed Bill Gibbons to the SOAR Executive Board as the PACE Division Representative. He recently retired from the Union as Co-Director of District 7. Prior to the merger in 2005, Bill served as Vice President and Regional Director of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE) Region Nine (covering the states of Illinois, Indiana and Michigan).

Bill began his union career in 1961 when he went to work at International Paper in Chicago. He served as steward and later as president of Local 6-1210 of the United Papermakers and Paperworkers Union. He was active in volunteer organizing and enrolled in labor education courses, and is a graduate of Roosevelt University's Labor Education program.

In 1966, Bill was appointed International Representative. He represented local unions in northern Illinois. As a servicing staff, he participated in a number of successful organizing campaigns and handled numerous special assignments throughout the union.

Gibbons served as a trustee to the International Union's Employee Pension Fund and as an officer and president of the Representatives and Organizers Union (ROU) for over 20 years. He is a member of SOAR Chapter 30-18.

Bill and his wife Janice, who has supported him throughout his 40-year union career, enjoy spending time with their family. They have three daughters and seven grandchildren.

Al Becco Appointed SOAR Western Vice President



USW International President Leo W. Gerard appointed District 12 Coordinator Al Becco, SOAR Western Region Vice President. This is a new position on the Board created to better serve our membership in the Western United States.

Al began his union career shortly after he graduated from high school at Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I). In 1952, he was drafted and served in the United States Navy during the Korean Conflict. Shortly after being discharged, Al went back to work at CF&I. It wasn't long before he became active in Local 3267. He held various positions with his local union including grievance representative and president, the position he held when he retired in 1986.

After retirement Al became active in SOAR and the Democratic Party. He is currently President of Chapter 38-3, and has been honored twice as Democrat of the year. Al is 1st Vice Chair of the Pueblo County Democratic Party. In 2004 he was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention for John Kerry. In 2005 he was named Labor Leader of the year by the Southern Colorado Labor Council where he continues to serve on their executive board.

Al and his wife, Norma Jean, have been married thirty-one years. Al likes to play golf on occasion, and both he and Norma Jean enjoy fly-fishing. They've been blessed with three daughters, a son, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

SOAR Welcomes Three New District Representatives to the Executive Board

The delegates from Districts 4, 10 and 12 elected new executive board members at the International SOAR Conference June 28, 2008.

Jim Bickhart

a member of Chapter 4-1 in Dunkirk, New York and District Coordinator was elected to represent District 4, taking over the spot vacated by H. Mickey Berger who did not run for re-election in order to spend more time with his family.

Denise Edwards

Recording Secretary of Chapter 20-15 in Pittsburgh, Pa. was elected to represent District 10, replacing Jean Friday who decided not to run in order to devote more time to her position as President of the Pennsylvania Alliance for Retired Americans.

Bob Rankin

District 12 Coordinator who resides in Carson, Calif. was elected to represent District 12. Bob took over the reins from Tino Torres who chose not to run in order to devote more time to political and legislative issues in his home state of Arizona.

Look for the biographies of the new board members in upcoming issues.

The SOAR Executive Board would like to thank the out-going members for their years of service to SOAR and look forward to their continued support.

Occupational Disease Clinic Helps More Than 550 Current and Retired Steelworkers

Sault Ste. Marie, ON—

Thanks to occupational health clinics sponsored by USW Local 2251 for current and retired USW members and their families, SOAR members had the opportunity to learn whether any of their health concerns are work-related and possibly compensable.

In addition to helping past and present USW members and their families with compensation claims, the clinic provided necessary proof for the urgent need to establish a registry of occupational illnesses.

Cancer rates in Sault Ste. Marie are four times the Ontario average. It is suspected that past or current working conditions have contributed to illnesses such as cancer and heart disease, as well as many other chronic medical conditions.

USW Retirees Get Answers

Retired 76-year-old USW member, Ronald Barrow, who traveled from British Columbia, told the Sault Star that he saw the clinic as an opportunity to get some answers. Barrow, who suffers from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease said, “If it hadn’t been for this clinic, I don’t know where I could have turned for some answers on whether my condition was work-related.”

Another retiree who underwent surgery in 1989 to remove a brain tumor said, “I didn’t connect the dots that my health problems could be the result of toxic exposure until a few months ago, when the union began its occupational disease campaign.

“I am hoping to at least get some confirmation that all I’ve gone



More than 550 current and retired Steelworkers took part in an Occupational Health Clinic sponsored by USW Local 2251.

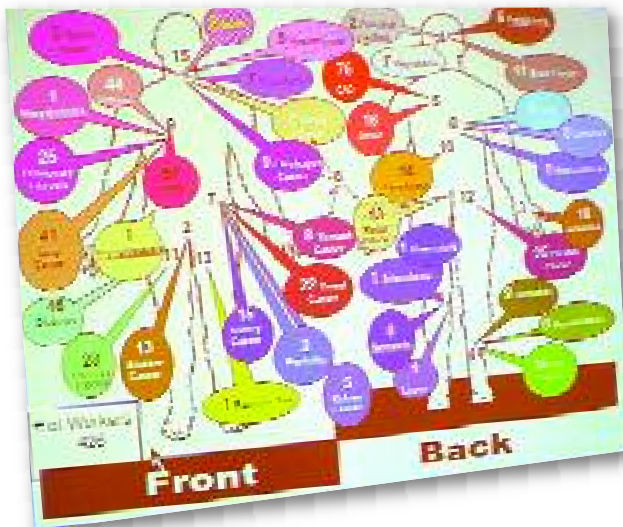
through is work-related. If it is work-related then I want my story on record so maybe my experience can help someone else in the future.”

Clinic Provides Evidence for Occupational Illness Registry

A technique called body-mapping to identify health concerns showed 453 diseases among 438 participants, said USW Local 2251 President Mike DaPrat.

New Democratic Party MPP Andrea Horvath and MP Tony Martin have introduced private members’ bills in the Ontario legislature and in Parliament calling on their respective governments to establish an occupational health registry to require employers to report information about accidents, occupational diseases and other hazards.

“Workers have the right to know the safety record of employers as well as trace the source of an illness,” Martin said, crediting the USW for the registry idea. “Governments have an obligation to make job sites safer.”



END MEANS TESTING

Say SOAR Members to Homecare Hearings

TORONTO — In a submission presented on June 17 to the Ontario Health Coalition's cross-province hearings into homecare reform, SOAR outlined its concerns with the present system and made recommendations for improvements.

SOAR called for an end to means testing and demanded centrally standardized regulations be established across the province so that all citizens would receive the same high quality care no matter where they live.

The brief also addressed the controversial issue of competitive bidding. First, SOAR demanded that all for-profit organizations be excluded. Second, SOAR recommended an end to the bidding process that undermines staff-patient relations and jeopardizes continuity of proper care. Competition should be based solely on quality of care not cost.

SOAR called on the government to set funding on a per-capita basis. A provincial advisory committee made up of health care providers, patients and patient advocates would develop the funding formula, regulations and levels of patient care.

SOAR condemned the current system for its lack of continuity of care caused by contracts being changed from one provider to another. To alleviate this SOAR called for labour law protection for workers in homecare similar to other sectors. SOAR also recommended strengthening ties between home-care and other social service agencies.

SOAR noted that the current staff shortage can be addressed by providing employment stability and decent wages.

SOAR in Canada Condemns Colombian Trade Deal

In June all Canadian SOAR chapter presidents and recording secretaries received a note from the USW Canadian National Office asking them to sign a petition demanding that Canada not enter into a trade agreement with Colombia.

New Democratic Party MPs Peter Julian and Libby Davies are spearheading the campaign in the House of Commons. Julian learned from one Canadian negotiator that if a Colombian trade unionist is murdered the Colombian government would be obliged to make a payment into a "cooperation fund" much like a traffic ticket.

You can help stop human rights abuses in Colombia by visiting Peter Julian's web site <http://www.peterjulian.ca> and downloading the petition or you can send an e-mail to your own MP by using the e-lobby feature of the USW Canadian web site www.usw.ca.

CHINA CHEATS

Members of SOAR Chapter 10-5 in Western Pennsylvania joined other Steelworkers from five local unions in Pennsylvania and Ohio in Washington, D.C. to show their support of the steel pipe industry in its trade case against China.

The United Steelworkers and the U.S. steel pipe manufacturers have been fighting the increased amount of imported pipe entering this country from China. Chinese steel pipe imports have risen from 10,000 tons in 2002 to 750,000 tons in 2007. An increase of nearly 6,900 percent! In this short time 25 percent of American workers in this segment of the industry lost their jobs.

SOAR members along with active Steelworkers attended the International Trade Commission (ITC) hearing. The ITC ruled unanimously that the Chinese government was unfairly subsidizing the U.S. steel pipe industry and that the Chinese were selling their steel pipe in the United States far below their production costs, in a practice known



SOAR and USW members in front of the United States International Trade Commission Building in Washington, D.C.

as "dumping." The ruling resulted in significant duties placed on imported Chinese steel pipe.

United Steelworkers President Leo W. Gerard called the commission ruling a major victory that should send a clear message to China and American politicians that "China is a trade cheat."

SOAR Chapter 31-9 *Keeps Memorial Day Massacre Memory Alive*

By Scott Marshall

SOAR District 7 Coordinator

In 1937, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, signed a contract with U.S. Steel for \$5.00 a day and an 8-hour day with time and one half for overtime. It was assumed that Republic Steel, part of what was known as “little steel” in those days, would follow suit and recognize the union.

When they didn’t, S.W.O.C. called a strike against Republic, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, and Inland. Most shut down operations, but Republic Steel in South Chicago continued production. They brought in non-union employees and housed them in the plant to continue production. Republic also had a cozy relationship with the Chicago police department.

On May 30, 1937, 1,000 strikers and sympathizers marched peacefully toward the plant from Sam’s Place (a popular neighborhood tavern that the S.W.O.C. used for their meetings) behind two American flags. 200 policemen were waiting for them. Shots were fired into the air and then into the crowd. Ten died, 30 more were shot. The gunshot wounds were in the back and side. The strike was called off. But, their heroic actions lived on. In 1942, “little steel” signed their first contract with the Steelworkers union.

SOAR Chapter 31-9 in South Chicago holds an annual Memorial Day event to celebrate and keep alive the heroic actions of those brave 1937 strikers who paved the way for our union. Our SOAR chapter carries on the traditions of USW Local 1033. Local 1033 was the local that grew out of this struggle to organize Republic Steel, later bought out by LTV Steel and then Republic Engineered Steel.

This year’s event was special because, through a lot of hard work by our chapter and the local Chicago Alderman’s office, we were able to have a permanent monument erected in memory of the ten who were killed in 1937. The monument now stands in the newly created Memorial Park right across the street from where the Massacre took place.

In addition, USW International President Leo W. Gerard was on hand to dedicate the monument. President Gerard praised the fighting spirit of the 1937 strikers and called on the union to remember and take inspiration from their willingness to fight. He noted that no one can guarantee victory in a struggle, but said if you don’t fight, defeat is certain. Gerard said that today workers and our union are called on to fight anew much like the historic battles to win industrial unionism in the 1930s. “Today the issues are global and require a fighting global response,” he said. “We are a union that will, once again, answer the call.”

This year’s event featured a rally in the former Local 1033 Hall including moving presentations and readings. The

District 7 Women of Steel, featuring several SOAR members, gave a dramatic presentation of what happened to the ten who were shot on that day and why they were there. Outside the hall, a large crowd assembled to dedicate the monument. Speakers included Ed Sadlowski, president of Chapter 31-9; District Director Jim Robinson; Steve Skvara, SOAR District 7 executive board member; and Alderman John Pope from Chicago’s 10th Ward.



Pictured above is the Memorial Day Monument across the street from where the Memorial Day Massacre took place in 1937.

Pictured from left to right: Bill Gibbons, SOAR Pace Division Executive Board Member; Jose Gudino, District 7, Sub-district 1 Director; Ed Sadlowski, President SOAR Chapter 31-9 South Chicago and former District 31 Director; Jim Robinson, District 7 Director; Leo W. Gerard, USW International President; Frank Greco, Vice President SOAR Chapter 31-9; and John Pope, Alderman of the 10th Ward Chicago where the Memorial is located.

District 7 SOAR Supports Georgia-Pacific Workers

On July 11, SOAR members joined Georgia-Pacific Steelworkers at the plant in Wheatfield, Indiana to protest the company's refusal to bargain in good faith.

Over a year ago, the workers voted to be represented by the United Steelworkers. The union and Georgia-Pacific had been negotiating their first contract for over a year when SOAR was asked to help in the first of several scheduled informational pickets.

Even though Georgia-Pacific increased the price of the wallboard manufactured at the Wheatland facility, the company has continued to demand wage cuts and other concessions.



SOAR members in the photo are left to right: Mike O'Brien, District 7 Sub-Director; Charlie Smith; Jerry Konja; Steve Skvara, District 7 Board Member; Charlie Averill, SOAR Secretary-Treasurer; Dan Frost; and John Hupke.

Chapters to Elect Officers

While voters across the United States go to the polls to pick their national leaders, SOAR members will be voting in their own elections, selecting officers for all our SOAR chapters.

According to Article 6 of the SOAR Chapter By-laws, elective chapter officers are: President; Vice President; Secretary-Treasurer (which can be separated in large chapters); three Trustees; and if provided for, a Financial Secretary. All positions serve four-year terms.

Nomination of officers is to be held at the chapter meeting held in October, with the election to be held at the November meeting.

No member is allowed to hold more than one office in a chapter, although chapter officers may serve on the SOAR Executive Board or as a District Coordinator. To hold a chapter office, members must be in good standing at the time of nomination and election.

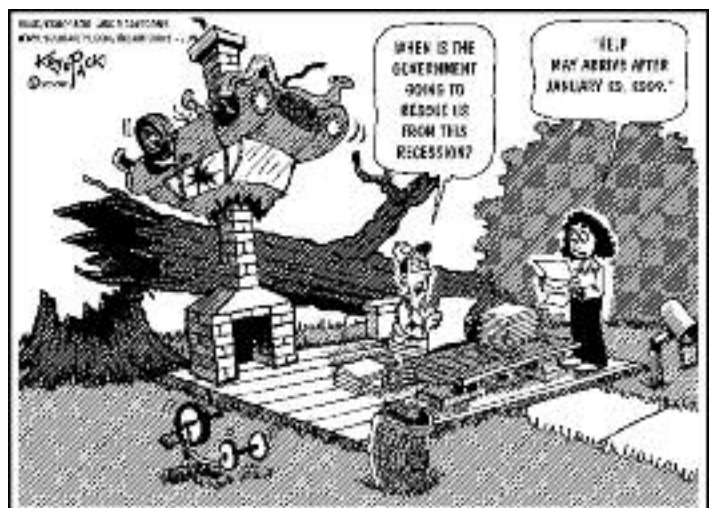
If a chapter does not regularly meet during October, it must hold both the nomination and election of officers during the November meeting.

Any vacancies caused by ineligibility, death or resignation shall be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the chapter executive board until the next election, except that if the vacancy is in the office of President, the Vice President shall serve as President for the remainder of the term.

IRS — It's still not too late to get a STIMULUS CHECK

It is not too late for those who haven't yet filed tax returns to receive an economic stimulus check. The tax agency will continue processing tax returns and issuing stimulus checks for much of the year.

In particular, it urges the five million Social Security recipients and veterans who don't normally need to file returns to do so this year so they qualify for checks. It also urges those who received extensions for filing to file by October 15 to ensure they receive a payment before the end of the year.



McCain Skips Crucial Medicare Vote— Elects to Stay on the Campaign Trail

Recently, John McCain, the Republican presidential nominee, was the only senator to skip a crucial vote on the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. Democratic presidential nominee, Senator Barack Obama, was joined by 68 senators from both political parties in passing the Act by a vote of 69-30.

However, despite the overwhelming bipartisan support for the bill, John McCain remained indifferent to the needs of senior citizens. Like John McCain, President Bush did not see the need to help seniors and instead stood by his cronies at the big insurance companies and vetoed this legislation to ensure their profits continue to increase on the backs of seniors.

This is not McCain's first missed critical vote for Medicare, as he was absent before in 2007 on a vote for a piece of legislation which would mandate aggressive bargaining for lower prescription drug prices for seniors. Additionally, he openly attacked Medicare in 2005 when he voted to cut \$6.4 billion in Medicare funding.

When it comes to issues affecting our aging population, once again John McCain has proven himself aloof—out of touch with everyday Americans and more in line with Bush and his disastrous domestic policies. This country needs to care for its elderly, and to do so we need to elect a leader who has their best intentions in mind. That man is Barack Obama!



SOAR Honors Top Achievers



Pictured left to right receiving their awards: Don Badie; Jim Bickhart; Rod Bezo; Lena Sutton accepting the award for Ray Silenzi; Ralph Merkel; and SOAR President C.L. "Connie" Entrekin.

The highlight of the SOAR Conference was the presentation of awards to our activists for outstanding performance and leadership in building the organization.

SOAR President C.L. "Connie" Entrekin presented the awards to the five activists recognized by the Executive Board as true leaders, who received a SOAR wristwatch for their good works.

VOLUNTEER AWARD: Rod Bezo – volunteered his time to serve as the Canadian National Coordinator after he retired from the union. He served in that capacity for over six years.

ORGANIZING AWARD: Jim Bickhart – District 4 Coordinator and recently elected District Board Member organized five new chapters since the last Conference.

LEADERSHIP AWARD: Ray Silenzi – District 6, for his outstanding leadership during the fight to preserve pension and benefits during the Stelco bankruptcy.

LEADERSHIP AWARD: Don Badie – District 9 Coordinator, for his continued involvement in the political battles in Florida and his leadership role in building the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans.

SOLIDARITY AWARD: Ralph Merkel – District 11 Coordinator, for his efforts in keeping the container industry retirees informed, engaged and together throughout the benefit litigation process.

KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON THE CANDIDATES

AAM ACTION'S GENERAL ELECTION PLAN

AAM General Election Strategy

AAM Action (formerly the ReUNION Project) played a key role during the primary election season in pushing the presidential candidates to discuss U.S. trade policy. A series of John Ratzenberger "Keep it Made in America" town hall meetings, an April 14 Presidential Forum in Pittsburgh, and scores of smaller town meetings throughout the country brought the trade enforcement issue to the forefront of the primary campaign issue list. As we move into the general election, AAM Action isn't letting up.

In order to motivate the President and Congress to take action to save American manufacturing, the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) and its AAM Action field staff are working to educate voters about the importance of saving U.S. manufacturing jobs. Grassroots action and vocal concern from voters is what drives a debate, and the AAM team is gearing up for outreach throughout the states where trade and manufacturing issues are a real factor. Both AAM and AAM Action are nonpartisan, so efforts will be focused on asking both congressional and senatorial candidates to state their positions on trade enforcement. By holding meetings and candidate forums, along with other media efforts, hopefully the case will be made that trade enforcement is a key piece of turning America's economy around.

We will be asking you to help us get the message out when AAM Action's efforts reach your part of the country.

"The Little Blue Book"



AAM has just released a new primer, "The Little Blue Book of Big Trade Problems." Designed as a quick pocket reference guide, the book provides answers to anyone wanting to know the facts about the poorly enforced U.S. trade laws and its negative impact on the American economy.

You can order a free copy of the "Little Blue Book" by calling our toll-free number: (866) 365-2203.

Trade Enforcement Legislation Difficulties

AAM and other trade enforcement advocates have been closely following efforts in the House of Representatives to craft a new trade enforcement bill. Progress has been made, but an actual piece of legislation has been slow to emerge. Election-year politics and the declining economy play a role in all of this. Even though polling of the American people shows increasing support for fair trade policies, the difficulty in passing a viable bill means that Congress needs to hear a healthy dose of pro-fair trade messages. AAM Action will be out there asking the tough questions about trade and educating voters as to the importance of enforcing U.S. trade law. It's up to all of us to be committed and continue to keep a spotlight on manufacturing so that the next Congress and President will be able to act quickly and decisively.



AAM Action staff pictured left to right: Meghan McKeefry (Mich./Wis.); Ken Poweski (Ohio); Lou Delatore (W.Va.); Mark Musho (Eastern Pa.); Mike Mitchell (Ill./Ind.); and Mickey Bolt (Western Pa.).