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Volume 6/1

Winter 2011

USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

A Powerful Voice for Workers



STEELWORKERS
of the **FUTURE**

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INSIDE USW @ WORK

“I believe talk radio should inform, not inflame. I think it should entertain, not demean. I think it should elevate political discourse, not debate it.”

Bill Press

Host of the nationally syndicated Bill Press Show



TIRE TARIFFS UPHELD

In a huge victory for the USW and tire workers, the World Trade Organization has upheld import duties that the union sought on unfairly priced tires made in China.



WORLD CLASS WORK FORCE

With the USW's help, union-represented workers in steel are learning the skills they need for the jobs of the future.



MEDIA ALTERNATIVES

In this age of big media controlled by big business, there are a growing number of alternative outlets for legitimate in-depth news that affects working families and their communities.



OIL INDUSTRY REGULATION

To improve on-the-job safety in the oil sector, the USW calls for dramatic changes in how the United States regulates the industry, from exploration and development to refining.

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ON THE COVER

USW members Stan Bobro, left, and Gregg Estok participate in classroom exercises as part of the MTE training program at U.S. Steel's Mon Valley Works near Pittsburgh. They would wear more protective equipment in the mill. USW Photo by Steve Dietz.

USW@Work

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Fighting for Retirees

When I retired from Federal Mogul in 1996 I received union negotiated medical insurance with my retirement benefits.

In June 2010, I was informed that the employer was discontinuing these benefits.

My local union went to bat for us retirees and, through the efforts of our former local president George Fisher and current president Rick Clark, our benefits have been restored.

It is great to know my union does not forget it retirees.

I personally wish to thank both of these good men and the USW.

*Bob Barton
Local 1035 retiree
Lancaster, Pa.*

Speaking Out for Workers

I recently saw International President Leo W. Gerard on The Ed Schultz Show. He was great! We need more people like Leo and "Big Eddy" to speak out for working people!

As you know, we are getting killed!

Thank you for standing up for the working people of this country.

Americans used to take sides with the little guy – the underdog. You still do.

Thank you.

*Matt Becker
Phoenix, Ariz.*

Promote Small Business

You're doing a fine job, *USW@Work*!

My mind goes back to the day of the mom and pop grocery and retail outlets of America - our humble beginnings.

Some of those small businesses came to be the largest and greatest union shops in the world, built on hard-nosed principals and down-to-earth good, Godly ethics.

This country was built strong on small business. Small business needs to be promoted and backed by our banks and local governments.

America strong, America belongs, and if Americans need to sacrifice to keep the doors of our small businesses open, then we should.

*Daniel Raeder
Local 2-187
Shawano, Wis.*

Thank You Active Members

I don't know if this is the proper place for this, but I wanted to express, in some way, to the active members in the USW how much we appreciate those yearly checks from the VEBA (Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association) trust fund.

They really help to cover the increasing costs involved in paying for our medical coverage. We realize that this benefit we receive each year is available because of the generosity of the active members. We hope they are aware of how much this benefit is appreciated.

Thanks again!

*Don and Annette Bonafede
SOAR Local 3144
Corfu, N.Y.*

Buy American, Drive American

As a World War II veteran and member of the USW for 34 years, I really get angry when I see union members or retirees buying and driving foreign cars from Japan and Korea.

How can people say they support workers when I see so many union members - police officers, firefighters, teachers, government employees, nurses, airline workers and others - buying foreign and non-union products?

During the Toyota congressional hearings, six of our elected representatives admitted driving non-union Toyotas, and yet they campaign at union halls every two years claiming to support American workers.

I'm glad I haven't shopped at Wal-Mart in seven years, and I don't understand why other union workers and retirees go there to buy foreign tires for their Japanese and Korean cars. It turns me off.

*Frank Benteman
Local 307 retiree
Topeka, Kan.*

Be Union and Buy Union

I feel as a retired union member, we should support our local unions.

Those who led local unions in every state have been honorable people over the last half century of the labor movement's existence. Being humans, mistakes were made. But I really believe that the occasional errors were of the head, not of the heart. Every union member owes a debt to all of them.

Instead of asking what the union can do for you, perhaps we can turn it around. To paraphrase the famous remarks of the late President John F. Kennedy, ask not what your union can do for you, ask what you can do for your union.

Remember the union is you. Be union and buy union.

*Richard "Windy" Vogt
President Local 1115 Retirees Club
Waukegan, Ill.*

SPEAKING

Out

USW active and retired members and their families are invited to "speak out" on these pages. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length.

Mail to:
USW@Work
Five Gateway Center,
Pittsburgh PA 15222
or e-mail:
editor@usw.org

In a huge victory for the USW and tire workers in the United States, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has upheld import duties that President Obama imposed on unfairly priced tires made in China.

“This is a major victory for the United States and particularly for American workers and businesses,” said United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk, who announced the ruling on Dec. 13.

The three years of duties worth an estimated \$1.8 billion had been challenged by China at the WTO, the organization that oversees the rules of global trade.

Since the 2009 imposition of the tariffs, U.S. domestic tire production has increased, tire producers have made new capital investments and new jobs have been created for American tire workers.

Trade rules can work

International President Leo W. Gerard, the driving force behind the USW trade complaint that led to the tariffs, said the decision “confirms that the rules of trade, when vigorously enforced, can be made to work for working people.”

It is significant that the WTO panel dismissed all of China’s complaints and ruled that Washington was within its rights to place the duties on passenger and light truck tires, Kirk said.

“We have said all along that our imposition of duties on Chinese tires was fully consistent with our WTO obligations,” he added.

China, however, immediately criticized the ruling, saying the safeguard measures adopted by the United States on its tire exports were protectionist. Either country has until May 24 to appeal the verdict to an appellate hearing panel of the WTO.

The tariffs started on Sept. 26, 2009 at a rate of 35 percent. They then fell to 30 percent in the second year beginning Sept. 26, 2010. The final year’s rate, to start this September, will be 25 percent.

As part of China’s acceptance into the WTO in 2001, its leaders agreed that if the

United States experienced import surges of Chinese goods that caused market disruption, the United States would be allowed to limit the imports of those goods.

Breathing room

The USW filed the complaint under Section 421 of the Trade Act of 1974, which was designed to give domestic industries and their workers breathing room from import surges that disrupt markets.

“The USW has never shied from using every tool we have available to fight for fair trade and to fight for our members’ jobs,” Gerard said.

In its complaint, the USW argued that a surge of tire imports from China had cost 5,000 U.S. tire workers their jobs between 2004 and 2008 as imports of low-grade Chinese tires surged into the United States.

When the International Trade Commission (ITC) examined the surge in tire imports from China, it discovered material injury to the domestic industry through continuous declines in U.S. producer’s domestic capacity, production, shipments and employment from 2004 to 2008.

Gerard noted that President Obama is the first president to provide trade relief under Section 421 of the trade act. Obama’s Republican predecessor, George W. Bush, declined to impose quotes on steel wire hangers and other products imported from China, saying they would have an adverse impact on the U.S. economy

“We applaud the Obama administration for standing up and defending American jobs in its original decision to impose relief and in its strong defense of that action at the WTO,” Gerard said.

“We look forward to continue working with the administration to take full advantage of all enforcement tools available to us so that the benefits of fair trade are made available to all Americans.”

Second WTO victory

The WTO ruling was the second victory for the USW and the United States against China on a trade issue. A WTO dispute settlement panel last October broadly upheld Washington’s right to place tariffs on unfairly subsidized goods from China.



Big Win

WTO BACKS U.S.
TARIFFS ON CHINESE TIRES

USW COMPLAINT SPURS TALKS WITH CHINA

In response to a massive trade complaint filed by the USW, the Obama administration is seeking formal consultations with China over subsidies it gives to wind power equipment makers.

The consultation request, announced by U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk in December, is part of a three-pronged response by the administration to the union's complaint that China is stealing green manufacturing jobs by violating international rules.

Consultations are the first step in a dispute settlement process established by the World Trade Organization (WTO). If those talks fail, the United States may seek a dispute resolution panel.

"The administration has shown its commitment to enforcing the rules of trade by making it clear to the Chinese that they will pursue U.S. interests," International President Leo W. Gerard said.

Trade rules violated

The USW's 5,000-page complaint, filed with the USTR last October under Section 301 of the 1974 Trade Act, contends China's national and local governments have violated dozens of WTO rules to jump ahead of the United States as a leading producer of new energy technologies.

Those include massive trade-distorting subsidies that have crippled U.S. companies and killed jobs, export restraints, discriminatory regulations, technology transfer requirements and restrictions on access to critical raw materials controlled by China.

Gerard said the administration "faithfully consulted" with the USW as it developed the three-part approach to dealing with the union's comprehensive and complex case.

"From day one, the Steelworkers knew that the complexity and enormity of the case and the lack of transparency in the Chinese system would require that we be in this for the long haul," Gerard added.

First, the administration promised to move to resolve those matters where China could identify that its practices had changed or were changing, or where China would agree to abandon illegal activities.

Second, as Kirk's announcement demonstrated, the administration said it would initiate consultations with China where the data and evidence appear to be irrefutable

and where the case was ready to prosecute.

Finally, to improve the case and obtain relief for U.S. workers, Gerard said the administration has agreed to an ongoing work plan to investigate and evaluate the remaining issues raised by the petition.

Bowing to pressure

The Chinese have already bowed to U.S. pressure by agreeing to dismantle some objectionable practices.

During December meetings of the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, the USTR said China agreed to modify its criteria for new wind power projects.

China promised to stop requiring foreign enterprises to have experience supplying equipment to wind power projects in China. Instead, it will recognize experience outside China.

China also reconfirmed a 2009 commitment to eliminate other discriminatory provisions related to local content requirements in wind manufacturing.

During the government's investigation of the 301 complaint, China confirmed that two additional subsidy programs identified in the USW petition had been terminated.

Those programs – the Export Research and Development Fund program and the Ride the Wind program – allegedly provided prohibited export subsidies and prohibited import substitution subsidies.

The issues under consultation include several hundred million dollars in grants from a Special Fund for Wind Power Manufacturing to Chinese manufacturers of turbines and parts and components.

The Chinese grants under the program range from between \$6.7 million and \$22 million. Chinese manufacturers can receive multiple grants depending on the size of the wind turbines.

Gerard called the USTR announcement on consultations with China the first chapter in the saga of pushing China to live up to commitments made. He said the union shares the Obama administrations' goal of expanding green jobs at home.

"The promise of green jobs, however, will not become reality if China is allowed to dominate the sector through unfair and illegal actions," he said.

for
USW

TRADE WATCH

From Paper to Pipe and Tires, USW Leading Unfair Trade Fight



Auto worker walks along assembly line in Pyeontae, south of Seoul, South Korea. AP Photo/Lee Jin-man

You see them nearly everywhere on highways and television commercials. South Korean automakers - Hyundai and its corporate cousin Kia - have quickly made stunning inroads into the American marketplace.

Yet U.S. car companies have an anemic presence in South Korea, hindered by all kinds of market barriers including preferential taxes and regulations, even license plate sizes.

The Obama administration is attempting to level the playing field with South Korea by renegotiating terms of a stalled 2007 Bush-era pact.

The renewed trade agreement with South Korea, if approved by both governments, would be the second largest in history after the damaging

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) nearly two decades ago.

While lauding the administration's effort, the USW believes the renegotiated agreement announced at the end of 2010 does not go far enough to protect American industries and workers.

IEB votes to oppose

The International Executive Board (IEB) voted to oppose the tentative trade agreement after carefully examining its terms, the underlying trade relationships between the two countries and the competitive postures of the two economies.

"After thorough review, the USW Executive Board views the agreement as falling far short of what is necessary to ensure that U.S.

workers and businesses have a fair deal," the IEB said.

The USW concluded that the agreement would directly and negatively impact union members, many of whom work in glass, steel, rubber, plastics and other industries that are key suppliers to auto makers. The AFL-CIO, the nation's largest trade union federation, joined the USW in opposing the agreement.

The decision to oppose the agreement was not easy because the Obama administration has made implementation and enforcement of trade agreements a priority.

"Their efforts have advanced the interests of USW members in steel, tire, green technology and other important sectors," the IEB said. "Their record... represents a fundamental change in the

administration of trade policy and is deeply appreciated."

After President Obama announced last summer that he hoped to conclude negotiations with South Korea, the USW became deeply involved in discussions with the administration over how the Bush agreement could be improved to ensure workers would share in the benefits.

"Unfortunately, the provisions that have been agreed to fall far short of the proposals the USW identified as the minimum approach necessary to secure the union's support," the IEB said.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka also praised the Obama administration for negotiating changes that give "much needed breathing room" to the auto industry. But he said the agreement fails a broader review.

Auto parts, petroleum products, tires and iron and steel, all sectors where USW members work, were among the fastest growing imports from South Korea last year.

"We've seen U.S. multinational companies take advantage of the investment and other corporate protections in past trade deals to shift production offshore, while maintaining access to the U.S. consumer market and undermining the jobs, wages and bargaining power of Ameri-

USW, AFL-CIO OPPOSE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH

can workers,” Trumka said.

The revised deal would reduce tariffs and other trade restrictions on U.S. auto and beef exports and continue American tariffs on Korean vehicles for a limited period.

The United Auto Workers endorsed the deal, pleased that it keeps a 2.5 percent tariff on Korean autos for four years and a 25 percent tariff on Korean sport utility vehicles for six years rather than lifting them immediately, as called for in the Bush accord.

Korean market closed

And while Korean producers will see increased access to the U.S. market, the USW sees little assurance that the closed South Korean market will sufficiently open up to U.S. auto exports and other products such as steel.

There were no provisions in the agreement to reduce the flood of products that could be shipped from China and other countries to South Korea to be assembled into exports that would benefit from the terms of the free trade agreement.

Despite progress made in improving the agreement’s labor chapter, workers in both the United States and South Korea continue to face challenges to their fundamental human rights – especially freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively.

While Korean transplant operations in the United States provide welcome jobs, those assembly operations are magnets for foreign components. Domestic content in South Korean cars averages only about 40 percent.

The U.S. Commerce Department has issued a final ruling reaffirming that China was selling steel drill pipe at unfairly low prices in U.S. markets.

The Jan. 4 determination on antidumping duty (AD) and countervailing duty (CD) investigations moves the government’s probe toward a final conclusion.

The issue now goes to the International Trade Commission (ITC), an independent agency that must determine if U.S. manufacturers were injured by China’s trading practices.

International Vice President Tom Conway on Jan. 5 urged the ITC to make an affirmative determination and put American workers back on the job in the drill pipe and steel industries.

The USW represents workers who make drill pipe at U.S. Steel, TMK IPSCO and Timken. Each produces both pipe and the steel that goes into the pipe.

“So, in essence the jobs at stake include not only the jobs at the pipe mills producing green tube or the jobs at the bar mills producing drill collar, but also the jobs at the steel facilities producing the raw steel inputs,” Conway told the ITC.

Some two years into a formal economic recovery, Conway said the domestic steel industry is limping along at a 70 percent capacity utilization rate.

Matters are even worse in the drill pipe industry. The capacity utilization rate for unfinished drill pipe is 22 percent. The capacity utilization rate for finished pipe is 33 percent, Conway said.

About 600 workers, or 40 percent of the entire work force at finished drill pipe facilities, have been laid off while more than 100 workers making unfinished drill pipe, have been laid off, Conway testified.

“Certainly, the drill pipe industry and its work force – including USW workers –

cannot survive for very long with such weak capacity operating rates,” Conway said.

“But that is what will happen if drill pipe from China is permitted to enter the U.S. market without duties being imposed to address the dumping and subsidization that is causing this sector harm or the threat of harm,” he said.

Imports from China are subsidized by the Chinese government and sold at dumped prices into the U.S. market. Dumping occurs when a foreign company sells its products at a price below their cost of production in order to gain market share.

The USW believes Chinese drill pipe producers receive massive subsidies. They include low-priced raw materials from state-owned enterprises, below market rate loans from Chinese government-owned banks and tax incentives.

“U.S. workers – and in particular USW members – are forced to endure the brunt of China’s unfairly subsidized and dumped imports, so it is extremely important that the U.S. government vigorously enforce the nation’s trade laws,” Conway said.

The case began in December 2009 with a petition filed by the USW and domestic producers TMK IPSCO, of Illinois, and Texas-based VAM Drilling USA, Inc., Texas Steel Conversions and Rotary Drilling Tools.

If the ITC finds the domestic industry was harmed or threatened with harm, the Commerce Department will impose anti-dumping and countervailing duty orders designed to push prices for Chinese-made drill pipe up to levels that are competitive with those charged by U.S. producers.

Another Win

USW CALLS FOR PENALTIES ON DRILL PIPE FROM CHINA



KOREA

Silicon Metals Jobs Preserved

USW LAUDS SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN TRADE ZONE RULING

The Foreign Trade Zone Board of the U.S. Department of Commerce has rejected a request from a U.S. corporation to use silicon metal from China and Russia without paying required antidumping duties.

The USW hailed the ruling, saying it preserved the effectiveness of trade laws and trade order by preventing the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) system from being used to undermine valid antidumping and countervailing duty orders.

“This is a very significant win for us,” said International President Leo W. Gerard. “If we had lost, it would have created a very big loophole – a loophole that would have given a boost to unfairly traded imports while undermining the ef-

fectiveness of the trade laws and trade orders.”

The ruling preserves jobs for USW members who produce silicon metal at Globe Specialty Metal facilities in Niagara Falls, N.Y. and in Alloy, W.Va.

Foreign trade zones are designated sites in the United States licensed by the FTZ Board that permit companies to benefit from delayed or reduced customs duties and federal excise taxes.

Two firms unrelated to Globe had sought a special foreign trade sub zone to exempt them from paying tariffs on unfairly priced Chinese and Russian silicon metal. The FTZ Board preliminarily ruled against both companies. Then one of the two dropped its request and agreed

to pay the antidumping duties, leaving a single petitioner.

Dumped imports, first from China in the early 1990s and then from Russia in the early 2000s, were sold at prices that undercut domestic producers and caused the U.S. market to collapse.

During the second surge, Globe Metallurgical in Niagara Falls was forced to shut down and file for bankruptcy protection, a process that saw many production workers lose their jobs.

After the U.S. Commerce Department imposed antidumping duties on silicon metal imports from Russia, the Niagara Falls plant was able to restart as Globe Specialty Metals.

International President Leo W. Gerard, U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Steel Corp. executive Michael Williams joined together to send a united message: It’s time to get tougher against China’s manipulation of its currency and other unfair trading practices.

In January, the trio spoke in support of legislation that would do exactly that.

Casey has introduced the Currency Exchange Oversight Reform Act, which would make it easier for the Treasury Department to identify a currency as manipulated, triggering significant sanctions. It also would authorize the Commerce Department to take action against a nation with undervalued currency through antidumping measures or countervailing duties on imports.

When China unfairly manipulates the value of its currency, the country is able to unfairly flood the United States with artificially cheap goods. That hurts domestic manufacturers and workers,

costing tens of thousands of American jobs.

“We’re already in a trade war, we’re just not fighting back. Senator Casey is showing us a path to fight-back,” Gerard said. “China’s policy hurts all of our members in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.”

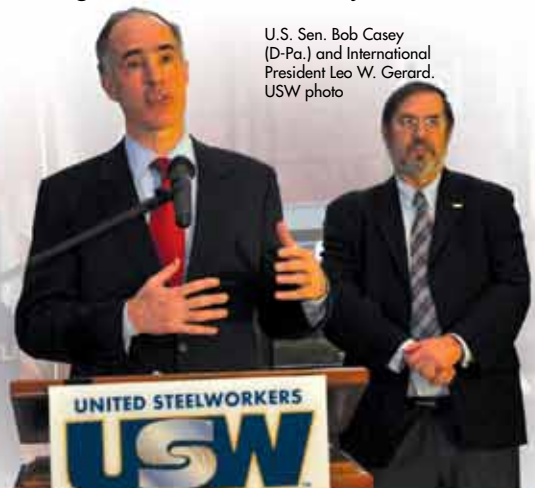
Casey (D-Pa.) has bipartisan support for the proposed legislation that was introduced recently along with Sens. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich).

“We’ve got to take action to let the Chinese government know that we’re serious,” Casey said.

The Alliance for American Manufacturing, a partnership between the USW and leading domestic manufacturers, also supports the bill and sent a message the week Chinese President Hu Jintao visited the United States with an ad that calls on President Obama to get tougher on China.

“It is critically important for President Obama to tell President Hu that the time has come for a more balanced economic relationship,” AAM Executive Director Scott Paul said.

“Currency manipulation, market-distorting subsidies, and harmful barriers to trade must be eliminated for the benefit of a global economic recovery.”



U.S. Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) and International President Leo W. Gerard. USW photo

USW, BUSINESS JOIN CASEY IN SAYING:

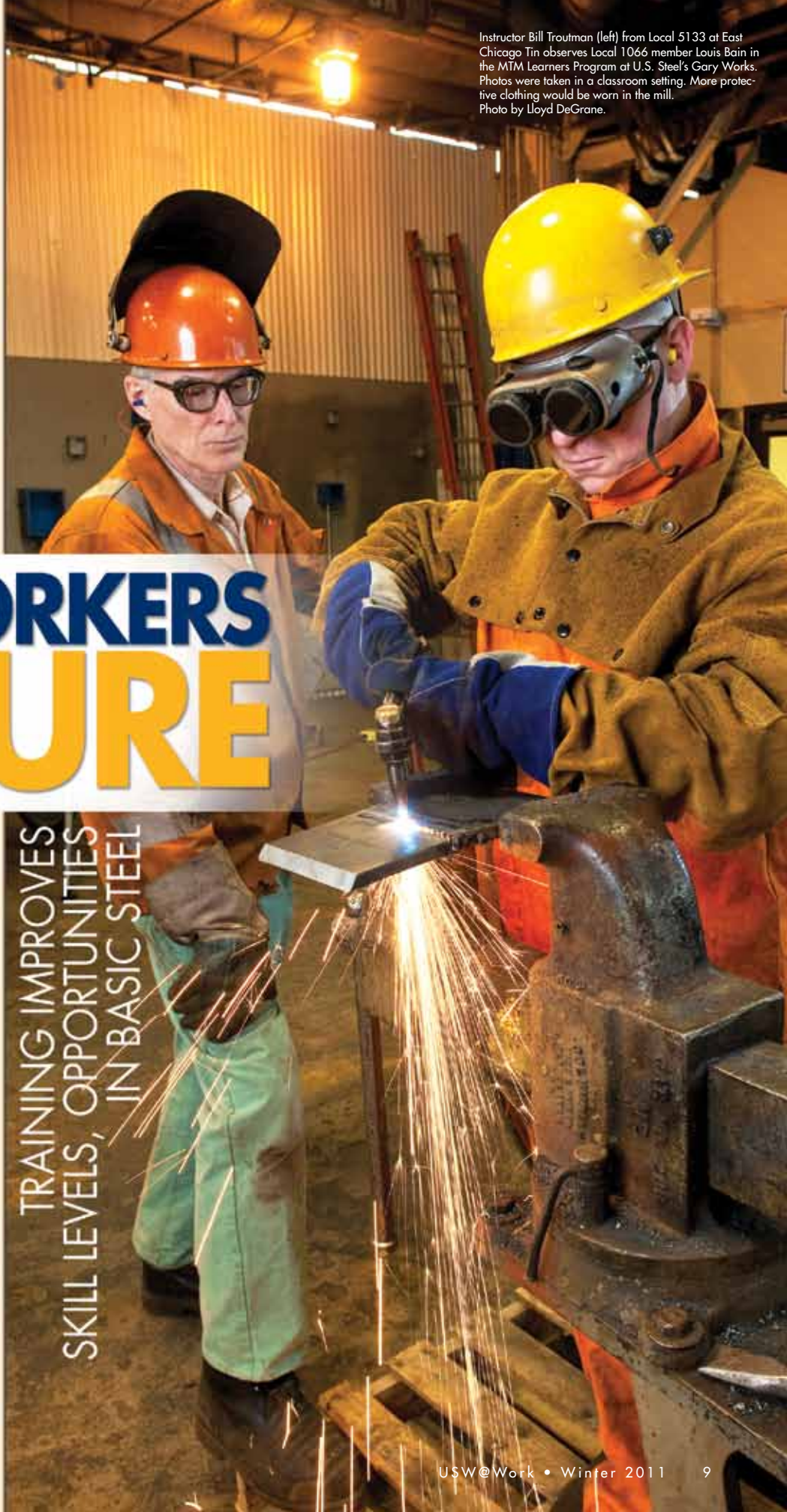
Get Tougher on China

With the job market tight all over the country, young workers in steel and other industries are learning that they need to develop skills now if they want the jobs of the future.

“It’s sometimes hard to find qualified workers. We can solve a lot of problems and keep more folks working if we take the initiative to get people trained,” said Fred Gipson, a Local 2122 member and the USW’s training coordinator at U.S. Steel’s Fairfield, Ala. facility.

There can be no doubt that having a highly-skilled, well-trained work force benefits both workers and employers. More efficient production boosts the corporate bottom line, while better-trained workers operate more safely and expand their own talents and earning opportunities.

Instructor Bill Troutman (left) from Local 5133 at East Chicago Tin observes Local 1066 member Louis Bain in the MTM Learners Program at U.S. Steel’s Gary Works. Photos were taken in a classroom setting. More protective clothing would be worn in the mill. Photo by Lloyd DeGrane.



STEELWORKERS of the FUTURE

Building a world class work force, however, does not happen overnight or by accident. In bargaining throughout the last decade, the USW has negotiated progressively stronger provisions to better train members for the work they are expected to accomplish.

During the crisis in Basic Steel that led to nearly 50 bankruptcies and industry consolidation, USW members were asked to accommodate employers’ needs for financial and shop-floor production flexibility.

New lines of progression

There are many aspects to the redesigned and restructured basic labor agreements that have led the way in securing USW jobs in steel. They include new lines of progression for production-rated jobs and the reinvention of job descriptions and classifications.

Employees receive additional training for their current job and the next promotion. They are more responsible for their jobs, more self-directed and better compensated.

Combining nearly all maintenance

TRAINING IMPROVES
SKILL LEVELS, OPPORTUNITIES
IN BASIC STEEL

positions into two basic categories, mechanical (MTM) and electrical (MTE), has been a major factor in enabling the industry to survive the last decade of market uncertainty.

So far, Learners Programs at U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal in North America have trained close to 800 USW MTMs and MTEs including graduates and those currently enrolled. There will continue to be more opportunities in the future.

At first, as the combined maintenance classifications took shape, it was not immediately clear how to best implement the improved training language. As time progressed, it became plain.

“We knew we had an opportunity to improve the way we implemented the training programs that we negotiated,” said Bob Rankin, a USW contract coordinator from Local 979 at ArcelorMittal in Cleveland, Ohio, and leader of the union-side training efforts corporate-wide. “So our priority was to better apply them in the 2008 negotiations.”

Retaining jobs, saving money

One major advantage from the company’s perspective is the money saved by using its own employees to perform

work instead of high-priced contractors.

The 2008 labor agreement requires that all natural attrition that occurs in the maintenance forces be backfilled with new hired employees if necessary, according to Ross McClellan, the USW contract coordinator at U.S. Steel’s Mon Valley Works near Pittsburgh. The parties also agreed to additional hiring goals along the way to rebuild and expand craft forces and reduce reliance on contractors.

During the past few years, the USW has continued to press the point in bargaining that many different companies across the country have allowed maintenance work forces to decline while hoping to rely on outside contractors or draw from a tough labor market to meet maintenance needs. While the labor market remains tough, the United States has permitted skill levels to decline by abandoning apprenticeship and vocational programs at workplaces and in schools.

If a company expects to meet its own internal maintenance needs and not be held hostage by outside contractor firms, it must grow its own work force. There is no one better to do that than experienced instructors and employees who have a

stake in both the business and in fixing equipment correctly the first time.

“The training program is flexible enough that we can adjust the curriculum to meet the demand for certain skills as needed,” said Local 1066’s William McCall, training coordinator at U.S. Steel’s Gary Works. “We can look at the kinds and types of contractors being used to gear our training toward developing those needed skill sets.”

Specialty certifications available

There are, of course, standard corporate training requirements for mechanical and electrical technicians. Working with the union’s Institute for Career Development (ICD), members in Basic Steel can take courses to both prepare for Learners Programs and earn specialty certifications.

Current production workers and new hires who pass basic skills and aptitude tests in mechanical or electrical may join a Learners Program. Depending on individual skill levels, the program can last a few weeks, a few months or up to two years or more.

In general, the multi-craft MTM certification includes classroom and on-the-job training and testing of a candidate’s



STEELWORKERS
of the **FUTURE**

Instructor John Guy (right) reviews process logic control connections with Gregg Estok (left) and Stan Bobro at the Mon Valley Works Training Center near Pittsburgh. Photo by Steve Dietz.

Photos were taken in a classroom setting. More protective clothing would be worn in the mill.

skills in hydraulic and other mechanical equipment, iron work, pipefitting, rigging and welding. Some facilities offer American Welding Society certification through a Learners Program or the ICD. MTE certification training includes electrical connections and wiring, HVAC, computer controls for equipment, network data connections, telecommunications systems, wiring and equipment calibration.

Learners Programs must be consistent company- and industry-wide. The USW is working to build a staff of qualified instructors for the training program, with the ultimate goal of having the entire program staffed by USW journeyman level craft employees who are certified and familiar with the wide variety of equipment used in making steel.

Hands-on approach to training

Dave Walton, an MTE and member of Local 1066, finished a Learners Program in August 2010 after starting at Gary as a crane operator in 2006. The hands-on approach to multi-craft maintenance training has improved his performance and gives him experience on a wide variety of electrical equipment.

“We work with just about anything

electrical,” he said. “From electric motors that were designed and built 100 years ago to the most hi-tech, state-of-the-art, industrial equipment made today.”

Walton said the emphasis on safety during training in the classroom and on the shop floor makes a difference.

“We learned that safety on the job demands constant attention,” he said. “You must approach it with a serious attitude in order to improve.”

Learners Programs are not just for newer hires. Local 1066 member Louis Bain worked in production at Gary Works for about 12 years before he took the test for MTM training. He joined a Learners Program last year and looks forward to new challenges.

“I was frustrated by the repetitiveness of production work,” Bain said. “In maintenance and the Learners Program, there’s something different almost every day.”

Bain and others in Learners Programs learn from lectures and activities in specially constructed classrooms. There are opportunities to practice new skills and knowledge before hitting the shop floor.

“This method of learning new skills really helps translate the theory that we

learn in class into practical knowledge in the mill,” Bain said. “The results are easy to see from the learner’s perspective in the work we do.”

Working in conjunction with ICD centers, workers without previous mechanical or electrical skills may prepare for the required skills testing through pre-learner classes available online.

In northwest Indiana, ArcelorMittal works with community college, vocational and technical school students in the Steelworker of the Future program. Participants learn the basic skills they need during internships at nearby company plants.

The Basic Steel industry today needs talented, multi-craft maintenance workers as much as ever. With employers as partners, the USW is laying a strong foundation through training programs for both current and future workers, wherever their location.

“For decades, a generation of young adults growing up in the industrial Midwest was warned that steel industry jobs are few and far between,” Rankin said. “There aren’t as many as there used to be, but they are still excellent, union jobs.”



Ken York (left), a member of Local 5133 from U.S. Steel’s East Chicago Tin, tests electrical connections with instructor Andre Flynn, a member of Local 1066 at Gary Works. Photo by Lloyd DeGrane.

After nearly 40 years of working as a USW member in a steel mill as a millwright and roll grinder, John Jacobs is in college for the first time, earning a two-year associate's degree in building maintenance and management.

Jacobs, 59, is among a group of Steelworkers from Lackawanna, N.Y., who are attending Erie Community College (ECC) in Buffalo with help from the USW, the Institute for Career Development (ICD) and retraining programs.

"It was quite a decision to make," the white-haired Jacobs said of his leap to college, where he studies alongside a mix of non-traditional older students like himself and other younger students who are a mere one third of his age.

Once a large grain milling, steel and shipping center, the Buffalo region has been hit hard by industrial decline and the loss of traditional manufacturing. Its

largest economic sectors today are health care and education.

Jacobs and his USW classmates were long-time employees of ArcelorMittal Lackawanna, a steel-coating and sheet-finishing facility near Buffalo that closed in 2009, idling 235.

Workers win awards

The closure came despite a labor-management partnership that was recognized as top notch by Cornell University's Industrial Labor Relations School with its Champions@Work Award.

"We were doing a good job. We got a lot of awards, best contributor to the profit-sharing program two years in a row, the Cornell Champions Award," said Local 2604 President Anthony Fortunato. "We tried to work as a team with management and did everything we needed to do to make sure that place was running and profitable."

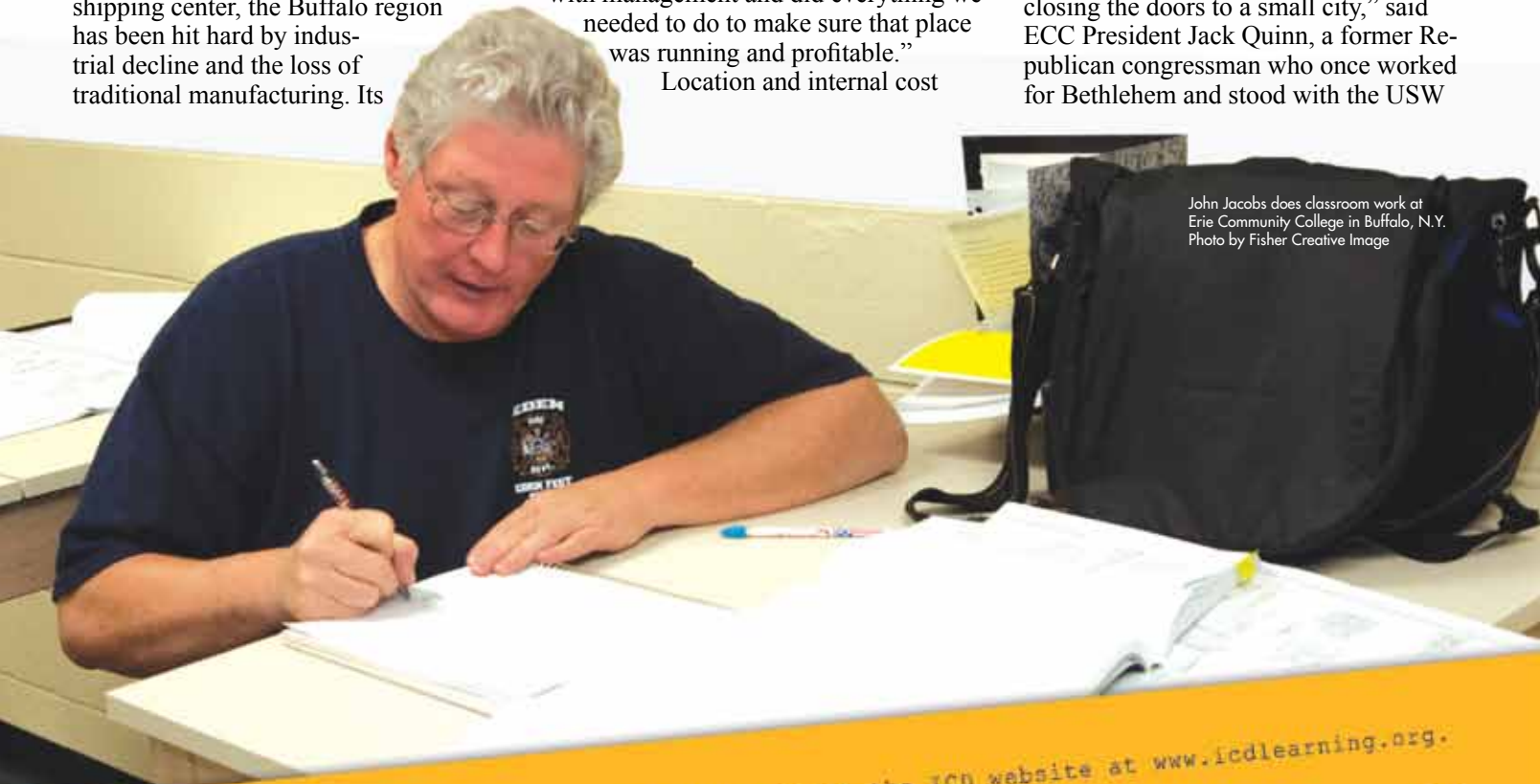
Location and internal cost

measures, however, worked against the plant when the economy foundered. Work moved to a newer galvanizing facility in Cleveland and to ArcelorMittal's non-union Dofasco plant in Hamilton, Ontario, about 100 miles away. In January, the company announced a \$253 million (Canadian) investment in Dofasco.

"We went from a profit center to a cost center," Fortunato said of the facility, once a part of a Bethlehem Steel complex that employed some 24,000 in its heyday.

Bethlehem shuttered its huge mill in Lackawanna in 1985 and closed its coke ovens in 2001. The coating and finishing facility then passed in bankruptcy to the former International Steel Group, which merged with ArcelorMittal in 2005.

"When the mill shut down, it was like closing the doors to a small city," said ECC President Jack Quinn, a former Republican congressman who once worked for Bethlehem and stood with the USW



John Jacobs does classroom work at Erie Community College in Buffalo, N.Y. Photo by Fisher Creative Image

For more information on ICD and its programs, visit the ICD website at www.icdlearning.org.

Back to School

USW Members Tackle College After M

on steel trade issues while in Washington.

The ICD, a work force training program created in 1989 through contract negotiations with the USW and major companies, provided one-on-one support for laid-off members as they were reviewing school and other alternatives.

“You worked 39 years. It’s your life,” Jacobs said. “Now, all of a sudden, you are out on the street and everything is so different. You’re looking for avenues to take, things to do, and ICD really helped with that.”

The first thought Kevin Fox, 48, had was to get back to work as soon as possible in another job. When that didn’t happen in a recessionary economy, school was his next best choice.

Like Jacobs, he signed up for a two-year degree program in building management and maintenance. They are being exposed to a range of construction skills from blueprint reading and project estimating to electrical, heating, air conditioning and plumbing.

“I was on the swing shift all the time at the mill, never able to go back to school,” Fox said. “So, I figured this was the perfect opportunity.”

Homework after 40 years

During a recent visit, Jacobs, Fox and Jerry Leisner, 56, were collaborating on estimating the costs of a residential roof job. They poured over blueprints to figure how much material is needed to cover a main roof, a garage roof and a small side roof.

“Probably, if the economy was better and I could have found a job right way, I would be working,” Jacobs said while

they did their calculations. “But the way things worked out it was more advantageous for me to go to school.”

Leisner started work in the steel plant right out of high school in 1973. He and Jacobs started in the coke ovens and both ended their careers grinding mill rolls to fine tolerances.

“At times, it’s rough,” Leisner said of his return to school. “You have to get used to doing homework again, and I haven’t done homework for 40 years.”

In the last collective bargaining agreement before the closure, the USW and ArcelorMittal agreed to provisions protecting workers and requiring that the company would assist union efforts to find a new buyer.

Potential buyers who intended to operate the facility offered the steelmaker over \$10 million for it but the company refused, Fortunato said. Instead, the 160-acre site was sold in December for \$3.5 million to developers.

Faced with shutdown, Fortunato said the union and ICD successfully helped eligible workers transfer to other plants, take advantage of retirement opportunities or begin retraining programs like those available at ECC.

The USW negotiated severance payments, supplemental unemployment benefits and cash transfer benefits for those able to move to other plants.

“We tried to find avenues for them to get what they wanted,” Fortunato said of the USW members affected by the shutdown. “We made the best of a bad situation.”

The return to school was also enabled by federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs that provide benefits and support for workers who are unemployed due to international trade.

ECC, part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system, was a logical option for some. The multi-campus school has a long history of work force training including working with the USW and ICD on workplace safety programs.

The school offers more than 90 accredited associate degree and certificate programs in areas including business, public service, health sciences, liberal arts and engineering and technologies. It also boasts new labs for green energy and construction technologies. The ICD worked with ECC to provide federally-funded training in weatherization and

Ken Fox works on electrical wiring at Erie Community College. Photo by Fisher Creative Image



“I figured this was the perfect opportunity.”

green building technologies for displaced workers including USW members.

ICD promotes retraining

Andy Mihalik, the ICD’s training grant coordinator in Buffalo, said he is also working to develop a program that would train offshore and onshore wind-mill technicians if a proposed wind farm for Lake Erie moves forward.

ECC President Quinn welcomes Steelworkers and other non-traditional students to the community college, which uses a combination of aid programs like Training Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and federal Pell grants to provide an affordable education to workers.

“Our mission is to prepare people for the work force,” Quinn said. “What I want to do for Steelworkers and others is to make certain that financing is not an obstacle to coming back to school. So far, they are telling me it is working.”

Mike Sulik, an active USW member who ended his 36-year career as a millwright welder with a disabling injury, is studying at ECC to become a paralegal. He hopes to use his new skills to help fellow union members.

“I’m into this because of my strong desire to help fellow Steelworkers and to share with younger people how important the union really is,” Sulik, 56, said.

“People don’t realize what a union is about, how we got involved with safety programs and programs to make sure our facility was profitable,” he added. “The union really worked to the advantage of people.”

ool
ill closes

Atomic Workers Eligible

USW's Early Lung Cancer Detection Program Saves Lives

Retired atomic worker Art Hensley believes he would no longer be alive if it wasn't for a free lung cancer screening program offered at his union hall.

"If it hadn't been for this scan, I would be dead. There ain't no doubt about it," Hensley told *USW@Work*. "I'm very grateful."

Work-related lung cancer is the leading occupational cancer in the United States. Lung cancer is also the leading cause of death from cancer in both men and women in this country, accounting for 160,000 deaths per year.

Hensley, 75, is among thousands of atomic workers who have participated in the USW-sponsored Early Lung Cancer Detection (ELCD) program.

The union program uses the same CT scan technology that was recently declared highly successful by the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

A 10-year study by NCI involving over 53,000 people demonstrated that annual screening with a low-dose helical chest CT scan lowered mortality due to lung cancer by 20 percent, compared to participants who received only chest X-rays.

"Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer mortality in the United States and throughout the world, so a validated approach that can reduce lung cancer mortality by even 20 percent has the potential to spare very significant numbers

of people from the ravages of this disease," said the NCI's director, Harold Varmus, M.D.

Unfortunately, most cases of lung cancer are discovered only when people begin coughing up blood or develop shortness of breath. By then, the cancer is at a late stage and usually incurable.

The USW's early lung cancer detection program, the largest in the United States, is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and is also co-sponsored by Queens College of the City University of New York and the Atomic Trades & Labor Council.

Hensley is living proof of the effectiveness of the low-dose screening CT scan. After a scan uncovered a suspicious lung nodule and tests confirmed cancer, a surgeon removed the lower lobe of his left lung. He has been cancer free for more than five years.

More than 10,000 nuclear workers underwent screening in the first decade of the program starting in 2000. Over 70 individuals were found to have lung cancer. Three-quarters were detected at early stages where treatment has the greatest chance of being successful.

"They offered this program. I heard about it and thought well, I don't need to do this," Hensley said. "Then I thought, this is free and anything free you take. So, I signed up."

Working with uranium

Hensley suspects his work may have played a role in his lung cancer. In the 1950s, he worked for several years at K-25, a former uranium enrichment facility on the Oak Ridge Reservation in Tennessee, constructed by the Manhattan Project.

After that, he worked some 30 years at the Y-12 National Security Complex, also in Oak Ridge, which today produces uranium parts for nuclear weapons and stores nuclear material.

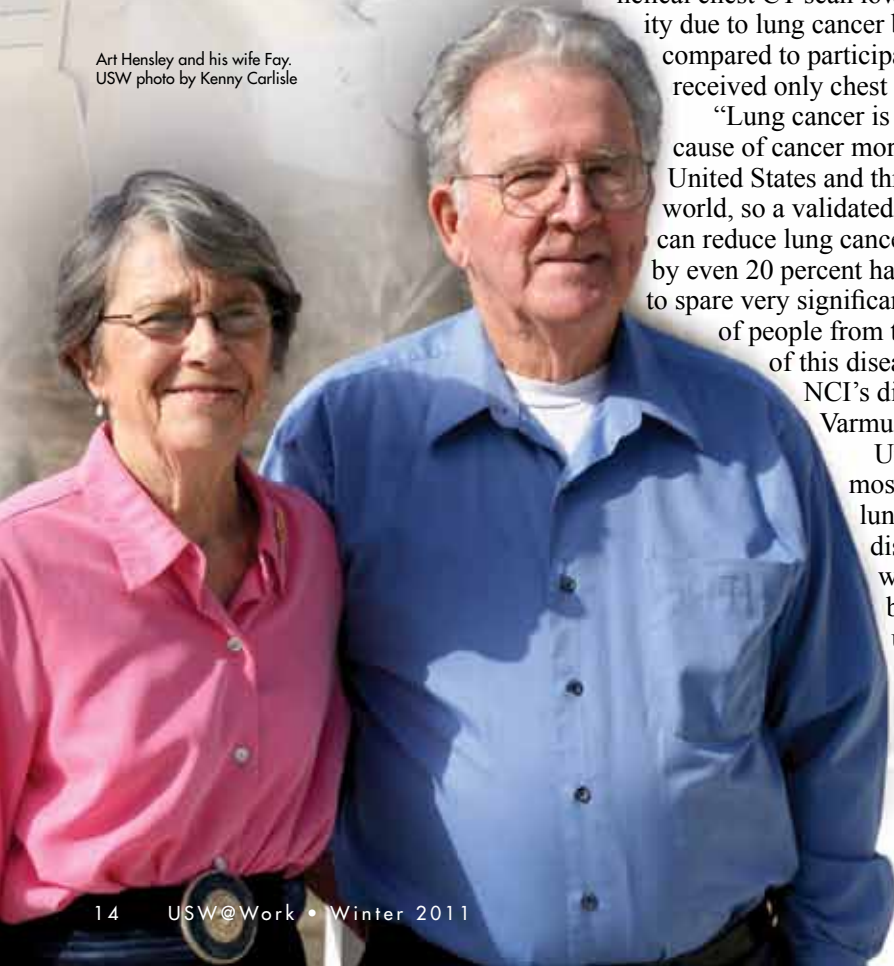
Norval Hockman, a 71-year-old retired welder at Oak Ridge, has had several scans over the years and his most recent one, in January 2010, detected problems. After lung cancer was confirmed, it was surgically removed.

"It went about as good as you can hope," said Hockman. "I'm really glad they found it. I have advised all of my friends to get it done."

Although Hockman doesn't know the source of his cancer, he also worked for many years at K-25, where the presence of lung carcinogens such as asbestos and beryllium has been documented.

"If it hadn't been for this scan, I would be dead."

Art Hensley and his wife Fay.
USW photo by Kenny Carlisle



Hockman believes he may have come into contact with uranium products while changing compressors and other equipment. Yellow material caught in the pipe flanges would fall on the floor during equipment changes and repairs.

“I would take my arms and rake that stuff to one side and go about my work,” he said. “I crawled through more of that product than most people will ever see.”

After the NCI released its initial study results last November, the USW called for expanding screening to cover more workers who might be at high risk.

“We are now presented with an enormous opportunity to save workers from dying from lung cancer,” International President Leo W. Gerard said. “Millions of workers have been exposed to asbestos, silica, chromium, arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, nickel and combustion products – and all of these exposures are firmly established as causes of human lung cancer.”

The NCI study was the first to show that such screening can reduce lung cancer mortality when compared to a control group. The results were so convincing that the NCI halted the study early to inform the public about the effectiveness of using low-dose chest CT scans.

Gerard called for action after the study was released. He said union health and safety leaders need to devise a strategy to assure that more high-risk USW workers can benefit from screening.

In December, union health and safety leaders met in a strategy session with occupational medical professionals at the USW office in Washington, D.C.

They discussed identifying and notifying workers at high risk of lung cancer; revising OSHA medical surveillance standards to include lung cancer screening and stimulating the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to promote and apply the science of lung cancer screening.

The screening program originated with the former Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE), which merged into the USW in 2005. The first screenings were conducted in 2000 as part of the union’s Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP), a congressionally-mandated program funded by the DOE.

WHPP medical evaluations are offered to current and former workers from

Currently early lung cancer screening is offered to eligible current and former workers at the three gaseous diffusion plants and the Mound facility in Ohio. If you are interested in participating, call this toll-free number to find out if you are eligible: 1-866-228-7226.

gaseous diffusion plants in Paducah, Ky., Portsmouth, Ohio and K-25 in Oak Ridge, Tenn., as well as the closed Mound facility in Miamisburg, Ohio, and the Idaho National Laboratory in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

WHPP is operated for the USW by the Steelworkers Charitable and Education Organization and its Tony Mazzocchi Center (TMC) for Health, Safety and Environmental Education. The TMC is part of the USW’s Health, Safety and Environment Department and is a consortium composed of the USW, the Labor Institute, and the Communications Workers of America (CWA).

Traveling CT scanner

The idea for the screening program originated in 1999 with Dr. Steven Markowitz of Queens College, who approached the union with a proposal to use an advanced medical screening procedure to detect lung cancer among members who had worked for the DOE at nuclear weapons facilities. Dr. Markowitz has directed the WHPP since 1997.

Dr. Markowitz’s idea emerged from early evidence that low-dose chest CAT scans could identify lung cancers at an early stage. When identified early, he believed medical treatment might prevent cancers from spreading and reduce deaths.

After the USW and Dr. Markowitz convinced DOE environmental and occupational health administrators of the potential to save lives, the DOE gave the innovative new program its support.

A mobile CAT scanner travels between local union halls to bring the

screening to atomic workers who would not otherwise have access to the test. Personnel from Queens College, a program partner from the beginning, conduct the scans. The images from the scans are read by a chest radiologist and reviewed by a lung doctor, ELCD Medical Director Albert Miller, MD.

USW local unions are a critical part of the program. Local coordinators are the ground team that works with Queens College medical staff to make the program function efficiently. They register participants as they come for their scans and are available to answer questions.

While Dr. Markowitz and the union saw the potential for early detection and treatment of lung cancer using low dose CT scans, others in the medical community then claimed there wasn’t enough evidence to justify this type of program.

The new NCI study findings, however, now indicate that the courage and leadership shown by the USW, Queens College and the DOE in setting up the program was the right thing to do.

According to Dr. Markowitz, workers who are at an elevated risk for occupational lung cancer should have ready access to annual low dose chest CT scans without cost as part of a well-rounded program, such as WHPP.

“The goal is straightforward but urgent,” said Markowitz.

“Workers at high risk of lung cancer should have rapid access to a high quality, appropriate, comprehensive CT scan-based lung cancer screening services without financial barriers. We can save many lives.”



Norval Hockman
USW photo by Kenny Carlisle

Janine Anderson was one of thousands of nuclear arms workers who became sick while building atomic weapons to defend their country.

Ill from working at the Oak Ridge nuclear reservation in Tennessee, Anderson spent seven years fighting for compensation from a landmark federal program that was supposed to help nuclear workers who had been on the front lines of the Cold War.

"It's denial by design," she said of the struggle in 2006, three years before her death from debilitating illnesses linked to her work. "I'll go to my deathbed believing this was set up to deny claims."

Anderson, 56 at her death in 2009, was a major player in the national effort to pass the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act in 2000. She was a force in developing the Alliance of Nuclear Worker Advocacy Groups (ANWAG) and the Cold War Patriots, a support group.

The alliance is still fighting without her. In January, ANWAG asked the U.S. Department of Labor to investigate whether the compensation program is being administered in the way Congress intended.

Worker advocacy groups believe the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC), the program administrator, has created a regulatory environment where valid claims from ill workers and their families are routinely evaluated unfairly and unjustly denied.

Timely compensation

Getting timely compensation and medical care has long been a problem. Many have died before receiving the benefits.

Many nuclear workers have developed disabling or fatal illnesses because of exposure to radiation and toxic substances while producing and testing nuclear weapons.

Their sacrifice and that of the nuclear and uranium workers who risked their lives during the Cold War are honored at an annual National Day of Remembrance with events held throughout the United States.

Day of Remembrance

Last October in Denver, the day was marked by a rally organized by former Rocky Flats nuclear worker Judy Padilla on the west steps of the Colorado State Capitol Building.

The USW represented workers at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant, where plutonium triggers were built for nuclear weapons. The complex has since been demolished and the site restored.

Speakers included U.S. Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and U.S. Reps. Mike Coffman (R-Colo.), Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Ed Perlmutter (D-Colo.). U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) sent a representative. A letter was read from former Congresswoman Betsy Markey (D-Colo.).

Widow Kathy Wolf spoke of the need to pass the proposed Charlie Wolf Act, which was named after her husband, a brain cancer victim who worked at Rocky Flats.

The bill would make it easier for sick nuclear workers to collect from the government compensation program. It would expand the category of individuals eligible for compensation and improve the procedures to make the process more transparent.

Investigation Sought

Sick Nuclear Workers Continue Fight for Justice



U.S. Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) speaks in support of sick workers from the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

In the age of 24-hour cable television, the Internet, smart phones and satellite radio, information is everywhere. And, in a world dominated by Wall Street, it's no surprise that the big media is largely controlled by and beholden to big business.

"We fight uphill battles as it is against multinational corporations with deep pockets," said International President Leo W. Gerard. "Add in the corporate-controlled Fox News networks of the world and you might think the voices of working Americans could never be heard. Thank God that's not the case."

Gerard is referring to the growing number of independent media – and their followers – popping up in traditional and nontraditional forms. From the nearly 150-year-old *The Nation* magazine to the multimedia-rich *The Huffington Post* internet newspaper, there are plenty of alternative outlets to get legitimate, in-depth news that impacts working families and their communities.

The USW's website, www.usw.org, is filled with clips of Gerard and other union leaders discussing issues such as fair trade, jobs and the green energy industry on media outlets including MSNBC, nationally syndicated radio, blogs read by millions and yes, even on Fox, which makes no secret about its catering to political conservatives.

Working people's interests

"Too often, conservative viewpoints dominate the electronic spectrum while working people's interests are ignored," said Frank Emspak, executive producer of *Workers Independent News*, which airs its programs on about 200 radio stations across the country.

"WIN's mission is to bring balance to news coverage by providing news and features focusing on the issues and concerns of working people."

One of the strongest voices out there today is Ed Schultz, whose radio and television shows reach millions daily on MSNBC and a variety of radio stations. Gerard has appeared on both several times.

"It's important that we offer Americans a real alternative for news and information," Schultz said. "Trust me, the Fox News networks of the world do not want to tell the stories of everyday Americans. They'd rather push the profit-driven agenda of big business, CEOs and their political friends."

Another good source for USW members is the *Leslie Marshall Show*, syndicated nationally on the radio to an audience

International President Leo W. Gerard is interviewed by a radio report. USW photo by Steve Dietz

More than FOX:

Large Network of Independent Media Offers News *for the People, by the People*

approaching five million. She recently interviewed International Vice President Tom Conway about the need for a national manufacturing policy and International Vice President Fred Redmond about the union's important international work. (You can hear the interviews on www.usw.org.)

"These days, with so much information available and so much of it unreliable or even false, viewers and listeners really need to seek the whole truth about issues that affect their jobs, their budgets and their families' future," Marshall said.

"Supporting these shows, magazines, blogs and other outlets means there will always be a place where working families can have a voice that can compete with other media, where the rich and powerful literally run the show."

Getting the message out

Union Edge Talk Radio show host Charles Showalter airs a daily program that

reaches seven million families between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and is looking to expand to more states. He said individual and organizational support of these efforts is critical.

"Us union folks can talk among ourselves until we're blue in the face and most of the time we're going to agree with each other, but we have to get the message out and convince non-union families about the importance of unions," Showalter said. "With a coordinated message and coordinated support, we can compete with Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, Michael Savage and all the right-wing messengers, and compete very effectively."

Check out our accompanying media guide for a sampling of progressive media shows, print media, blogs and other places to get valuable information. An expanded guide will be available on the USW website, www.usw.org/mediaguide.

More than
Fox:

MEDIA GUIDE

Here is a sampling of some of the many independent-minded media outlets that offer a different point of view from corporate-run sources. A more extensive, state-by-state guide will soon be available at www.usw.org. If you know of a show, newsletter, website or other outlet that should be included please let us know at progressivemedia@usw.org.

THE BILL PRESS SHOW

WWW.BILLPRESSSHOW.COM



The Bill Press Show is syndicated nationally by Dial-Global Radio Networks. His show is on from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Eastern – check his website for stations. Press, the former co-host of CNN’s “Crossfire” and MSNBC’s “Buchanan and Press,” is known for putting a humorous spin on the day’s events.

COLORLINES

WWW.COLORLINES.COM



ColorLines has been building a home for journalism in service to racial justice since 1998. It says its “multiracial team of writers, producers and photographers cover stories from the perspective of community, rather than through the lens of power brokers.”

CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

WWW.OURFUTURE.ORG



The goal of Campaign for America’s Future “is to forge the enduring progressive majority needed to realize the America of shared prosperity and equal opportunity that our country was meant to be.” Its widely read and influential blog carries daily news and commentary from founders Roger Hickey and Robert Borosage, among others.

FIGHTINGBOB.COM

WWW.FIGHTINGBOB.COM



Founder Ed Garvey (former NFL Player’s Association executive director and U.S. Senate nominee) has written more than 2,000 blog entries since 2003. He focuses on preserving the environment and promoting social and economic justice.

CASTLE ROCK RADIO

WWW.CASTIEROCKRADIO.COM



Based in Castle Rock, Colorado, this broadcaster provides content 365 days a year, 24 hours a day with local hosts who cover topics that resonate internationally. Their goal: “an intentional focus on personalities with expertise in a specific field who can deliver compelling, actionable advice.”

FREE SPEECH TV

WWW.FREESPEECH.ORG



Dubbed “your progressive and independent TV and multimedia network,” Free Speech TV offers video on demand, daily news, links to progressive blogs and organizations and other content for television, the Web and smart phones. Its mission: inspire viewers “to become civically engaged to build a more just, equitable, and sustainable society.”

COLBERT REPORT

WWW.COLBERTNATION.COM



Airing Monday through Thursday nights on Comedy Central, “Colbert Report” is known for its news satire. Though admittedly comedy, the show often strikes a chord with Americans for tackling issues that matter. Host Stephen Colbert’s popularity soared in 2006, when he seared the media and then-President Bush at the White House Correspondents’ Dinner.



HIGHTOWER LOWDOWN

WWW.HIGHTOWERLOWDOWN.ORG



The fastest growing political publication in America has more than 125,000 subscribers. The populist newsletter is published by Jim Hightower, the two-time Texas Agriculture Commissioner, columnist and national radio commentator. Hightower’s radio commentaries are carried in more than 100 commercial and public stations and on the Web.

THE ED SCHULTZ SHOW

WWW.BIGEDDIERADIO.COM

One of the strongest voices in our nation for working-class Americans, Ed Schultz is on the air daily on radio (The Ed Schultz Show airs from Noon-3 p.m. Eastern in syndication) and on television (MSNBC's "The Ed Show" airs at 10 p.m. Eastern.) With more than three million "Ed Heads" faithfully tuning in, Schultz offers the unvarnished truth on more than 100 affiliate stations, the Armed Forces Radio Network and online.



THE DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART

WWW.THEDAILYSHOW.COM

Like it or not, comedian Jon Stewart is where millions of viewers get their news. The show run by MTV Networks that airs on Comedy Central boasts nearly two million viewers and sells itself as an alternative to "having your news spoon fed to you by big network suits and the smaller, chattier suits on cable news." It dubbed the financial crisis "Clusterf#@k to the Poorhouse" and recently drew tens of thousands to Washington, D.C., for a rally. Fox's "The O'Reilly Factor" has about the same number of viewers as "The Daily Show" and its spin-off, "The Colbert Report," according to the Pew Research Center.



HUFFINGTON POST

WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.COM

The online news website offers daily news blogs, video and commentary. With topics ranging from entertainment tidbits to politics and business, The Huffington Post helps spread information to millions of readers. International President Leo W. Gerard is one of the site's featured bloggers, using the platform often to push the union's issues such as fair trade, protecting jobs and worker safety. You can subscribe to Gerard's blog feed and become a fan on the Huffington Post website.



GRITTV

WWW.GRITTV.ORG

Founded by former Air America host Laura Flanders, GRITtv is a nationally syndicated daily talk show for activists.



MOTHER JONES

WWW.MOTHERJONES.COM

"Smart, fearless journalism" is how the publishers of Mother Jones describe the bimonthly magazine with a circulation of 240,000. Mother Jones has also built a robust and often updated website featuring original investigative, political and social justice reporting. "This is journalism not funded by or beholden to corporations," Mother Jones says of itself. "We bust bullshit and get results."



THE NATION

WWW.THENATION.COM

When it was founded in 1865, The Nation magazine offered this prospectus: "The Nation will not be the organ of any party, sect, or body. It will, on the contrary, make an earnest effort to bring to the discussion of political and social questions a really critical spirit, and to wage war upon the vices of violence, exaggeration, and misrepresentation by which so much of the political writing of the day is marred." Not much has changed since, other than its content is also available on a multimedia rich website.



TAVIS SMILEY

WWW.TAVISTALKS.COM

Enlighten. Encourage. Empower. That's the theme of Tavis Smiley's many media endeavors. His talk show airs nightly on PBS stations (check local listings for times), featuring a mix of news and pop culture with the goal of provoking thought and inspiring change. In addition to the talk show, Smiley also appears regularly on radio, has authored several books and has produced award-winning television specials.



READER SUPPORTED NEWS

WWW.READERSUPPORTEDNEWS.ORG

It is exactly what its name says: news supported entirely by its readers. Founder Marc Ash says he started the news service to feed "readers who wanted to better understand the most important stories of the day, but had grown tired of the hype and sales-pitching of the big corporate outlets." The service accepts no advertising, no grants and no corporate funding.



More than Fox: MEDIA GUIDE

REAL TIME WITH BILL MAHER

WWW.HBO.COM/REAL-TIME-WITH-BILL-MAHER

Hosted by stand-up comedian Bill Maher, Real Time airs on cable's HBO and offers real political commentary and news peppered with humor.



THOM HARTMANN

WWW.THOMHARTMANN.COM/RADIO/STATIONS

Progressive commentator Thom Hartmann's daily radio show is broadcast in hundreds of cities including New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Detroit and Chicago. The show, which is heard on three continents, is also simulcast as TV in 40 million homes by Dish Network/Free Speech TV. Hartmann also is a New York Times bestselling author.



LESLIE MARSHALL SHOW

WWW.LESIEMARSHALLSHOW.COM

Leslie Marshall has the fastest growing progressive radio show in America, reaching between three and five million people a week plus the Armed Forces Radio Network and online listeners. She also regularly appears on Fox News programs and writes weekly for USNews&WorldReport.com. Her show even appears on some conservative stations.



TRUTHOUT

WWW.TRUTHOUT.ORG

Truthout is a full-service, reader-supported news agency dedicated to independent journalism. Their mission is "one of social progress, as we attempt to shed light on issues of vital interest to the community such as health care, the environment, international relations and human rights."

“ In the age of corporate-controlled media it's important that we offer Americans a real alternative for news and information. Trust me, the Fox News networks of the world do not want to tell the stories of everyday Americans. They'd rather push the profit-driven agenda of big business, CEOs and their political friends. ”

ED SCHUITZ

THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW

WWW.MADDOWBLOG.MSNBC.COM

"The Rachel Maddow Show" airs Monday through Friday on MSNBC at 9 p.m. Eastern. Recent topics included a look at how Republicans are engaging in cultural battles instead of a jobs agenda.

JEFF SANTOS SHOW

WWW.REVOLUTIONBOSTON.COM/SHOWS/JEFF-SANTOS

Another blend of serious discussion and a bit of comic relief, Jeff Santos focuses on local, state and national issues that have an impact on Americans' lives. Outside of the Boston area, his show can be heard on the Web.

UNION EDGE RADIO

WWW.THEUNIONEDGE.COM

Airing daily on the Working Families Radio Network (WFRN) and hosted by Charles Showalter, "The Union Edge Talk Radio Show" says its mission is clear: Develop a national radio-and Internet-based outlet for unions and progressives to express their views and build support for issues that are important to all working families.

SLY IN THE MORNING

WWW.SLYSOFFICE.COM

Hosted by John "Sly" Sylvester, the "Sly in the Morning" radio show airs weekdays on WTDY in Madison, Wisconsin. The show, as well as Sylvester's downloadable podcasts, have big Web followings. A recent episode featured International President Leo W. Gerard breaking down the myths about "free trade."

WORKERS INDEPENDENT NEWS

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This media guide was created so that you can pull it out to keep for future reference. You can find additional copies as well as more listings on our website at www.usw.org/mediaguide.



On Nick Gaitaud's Facebook profile, the first thing you see is this description: "Proud UNION millwright!"

"I'm so proud to be a member of a fighting union and I want everyone to know who we are and what we stand for," Gaitaud said. "We have been given a great union by our brothers and sisters who came before us, and it's up to us younger members to honor that tradition and keep it going."

Gaitaud, 32, is a member of USW 7150, which represents the workers at ATI Oremet, a titanium foundry in Albany, Ore. He's one of the many younger members who are part of a developing USW program that aims to reach out to the next generation of Steelworkers.

This January, Gaitaud was selected to represent the USW on the newly formed AFL-CIO Young Workers Advisory Council, which will help to define the federation's young worker outreach program and give input on how the labor movement can appeal to the new generation.

Gaitaud, who's been active in his local union for 10 years, also was elected to represent all the young workers in the state of Oregon on the state AFL-CIO general board and he leads the Oregon Young Emerging Labor Leaders (YELL) program.

"Today's younger workers are the future of our union, our movement and our country," International President Leo W. Gerard said. "We're so proud of Nick, and all our young activists. Nick is a dedicated leader and a passionate union brother who wants to see the labor movement grow and thrive so that

we can keep fighting for our jobs, our pensions, our health care and so much more."

Gaitaud was part of the USW's recent "Next Generation" meeting at the Pittsburgh headquarters, where young leaders from every district gathered to brainstorm ways the union can better attract and engage younger members.

The action plan they proposed included ideas such as creating a mentoring program for emerging leaders, making local union meetings more family friendly and updating new employee orientation guides to include new technologies.

Gaitaud said he's looking forward to his new role on the AFL-CIO council and would like to help any fellow USW members interested in starting a young workers group.

"We have a responsibility to our union and our country and the time for action is now," he said. "I am so proud to represent the USW in this next generation labor movement!"

District 12 Director Robert LaVenture said, "It's so important for younger members like Nick to be engaged in our union. These developing leaders are doing great things now working side by side with our veteran leaders. Together, they're strengthening the USW so we can be around fighting for working families for a long, long time."

Next Generation

USW Leader Elected to Represent Young Workers



The USW's Nick Gaitaud (center top row with arrow) poses for a photograph with other members of the AFL-CIO Young Workers Advisory Council. Photo courtesy of AFL-CIO

Sweatshops to Ship Breaki



HELPING THE WORLD'S WORKING POOR

Charles Kernaghan travels the globe helping the poorest of the world's working poor – sweatshop garment workers in Jordan and Central America and ship breakers who scrap huge maritime vessels on the beaches of Bangladesh.

The work is always daunting, yet there is progress.

Kernaghan and his assistant Barbara Briggs recently secured the release of five guest workers who were imprisoned under false charges while working in a

ers. They live that reality. They fight.”

Kernaghan is executive director of the USW-supported Institute for Global Labour & Human Rights, a non-profit organization formerly known as the National Labor Committee (NLC) in Support of Human and Workers Rights.

Fashion sweatshops

Kernaghan usually works quietly but over the years has established a reputation for exposing the labor practices of sweatshop factories that produce for big-name fashion labels and retailers.

His reports have shamed labels and stores including Liz Claiborne, Fruit of the Loom, The Gap, Disney, JCPenney, Kmart, Kohl's, Nike, Target, Wal-Mart and others. He is most famous for making TV host Kathie Lee Gifford cry in 1996 by revealing that child laborers in Honduras were producing her clothing line sold at Wal-Mart.

Most recently in Jordan, the five guest workers Kernaghan helped to free in collaboration with the Jordanian Ministry of Labor had been imprisoned under

false charges while working at the Galaxy Fashion factory in the Al Hassan Industrial Park in Jordan. Galaxy produces clothing for Wal-Mart and Hanes, which enters the United States duty free under the U.S. Jordan Free Trade Agreement.

At least one of the arrested workers was suspected by management of alerting Kernaghan and the institute to the harsh conditions at the factory.

Kernaghan said outside pressures have led to some improvements – a rare day off and shortened factory hours, for example. Illegally confiscated passports

have been returned.

Over 130 foreign guest workers, mostly from Bangladesh, are trapped at Galaxy under violent and harsh conditions. He described mandatory 15-hour shifts seven days a week, threats of imprisonment and forcible deportation for workers who question their situations.

Kernaghan said the workers were freed from prison as he and Briggs were traveling to Jordan to seek their release.

Nine years into the U.S.-Jordan free trade agreement, workers are still stripped of their passports and forced to work 80- to 90-hour work weeks while being shortchanged of wages, beaten and housed in primitive dormitories.

“I believe the U.S. government does not have a plan, a concrete plan, to promote labor rights under free trade agreements. It's certainly not working in Jordan,” he said. “It's not working in Central America.”

Kernaghan said the institute is working to develop an advocacy group on the ground in Jordan to represent the thousands of guest workers in the garment industry.

“The Ministry of Labor is willing to negotiate and mediate between the workers and management, but in Jordan, all you have is management,” he said. “You have the guest workers from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and all over the place, but they have no unions. They have no power.”

In Bangladesh's ship-breaking industry, some 30,000 workers including children 10 to 13 years old, break apart huge decommissioned tankers that are 650 feet to 1,000 feet long and 20 stories high. The ships are run up onto the beaches of Bangladesh, where they are dismantled for scrap.



Charles Kernaghan (center) and freed workers in Jordan.

garment sweatshop in Jordan.

And they are helping Bangladeshi ship breakers organize under the banner of Workers Uniting, the international union created by the USW and Unite, the largest trade union in Britain and Ireland.

They are also trying to improve conditions for sweatshop workers at Alianza Fashion in Guatemala.

“Many workers in the developing world are more aggressive than workers in the United States,” Kernaghan said. “Some have the same characteristics as the best and the most militant steelwork-

ng



With only the most minimal safety precautions and equipment, the ship breakers use crude hammers, axes and acetylene torches to tear apart the metal hulls for recycling. They work 12 hours



Shipbreakers in Bangladesh wear new safety goggles.

a day, seven days a week, for just cents an hour. Injuries are commonplace. A worker is killed, on average, every three weeks.

Safety gear distributed

Late last year, Kernaghan and a delegation from Unite distributed safety gear including hard hats, safety goggles and gloves to ship breakers.

More than 630 of the workers joined a mass clandestine meeting and voted to organize a union. The organizing drive will be directed by Bangladesh's Port and Dock Workers, that country's most progressive union, along with institute staff on the ground in Bangladesh.

The Port and Dock Workers were nearly crushed by a military government in 2007. Two of the union's leaders were imprisoned for 18 months, but they remain active.

"We found the perfect partner on the ground. These guys are the real thing. Any U.S. trade unionist would be proud to stand next to these port workers," Kernaghan said.

While he was in Bangladesh with the shipyard workers last July, the country was debating raising the minimum wage for some 3.5 million garment workers. Kernaghan placed an ad in one of the largest daily newspapers, saying Workers Uniting, Unite and the USW backed demands by the garment workers for higher pay.

The ad created a media firestorm, prompting the prime minister to address the issue. The garment workers later credited the ad and the labor support with helping them to win a raise in the minimum wage from about 11.5 cents an hour to 21 cents an hour.

"No Western union had ever stood in solidarity with the unions in Bangladesh," Kernaghan said.

In Guatemala, the institute is working with a local non-profit to improve conditions at factories like Alianza, which produces clothing for Briggs New York, Sag Harbor, Fashion Bug, Alfani and JM Collection.

Last summer, the United States Trade Representative filed a case against Guatemala alleging the systematic violation of workers legal rights there.

Alianza workers, for example, are forced to work shifts of up to 12 hours six days a week. They are paid \$1.21 an hour, including a 95 cent wage plus bonuses.

Workers are allowed 20 minutes to sew each pair of pants. Kernaghan said supervisors yell

and curse at the women workers. Those who try to exercise their legal right to organize are immediately fired and blacklisted.

In addition, Kernaghan said it appears that the factory is robbing workers of their Social Security deductions, leaving them and their children without health care coverage and pensions.

Kernaghan said he's not sure if the Social Security fraud is a local problem or a national one. He has called for an investigation of Guatemala's Social Security Institute.

The volume of worker complaints that come to the institute from all over the world makes Kernaghan fret over his small staff and small budget.

The institute's board of directors include representatives from the USW, Unite, the United Food and Commercial Workers, and recently, the International Association of Fire Fighters. Many USW districts, the Women of Steel and local unions are key supporters of the institute and Kernaghan's work.

"Clearly, it's possible to do this work," Kernaghan said. "Something is always coming up. It's non-ending."



Shipbreakers show off new red safety gloves.

Deepwater Horizon

To improve on-the-job safety in the oil sector, the United States must dramatically change the way it regulates the entire industry, from exploration and development to refining.

That's the message USW Health, Safety and Environment Director Mike Wright delivered to the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) during a public hearing called to probe the fatal 2010 explosion of the BP Deepwater Horizon drilling rig.

"There is a dangerously wide gap between the inherent hazards of the oil industry and the effectiveness of the industry safety programs designed to address them," Wright said in his Dec. 15 testimony.

Safety problems aren't confined to BP or to offshore exploration and production, Wright told the panel. He said a lot can be learned about safety management and mismanagement and the industry's culture by looking at refinery operations.

Fundamental changes needed

"We have to fundamentally change how we regulate this industry, not just offshore, and not just in exploration and development, but all the way through refining," he said.

An explosion and fire on the Deepwater Horizon rig last April 20 killed 11 crewmen and ignited a fireball that was visible 35 miles away. The fire could not be extinguished and the rig sank two days later, leaving the well gushing at the sea floor and causing the largest oil spill in U.S. history.

In his testimony, Wright noted that no union represents workers on the offshore oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico where the disaster occurred. The industry has worked hard to keep it that way, he said.

The USW, however, represents 30,000 workers in the oil sector, mostly in refineries. USW-represented refineries account for about two-thirds of U.S. capacity.

The USW also represents about 320 operators and maintenance employees who work for BP in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska – the biggest oil field in North America. Two local union officers testified with Wright.

Glenn Trimmer, financial secretary of Local 4959, has worked 35 years in the petrochemical industry including refineries, chemical plants and the oil field.

Trimmer said BP has a two-prong "carrot and stick" approach to safety that includes disciplining employees for violations and tying pay bonuses to safety measures.

"It's our opinion their program is about driving numbers down," he said. "The result was employees not reporting accidents or near misses for fear of being disciplined."

On the carrot end of BP's approach, Trimmer said the company daily reviews data on safety issues such as recordable illnesses, first aids, fires and near misses and bases year-end performance bonuses on unspecified results.

"I submit the effect has been to reduce reporting of any event that might be marked against your pay," he said.

Excessive overtime also remains a problem. Trimmer said 18-hour shifts were once common until the union intervened and the company initiated a new permission policy. To get around the new policy, 16-hour shifts replaced 18-hour shifts.

"What reasonable person thinks that fatigue is not an issue for someone working 16 hours a day for 14 days in a row? Trimmer asked the CSB.

Problems remain

Fritz Guenther, a 31-year maintenance worker for BP and chief steward of Local 4959, described how a culture of preventative maintenance gave way over decades to understaffing and maintenance backlogs.

Although some improvements have been made in the last few years, Guenther said problems remain including equipment corrosion and lack of timely inspections. BP, he said, is fighting with the union over a full-time Health, Safety and Environment representative.

"It's easy to accept risk when you're sitting in an office miles away from the blast zone," Guenther said.

Most USW members in oil came through the merger with PACE, which was finalized nine days after a March 23, 2005 explosion at a BP refinery in Texas City, Texas, killed 15 workers and injured more than 170.

In the aftermath, the USW surveyed local unions at 71 refineries operated by 22 different companies, and asked about the existence of hazardous conditions that helped to cause the Texas City accident.



The Deepwater Horizon rig burns on April 20, 2010.

Probe

USW Calls for Fundamental Changes in Oil Industry Regulation

Those conditions were atmospheric venting, inadequate management of instrumentation and alarm systems, siting temporary structures near process units, and allowing non-essential personnel in vulnerable areas during startups and shutdowns. The survey also looked at emergency response.

Some 90 percent of the surveyed locals reported one or more of those hazardous conditions while 43 percent had three or more. Seventy percent reported inadequacies in emergency response programs.

Even though the survey data was collected nearly a year after the Texas City accident, 87 percent of the surveyed locals reported that the overall management of process safety in their refineries was still not effective enough.

One of the conditions noted in the survey, non-essential personnel in vulnerable areas, was among the reasons why seven people died in an accident at the Tesoro refinery in Anacortes, Wash., last April 2, Wright testified.

Refineries have hazards beyond hydrocarbon fires and explosions. Last October, a worker died in a hydrogen sulfide release at the ExxonMobil refinery in Chalmette, La.

Greatest hazard of all

Wright said the “greatest community hazard of all” is an accident that would release deadly hydrogen fluoride (HF) from a refinery’s alkylation unit.

“A full release in a populated area could kill or injure more than a million people unless they are evacuated in time,” Wright said.

A far safer system, using solid acid catalysts as a replacement for HF, has been demonstrated at the pilot stage. But Wright said the union knows of no refinery planning to build such a unit. Most have not even converted to a somewhat safer – although not safe enough – modified HF system.

Wright, who has worked on safety issues in many industries where the union represents workers, said he knows of no other industry where the gap between the intrinsic hazard of the process and the quality of programs addressing that hazard is so wide.

“That’s not because oil industry safety programs are so bad in comparison to other industries,” Wright said. “Indeed, they are better than the average safety programs

across all industries. But they tend to be the kind of ordinary programs aimed at trips and strains and injuries in general, mostly by exhorting employees to just work safely, often through programs that focus primarily on worker behavior, instead of finding and addressing the kind of system failures capable of causing catastrophic accidents.”

Voluntary safety standards

The industry sets voluntary safety standards through the American Petroleum Institute (API). Wright said many of those standards are strong, well-reasoned and useful. But overall, the system isn’t good enough.

Even where an API recommendation is widely followed, Wright said it may have loopholes that completely negate its intent. He cited API 753, which was developed in response to a CSB recommendation that the API bar trailers and other portable buildings from potentially dangerous locations.

“API responded, and wrote an excellent standard in all respects but one – it specifically exempts ‘lightweight fabric enclosures,’” Wright said. “So in many refineries the trailers have simply been replaced by tents.”

Wright said there is an “equally wide gap” between the industry’s hazards and regulatory efforts.

“A nuclear meltdown might be worse than a catastrophic release of HF, but the nuclear industry is regulated by the NRC, an independent agency with real power and resources,” Wright said. “Mining is a dangerous industry, but mining has MSHA, with a stronger law and far more resources per worker than OSHA.”

One thing that would make oil exploration and development safer is more unionization, Wright told the CSB.

“I’m not saying that unionization automatically increases safety or that all union plants are safe. Texas City was a unionized plant. But we can bring fresh eyes, a fresh approach, and experience in other industries to the table,” he said.

“More important, we give workers a real voice in workplace conditions. We can encourage people to report safety problems, and we can protect them when a manager doesn’t like it.”

Explosion Could Happen Again Without Reform

Disasters like the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon rig could happen again without significant reform in both industry practices and government policies, according to the presidential oil spill commission.

In a new report, the commission said last year’s accident was “rooted in systemic failures” within the offshore oil and gas industries and the government regulators who oversee the industry.

The report blamed “missteps and oversight” by oil giant BP, rig owner Transocean and contractor Halliburton. The three companies all ignored critical warning signs and failed to take precautions that might have averted the environmental disaster.

“The blowout was not the product of a series of aberrational decisions made by a rogue industry or government officials that could not have been anticipated or expected to occur again. Rather, the root causes are systemic, and absent significant reform in both industry practices and government policies, might well recur,” the commission concluded.

The report highlighted time and cost-saving measures that were taken when better alternatives were available. Ultimately, the panel said the disaster came down to management failure. Decision-makers did not fully consider risks taken.

Refinery Safety

USW Launches Shareholder Campaign

The USW is bringing its petroleum industry safety issues to the attention of shareholders as part of its “Safe Refineries, Secure Jobs, Healthy Communities” campaign.

In December, the AFL-CIO Reserve Fund filed shareholder resolutions on the USW’s behalf with Sunoco, ExxonMobil, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Marathon, Tesoro and Valero.

The resolutions ask the companies to detail the steps they are taking to reduce the risk of accidents excluding proprietary and personal information.

Each corporate board of directors is requested to prepare a report within 90 days of the 2011 shareholders meeting to address their oversight of process safety management, staffing levels, and the inspection and maintenance of refineries and other equipment.

USW-represented workers in the industry will attend shareholder meetings this April and May to present the resolutions and seek shareholder support for them.

“We have always contended that increasing transparency in this sector is

key to improving refinery safety,” said International Vice President Gary Beevers, who heads the USW’s National Oil Bargaining (NOB) program.

“This is an opportunity to start talking with shareholders about safety in a meaningful way that addresses their concerns with financial risk,” he said.

Sunoco agreed after receiving the proposal to disclose data on its tracking and categorization of process safety management events as part of its annual social responsibility report. The number of pressure vessels and relief devices that are overdue for scheduled inspections will be included.

Sunoco will also disclose and explain its worker fatigue policy and has agreed to work with the USW in developing a tracking system to report on the company’s performance and policy implementation.

No other refiners have so far agreed to increase transparency in the reporting of process safety management events and steps taken to make refineries safer.

“At the National Oil Bargaining meeting last September we promised these shareholder resolutions would be filed as part of our ongoing ‘Safe Refineries, Secure Jobs, Healthy

Communities’ campaign, but we still have a lot of work to do,” Beevers said.

“Workers are still getting killed on the job and communities are still at risk. The state of process safety management in this industry is atrocious.”

There were 13 fires, 19 deaths and 25 injuries in the oil sector in the first six months of 2010 including BP’s oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, which killed 11 workers and caused the worst and most costly environmental disaster in U.S. history.

Each company’s safety record is highlighted in a statement supporting each individual resolution. The AFL-CIO Reserve fund cited 128 safety violations at Sunoco refineries over the past five years, including 108 related to process safety management and 101 serious, willful or repeat violations.

“Safety and environmental hazards can play havoc with a company’s stock price performance,” Beevers said. “This is why it is so important that the oil companies comply with our shareholder resolutions to report on the steps they have taken to reduce the risk of accidents. Their openness provides transparency and can only increase investor confidence in their companies.”



BP TO Sell Texas City

Reacting to news that BP wants to sell its refineries in Texas City, Texas and Carson, Calif., the USW said it is working with the British oil giant to ensure a smooth transition for employees when the properties are sold.

Jobs and the USW contracts at both facilities will be protected because of the successorship language in the union’s agreements with BP, which made the announcement on Feb. 1.

“BP assured us that there will be a smooth transition to the next employer,” said International President Leo W. Gerard. “We are committed to work with the new company on health and safety issues at both facilities.”

BP’s Texas City plant became a symbol of safety deficiencies in the oil company’s culture after a March 2005 explosion and fire killed 15 workers and injured 170 others. Since then, the USW has worked to improve health and safety at BP and other oil refiners.

The USW will continue working with BP to ensure all operations are safe.

“We intend to meet with BP CEO Robert Dudley to discuss his company’s operations in the U.S. and to ensure his health and safety promises are kept,” Gerard said.

No meeting date was set as *USW@Work* went to press.

Honeywell International's use of temporary unskilled replacement workers to operate the nation's largest uranium conversion plant is unnecessarily putting communities at risk.

That's the conclusion of a new USW report that outlines the health and safety hazards posed by the use of strikebreakers at Honeywell's plant in Metropolis, Ill., near the Kentucky border.

At a press conference called to release the report, *Communities at Risk? Potential Hazards in Metropolis, Ill., and Paducah, Ky.*, Local 7-669 President Darrell Lillie cautioned that a catastrophic event could happen if Honeywell doesn't change course.

"The warning signs are present," Lillie said.

International President Leo W. Gerard asked for federal investigations to assure that the facility, nearby communities and their residents are safe from very real hazards posed by inexperienced replacement workers handling dangerous materials.

Federal investigation sought

Gerard sent the report to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

"We are extremely concerned that the strikebreakers do not have the same level of training, education and experience as our members, who have worked in this facility for many years," Gerard wrote in requesting investigations. "We know that the institutional capacity of a work force can not be replaced."

A local legislator, Illinois state Rep. Brandon Phelps, called on Honeywell to cease its use of temporary workers until a new contract is reached for the 228 USW members who have been locked out of jobs since June 28.

Phelps asked the NRC and OSHA to halt work until an agreement is reached. He also called on the state and federal EPA, OSHA and the NRC to hold hearings and demand that Honeywell ensure the region's communities are safe.

"It is irresponsible for Honeywell to operate like this and put the community at harm every day," Phelps said.

Several hazardous chemicals are

Photo courtesy of The Southern Illinoisian



USW Sounds Alarm

Replacement Workers Put Communities at Risk

used to produce the plant's main product, uranium hexafluoride (UF₆), including dangerously poisonous hydrofluoric acid.

Concern over safety in the region has been heightened by a series of incidents starting with an explosion that occurred shortly after the facility reopened in September with replacement workers. Hydrogen and fluorine were accidentally combined.

The NRC cited Honeywell in November for illegally coaching and

assisting its temporary workers on exams that allowed them to operate the facility. A Dec. 22 release of hydrofluoric acid triggered emergency sirens and the spraying of water to knock down escaping gas.

More than 128,000 residents within a 25-mile radius of the plant could be harmed if only a small portion of the 1.1 million pounds of hydrofluoric acid used in the process were to be accidentally released, the report noted.

Steelworkers Wood Council

Canadian Forest Industry Locals Bargain Hard in Recession

In the depths of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression, USW local unions in Canada – members of the Steelworkers Wood Council – bargained hard-won collective agreements in the softwood lumber industry in both the interior and coastal regions of British Columbia.

The results from last year's bargaining are increased wages and benefits and better job security for laid-off workers and those affected by partial and permanent closures.

Pattern agreements were set with three industry groups including Canada Forest Products and the Council on

Northern Interior Forest Employment Relations (CONIFER) in the interior. On the coast, the bargaining committee set a pattern with the giant Western Forest Products.

Steelworkers across North America will recall that coastal wood workers struck the industry for three months in 2007. During that dispute the USW conducted a major consumer action campaign from British Columbia to Maine, Pennsylvania, Florida and Texas.

"In 2010 we were able to reach agreements without job action," District 3 Director Stephen Hunt said. "No doubt the BC forestry industry remembered the

strength of our international union during the 2007 coastal strike and that assisted us in reaching agreements across the province."

Wood Council Chairman Bob Matters said the strength and unity of the membership's support for both interior and coastal bargaining committees has been outstanding.

"Our members stood with us during negotiations that have taken longer than we thought," Matters said. "We thank our membership for their solidarity and support in an industry that is greatly divided and has only seen a short-lived economic recovery."

A series of collective agreements, based on pattern agreements set in the north, were also reached with West Fraser Timber in northern interior Locals 1-424 and 1-425. Some issues are outstanding.

All agreements negotiated by the union provide health and welfare benefits improvements and stabilize the Long Term Disability Plan.

The agreements, which pay 2 percent wage increases in years three and four of the contracts, expire on June 30, 2013 in the interior. Coastal agreements expire on June 14, 2014.



USW Local 1-85 member at Western Forest Products' Alberni Pacific Division mill on Vancouver Island. USW photo by Norm Garcia

"We have reached solid collective agreements in both the coast and northern interior regions during very hard economic times."

"We have reached solid collective agreements in both the coast and northern interior regions during very hard economic times," Matters said.

At press time, the union was still in negotiations with the Interior Forest Labor Relations Association, an employer association in the southern interior.

Wood Council local union members have been following negotiations on a website set up specifically for negotiations (www.dealwithsteel.ca)

The Wood Council consists of amalgamated geographical locals of the former Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada – a Canadian union that merged with the USW in 2004.

While the rich get richer

Over the past year, Republicans made their disdain for the unemployed perfectly clear by calling them names and repeatedly attempting to sever their lifeline benefits. Expression of their feelings toward the middle class was more subtle.

Throughout 2010, as Congress repeatedly considered extending unemployment benefits, the GOP called the jobless “spoiled,” characterized them as shiftless and even suggested benefits be ended because it would be wrong to feed the unemployed, facilitating their “reproduction.”

The behavior of Republican Congress members toward the middle class wasn't nearly as blatant, but the message is similar – they're expendable.

If Republicans had enacted their proposed policies, the middle class would have been decimated. Republican attacks on the middle class have included:

- The attempt to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, which would end reforms that have shielded workers from greedy health insurance corporations;
- The demands for repeal of the Wall Street reform legislation, which would end regulations preventing bankster risk-taking;
- The insistence on slashing \$100 billion in non-military spending in the midst of a jobs crisis.
- And the calls for cutting Social Security and Medicare benefits.

While conspiring to take from the middle class, Congressional Republicans engaged in a concerted, and ultimately successful, effort to give a present to the privileged class. The GOP held hostage extension of benefits for the unemployed and tax cuts for the middle class until they extracted two more years of Bush tax cuts for millionaires.

Talk deficit – take tax breaks

The GOP had just come off an election cycle in which it repeatedly told Americans nothing was more important than lowering the federal deficit – not jobs, not preserving Social Security, nothing. But to accommodate the rich, the GOP insisted on increasing the national deficit by hundreds of millions of dollars.

In addition to extending Bush's budget-busting tax cuts for the rich, the legislation included another controversial provision: lowered Social Security payroll taxes. The reduction from 6.2 percent to 4.2 percent puts a little cash in workers' pockets, but it also reduces the Social

Security trust fund at a time when the program is under attack.

And for that reason, many workers opposed it, particularly because the payroll tax cut occurred just as a deficit commission released a plan to reduce the federal debt by, among other things, raising the age at which workers could begin collecting Social Security.

This is how Independent Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who caucuses with Democrats, responded to the deficit commission proposal: “The huge increase in the national debt in recent years was caused by two unpaid wars, tax breaks for the wealthy, a Medicare prescription drug bill written by the pharmaceutical industry, and the Wall Street bailout. Unlike Social Security, none of these proposals were paid for. Not only has Social Security not contributed a dime to the deficit, it has a \$2.6 trillion surplus.”

No need for reform?

Shortly before release of the deficit commission report, the GOP said it would work to reverse Wall Street reform, the law Congress passed to prevent bankers high on bonus bucks from gambling the world economy into a hole again.

Republicans in the House did actually pass a bill repealing the health care reform law. With their new majority in the House, the GOP voted in January to end the law's benefits without providing any replacement legislation. They promised to work on that.

In the meantime, they would have ordered senior citizens to send back the \$250 they received last year to help them pay for their prescription drugs. They would have cut off young adults, aged 18 to 26, who the health insurance reform law allowed to remain on their parents' plans. They would have allowed insurers to refuse to cover children with pre-existing conditions. They would have allowed insurers to again cancel coverage after someone became ill.

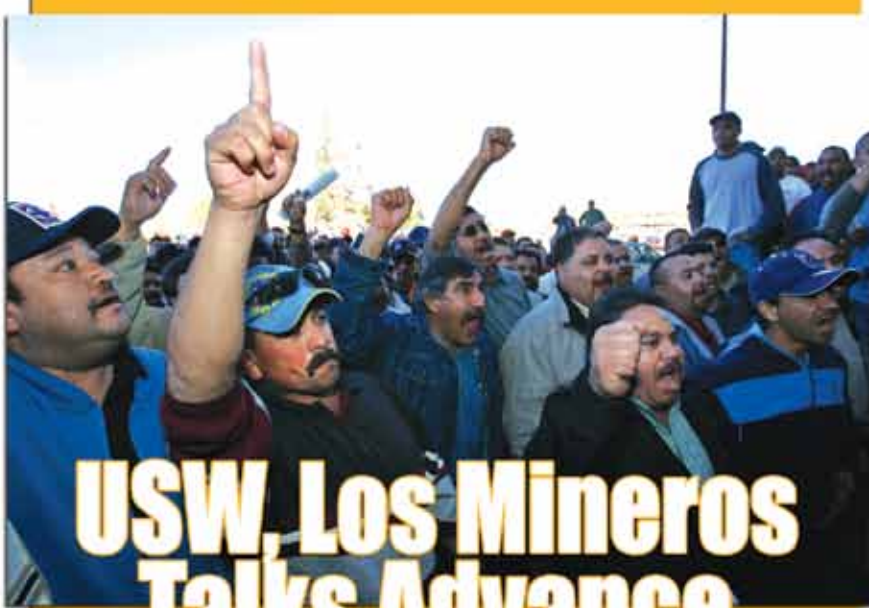
These are benefits for the middle class. The rich can afford all the health insurance and health care services their millions can buy.

In the U.S. Senate, Democrats, who maintain a majority, defeated the Republicans' bill to repeal health insurance reform.

So far, those Senate Democrats have also resisted Republican demands to cut \$100 billion from areas that benefit the middle class including school funding, programs to ensure worker health and safety and enforcement of clean air and water laws.

The middle class could say Democrats have their back. Republicans, by contrast, are attempting to stab them in the back.

GARPITO!
Letters



USW, Los Mineros Talks Advance

The USW and the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel, and Allied Workers of the Mexican Republic (Los Mineros) are moving forward on their pledge to increase strategic cooperation.

Representatives of both unions met on Dec. 10 in Vancouver to advance the joint commitment to cooperation that was agreed to in June 2010.

The June agreement called for the proposal of “immediate measures to increase strategic cooperation between our organizations as well as the steps required to form a unified organization.”

As the two unions committed then, a joint committee of members of the executive boards of both unions was established and, following intensive communication over several months, met together to agree on the next phase.

The joint committee, as well as International President Leo W. Gerard and General Secretary Napoleón Gómez Urrutia of the Mineros, reviewed the legal and political attack on the Mineros in Mexico and discussed ways to jointly continue to improve the wages, benefits, and working conditions of workers throughout North America.

Despite the attacks, Mineros members continue to support their union, which continues to negotiate the largest wage and benefit

increases in Mexico, at least three times greater than the average and often more, the USW noted.

The Mineros noted the success of the USW and its members in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean in taking on multinational corporations in North America and beyond.

The committee reviewed the success of joint organizing and negotiating efforts, which added more than 4,000 new members to the ranks of the Mineros last year, with an emphasis on companies employing members of both unions.

They also agreed to work to ensure the success of the International Days of Action on Feb. 14 to 19, when union members will demonstrate support for the Mineros in front of Mexican Embassies around the world.

The group agreed to form subcommittees to better understand the structure of each union in order to consider ways to better integrate the two unions. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for early 2011.

More developmental work will follow, as the joint committee seeks to accelerate its work to make the vision of a single North American organization dedicated to the improving the well-being of working people across the continent, a common goal of both the membership and the leadership of both unions.

USW Sub-District Director Manny Armenta was arrested in January by Mexican customs officers while on his way to meet with attorneys for the Los Mineros Mexican miners union.

The USW condemned Armenta’s arrest and said it would file a formal complaint with the U.S. State Department over the incident.

Armenta travels frequently between his home base in Arizona and Cananea in Mexico’s northern state of Sonora to support striking Mineros members at a Grupo Mexico copper mine.

The USW represents U.S. employees of Tucson-based ASARCO LLC, also owned by Grupo Mexico, and has forged strong ties with the Mineros over several years of cooperation.

At about 2 p.m. on Jan. 24, a Mexican customs officer stopped Armenta’s car, which is leased by the union, and accused him of driving a stolen vehicle.

Armenta presented documentation to no avail. After searching the vehicle with dogs, the officer attempted to extort a “fine” of 185,000 pesos (about \$15,000).

When Armenta refused to pay he was arrested and detained overnight. He was released early the next day after posting a bond of 80,000 pesos (about \$7,750).

Armenta’s car was impounded, and had not been returned at press time. His wallet was also taken during the arrest and later returned, minus \$700 cash.

“It just gives me more energy to continue doing my job,” Armenta said after his release.

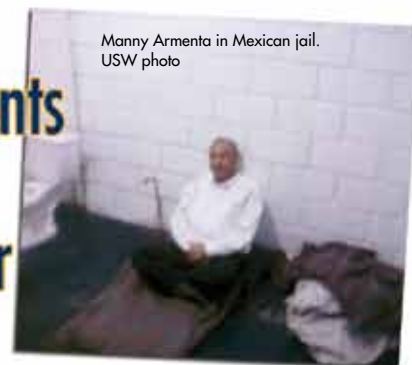
International President Leo W. Gerard condemned the Mexican federal authorities over the arrest and demanded that the charges against Armenta be dismissed. He also called for the return of confiscated property to the union and Armenta.

“This outrageous treatment by Mexican federal authorities shows the extent of the government’s corruption,” Gerard said.

Earlier in the month, Mineros leaders joined USW copper miners in a “sound-off” meeting with ASARCO, the U.S. copper producer owned by Grupo Mexico. The USW contract with ASARCO expires in June. Armenta is one of the union’s negotiators.

“By arresting Manny, the Mexican government is trying to intimidate the USW copper miners from exercising our right to collective bargaining and showing solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Mexico,” Gerard said.

Mexican Border Agents Arrest Steelworker Leader



Louis Beliczky, Pioneer Industrial Hygienist for the URW, Dies

Louis S. Beliczky, a widely admired industrial hygienist for the United Rubber Workers (URW) and a pioneer in his field, died on Jan. 5 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Beliczky, 85, was hired by the URW in 1971 as the first-full-time industrial hygienist employed by an industrial union in the United States. He retired in 1993 as the URW's Director of Industrial Hygiene.

Author of numerous workplace safety and health standards, Beliczky was a recipient of the USW's J. William Lloyd Award for outstanding service to the cause of worker safety and health, and an honorary member of the American Industrial Hygiene Association.

International President Leo W. Gerard said Beliczky had far-reaching impact on the lives of workers in the URW, the USW and across the globe.

Beliczky negotiated and implemented collective bargaining agreements covering medical surveillance and joint labor/management education programs. He represented URW members in AFL-CIO committees and sub-committees including the Industrial Union Department, where he served as chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee, senior scientist and advisory board member.

He was project director and coordinator of the URW's negotiated multimillion dollar Joint Occupational Health Program, which funded significant epidemiological studies at the Harvard and the University of North Carolina schools of public health.

Louis S. Beliczky



Habitat for Humanity

How long does it take a group of Steelworkers to build a house from start to finish?

In Tennessee, members of Local 1155L working in a joint effort with their employer, Bridgestone/Firestone, completed a Habitat for Humanity house in just 10 days.

After months of planning, construction started last Aug. 13. The house was finished on Aug. 22 and a participating family moved into their new home a week afterwards.

"It was a good project," said Local 1155L President Billy Dycus. "Many of the volunteers had never been involved in a Habitat house before and a lot of our members said it was one of the most fulfilling things they had ever done."

Planning for the house construction project in Warren County, Tenn., started last April. Once work got underway, a steady stream of USW volunteers pitched in to meet the tight construction schedule.

The foundation blocks and subflooring were done in advance. "But we framed it, we wired it, we painted it, we sided it ... we did it all. We even landscaped it," Dycus said.

Depending on the work plan, up to 30 Local 155L members volunteered daily for the project, which was supported by their employer, the Bridgestone/Firestone truck and bus tire plant in Warren County, Tenn.

"Everyone worked their tails off," Dycus said. "That's part of who we are. That's why they call us The Volunteer State, I guess. That's people who live and work in this area. They are willing to give of themselves.

"Part of it is showing the local community that we've got a good group of 774 members. This was a chance for us to get out and show them what we are all about and that we are a part of this community."

In building the house, Steelworker volunteers used skills learned in continuing education classes made available through the union's Institute for Career Development (ICD) programs.

For ICD students, this was a way for them to get some real hands-on work, said ICD Coordinator Ron Vining. "I think it makes the training better."



Members of Local 1155L work on Habitat for Humanity house in Tennessee. USW photos



NEWS Bytes

BREAKING NEWS

USW

2011 Convention Dates Set

The USW Constitutional Convention will be held this year in Las Vegas at the MGM Grand from Aug. 15 through Aug. 18. For information, contact your local union or go to www.convention.usw.org.

USW Activists Join King Celebration

More than 400 union activists converged on Cincinnati, Ohio, to remind America that Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of social and economic justice is not dead even in this tough political climate.

The union activists, including a large contingent of 98 Steelworkers led by International Vice President Fred Redmond, attended the annual AFL-CIO King Day Celebration, held this year from Jan. 13 to 17.

Cincinnati was chosen for the celebration because of its rich civil rights history. Because of its proximity to the Ohio River, which served as a natural dividing line between the slave states of the South and the free states of the North, Cincinnati was one of the last stops on the Underground Railroad.

Union members attending the AFL-CIO celebration discussed and developed strategies to advance the issues of good job creation, immigration reform and economic equality. They gathered at City Hall to condemn Republican Gov. John Kasich's plan to strip Ohio child care and home health care workers of their right to bargain.

For King, whose birthday has been a national holiday for the past 25 years, economic justice went hand in hand with civil rights. He believed the right to join a union was critical to gaining economic justice.

More than 40 years ago, King faced a similarly hostile political climate when he went to Memphis to fight for the freedom of sanitation workers to form a union with AFSCME. He was shot and killed April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis. He would have been 82 this year.

Local 5702 Honored for PAC Support

Reynard Adams, financial secretary of Local 5702 at the Noranda Alumina refinery in Gramercy, La., supports the USW Political Action Committee because he knows how important it is for organized labor to be active in government.

"It's hard to get the money, but it is important in the political arena," said Adams, who was nominated to be the PAC member of the quarter by PAC Coordinator Michael Scarver.

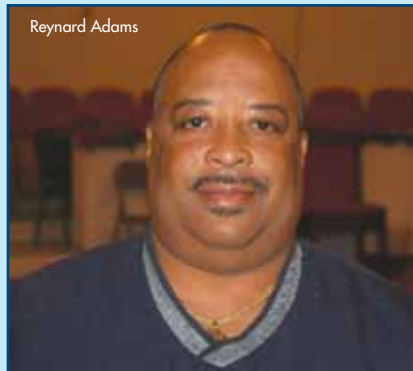
PACs and the funds they raise play a key role in the USW's ongoing activities on behalf of the union's members and their families. Contributions are voluntary and are used to support labor-friendly candidates and initiatives.

Local 5702 is the top producing PAC local in District 13, according to Scarver. Adams has spearheaded the local's PAC drive for several years.

Under his direction, the PAC program held a fundraiser featuring a Harley-Davidson motorcycle at Local 5702 about four years ago. And Scarver said Adams has continued since then to sign up new members for PAC contributions.

"He makes sure all new hires get a PAC card when they have orientation," Scarver said.

Local 5702 represents about 350 employees of Noranda in Louisiana. Last October, the local ratified a five-year agreement with the company.



Reynard Adams

Standing Strong in Voisey's Bay

After 18 months of pounding the picket lines, 180 nickel miners and members of Local 9508 in Voisey's Bay, Canada, have a new contract with the Brazilian transnational Vale S.A.

The deal approved in January includes wage and pension increases, a cost-of-living allowance and a bonus program. The agreement was approved by 88 percent of the membership.

A larger strike involving 3,100 USW members in Sudbury and Port Colborne, Ontario, against Vale, the world's second-largest mining company, was settled last summer.

Braskem Union Busting Resisted

The USW local representing workers at the Braskem polypropylene plant in Neal, W.Va., in January filed unfair labor practice charges against the company for failure to bargain.

Local 721 struck Braskem last Aug. 16 after rejecting an unfair offer, and has since made numerous failed attempts to settle with the Brazilian company. Braskem bought Sunoco's plastics business in 2010 for \$350 million.

The expired contract covered 72 workers. "We wanted to correct our contract language and protect our benefits," said Local 721 President Terry Carpenter. "But every time we've gone back to the table, they made each offer worse."

Local Unions Demonstrate Charity

Many USW locals contribute to those less fortunate during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. Here are a few examples of last year's efforts: **Local 1441/1441-01** of Selma, Ala. donated \$1,000 and 35 turkeys to striking Local 748L members in Columbus, Miss. ... **Local 1097** of Westport, Ore. raised \$15,000 for the United Way and assisted with a paper towel donation ... **Locals 1899, 50 and 68** of Granite City, Ill., collected toys for the Good Samaritan House and the Children's Home and Aid charities ... **Local 12** of East Gadsden, Ala., donated 2,150 items to a food bank ... **Local 1086** in Riceboro, Ga., gave baskets to needy families ... Pittsburgh **Local 3657** donated toys to a labor council project ... **Local 1375** of Warren, Ohio, donated Thanksgiving baskets to families of members on layoff ... **Local 831** of Providence, N.C. collected \$2,500 for Christmas gifts and the Salvation Army ... **Local 3199** of Erie, Pa. and the local labor council held a "Lunch with Santa" for homeless families.

District 10 Members Get Paid

When the Laubeck Corp. closed Laubenstein Manufacturing in Ashland, Pa. in 2001 and filed for bankruptcy protection, the USW moved to protect the interests of bargaining unit employees.

A law firm acting on behalf of the USW filed claims for lost benefits and vacation monies. The bankruptcy recently concluded after years of litigation and 34 past employees received long overdue payments totaling \$45,776. The checks were distributed in November.

Fighting Back in Mississippi

Members of Local 748L in Columbus, Miss., are in a long fight against Omnova Solutions to save seniority rights, pensions and health care benefits.

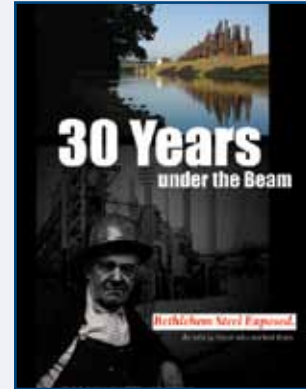
Some 180 members struck Omnova last May 21. Since then, Omnova has ignored requests from a mediator and state legislator to bargain even as quarterly profits fell.

Local 748L President Jay Lawrence said Omnova has hired inexperienced local workers to replace USW members at the plant, which supplies the wall covering and coated fabrics industries.

"It's a full-blown attack on our union and members," he said.

30 Years Under the Beam

A new book by former Steelworker Frank Behum Sr. of Bethlehem, Pa. tells the story of the last years of Bethlehem Steel as seen by those who worked there. His book, *30 Years Under the Beam: Bethlehem Steel Exposed*, can be purchased online at www.cspbooks.com or by contacting Behum at fabbfrank1@yahoo.com. "This is the real story, not what Bethlehem Steel wanted you to hear," Behum said.



NOTICE TO ALL EMPLOYEES COVERED BY A UNION SECURITY CLAUSE

All USW represented employees covered by a union security clause have the right, under *NLRB v. General Motors*, 373 U.S. 734 (1963), to be and remain a nonmember subject only to the duty to pay the equivalent of union initiation fees and periodic dues. Further, only such non-member employees have the right, under *Communications Workers v. Beck*, 487 U.S. 735 (1988), to limit payment of union-security dues and initiation fees to certain moneys spent on activities germane to a union's role as collective bargaining representative. This latter statutory right is embodied in the USW's Nonmember Objection Procedure.

The Procedure is available to any USW represented employee who is subject to a union security clause but who is a non-member and who objects to his or her union security fees being expended on nonrepresentational activities. Paragraph 1 of the Procedure states:

"1. Any individual, who is not a member of the United Steelworkers and who is required as a condition of employment to pay dues to the United Steelworkers pursuant to a union security arrangement but objects to supporting ... political or ideological expenditures by the United Steelworkers which are not necessarily or reasonably incurred for the purpose of performing the duties of an exclusive collective bargaining representative shall have the right upon perfecting a notice of objection to obtain an advance reduction of a portion of such individual's dues obligation commensurate with expenditures unrelated to collective bargaining as required by law."

An eligible employee who objects to the USW expending monies for nonrepresentational activities such as charitable or political activities may choose to perfect a notice of objection under Paragraph 2 of the Procedure, which states:

"2. To perfect a notice of objection, the individual must send an individually signed notice to the International Secretary-Treasurer during the first thirty days following either the individual's initial date of hire into the USW represented unit or an anniversary date of such hiring; provided, however, that if the individual lacked knowledge of this Procedure, the individual shall have a 30 day period commencing on the date the individual became aware of the Procedure to perfect a notice of objection; and, provided, further, that a member who resigns membership shall have the opportunity to object within the 30 day period following resignation.¹ Any objection thus perfected shall expire on the next appropriate hiring anniversary date unless renewed by a notice of objection perfected as specified above.

Objectors are not USW members and have no right to vote in union elections or to be a candidate, no right to participate in union meetings or activities, and no right to vote on contract ratification.

Upon perfecting properly a notice of objection, the objector is entitled to an advance reduction of a portion of his or her union security obligation commensurate with expenditures unrelated to collective bargaining, as required by law. International Secretary-Treasurer Stanley W. Johnson has determined, based upon expenditures for the calendar year 2009, that the reduction percentage under the Procedure is 9.00% (18.31% if organizing expenditures were to be included).

There are court decisions holding that organizing activities are non-representational activities. The USW does not agree with those rulings. However, without intending to waive its position that its organizing expenditures are not subject to objection and without intending to waive its right to assert its position if there is a challenge to the reduction percentage, the USW has deemed it expedient to apply the 18.31% figure to most current and future objectors. Therefore, an objector will be charged 81.69% of the regular dues amount. Each objector will be given a detailed breakdown between representational and non-representational activities with a report by an independent auditor.

The Procedure contains an appeals system under which challenges to the reduction percentage determination must be filed within 30 days of the Notice of Determination and are to be decided by an impartial arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association. Disputed amounts are escrowed pending appeal.

While a notice must be individually signed and timely mailed, there is no form for a notice. Processing is faster, however, when the notice contains the objector's name, address, local union number, and employer.

¹ Any right of a resignee to pay a reduced amount under this Procedure may or may not be superceded by the resignee's check-off authorization.



International

Women's Conference Confronts

Leeann Anderson
Special Assistant to International President Leo W. Gerard

“This is really about confronting global capital.”



There are good reasons why the USW International Women's Conference has the word international in its name and aims to aid women and workers in the world's less developed places.

“This is really about confronting global capital,” Leeann Anderson, special assistant to International President Leo W. Gerard, said. “We know now that money flows around the globe, and we as trade unions need to be a global force to confront that.”

Anderson delivered those words to the most recent international conference in Pittsburgh attended by some 1,000 delegates from across North America with special guests from Liberia, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Her exhortation to global union activism launched a series of speakers who described the need for concerted action between developed and underdeveloped nations to aid women, workers and families. They also detailed successes by the USW and Unite, the United Kingdom's largest industrial union and partners in Workers Uniting, the first global trade union.

Fight discrimination, inequality

Unite Assistant General Secretary Diana Holland told the conference that “it is time to redouble our efforts against discrimination and inequality, to make sure we don't go back” as women unionists prepare to celebrate in 2011 the 100th anniversary of the designation of March 8 as International Women's Day.

While describing Unite's efforts to persuade the International Labor Organization to develop standards for domestic workers, who are mostly women, Holland said women

Diana Holland
Unite Assistant General Secretary

“It is time to redouble our efforts against discrimination and inequality, to make sure we don't go back.”



Activism

Global Capital

unionists must fight at home and for other women workers worldwide.

“Through our transnational corporations, we are tied together with the poorest workers in the world,” added Barbara Briggs of The Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights, formerly the National Labor Committee (NLC).

“We need to reach out to them so that all of us have a chance for decent and safe working conditions, a decent wage and to be able to raise our families in a decent way and send our kids to school,” Briggs said.

Dying at work

The institute is assisting mostly women garment workers in Bangladesh who earn as little as 17 cents an hour, working 14-hour days, seven days a week. One woman at the R.L. Denim factory there died at her work station and a young man was kicked by a supervisor after he fell unconscious, Briggs said.

Most of the clothing they produced was sold at Metro Group, a popular retail chain in Europe and England. At the request of the institute and the USW, Unite and its German counterpart complained to the media.

In response, Metro Group threatened to withdraw all of its orders from R.L. Denim, Briggs said. Women of Steel, an activist organization of USW women, wrote hundreds of letters to the retailer explaining that it needed to demand improvements in conditions at the factory, not throw the women there out of work.

And that’s what happened, Briggs said. Abusive managers were fired. The factory was cleaned and forced overtime was ended. Now the institute is helping garment workers across Bangladesh form unions, Briggs reported.

Barbara Briggs
Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights

“Through our transnational corporations, we are tied together with the poorest workers in the world.”



Briggs’ description of deadly work conditions brought tears to the eyes of some delegates, as did stories told by Stephen Lewis, co-director of Aids-Free World.

In 2000, Lewis said the United Nations agreed to eight goals to be implemented by 2015 to close the gap between poverty in less developed countries and privilege in more developed nations.

The goals included gender equality and reducing poverty, maternal mortality and child mortality. “Every single one of the goals speaks to women and the rights of women,” he said, adding, the world is not close to achieving them.

Lewis recounted meeting a 14-year-old girl who was raising her four younger siblings in Uganda after they were orphaned by the AIDS epidemic. “I am the mother,” he recalled the girl telling him.

Lewis urged the assembly to work with him on these issues. Trade unions, he said, “are an important vehicle to uphold the rights of women around the world.”

Los Mineros hero

Gerard introduced Los Mineros President Napoleon Gomez, who was forced out of his home country of Mexico by threats from the government. He has been living in exile in Canada with the help of the USW, Unite, the International Metalworkers Federation and other unions and federations around the world.

“If there is a hero, a real labor hero in my lifetime that I know of, Napoleon is one of them,” Gerard said.

The bond with the Mineros illustrates a point made by International Vice President Carol Landry – that unionists worldwide must aid each other and all workers.

“We have a duty to this union and our daughters and sons to make this a better place, leave this world in a better place than we found it,” Landry said.

Landry challenged the group to work to achieve the goal of “equality, dignity and respect for each sister here and around the world.”

Have You Moved?

Notify your local union financial secretary, or clip out this form with your old address label and send your new address to:

USW@Work

USW Membership Department,
3340 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

Name _____

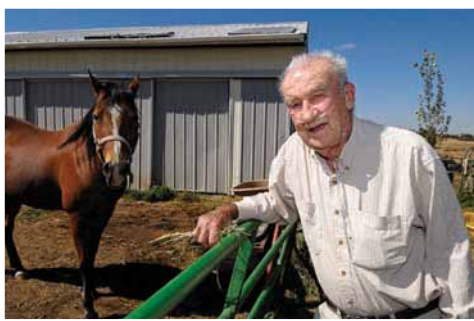
New Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Union Plus Benefits Never Stop!

For generations USW members helped to build this country. Today, Union Plus is proud to honor that tradition with a host of benefits to help USW members and family members of every generation.



Frank Starkey of Parker, Colo., and USW Local 724L discovered a new Union Plus program called Hospital Care Grants that helped him cope with some unexpected medical bills.

Help with health issues:

- **Free Medical Bill Negotiator** can help you lower your medical bills
- **Union Plus Mortgage** has built-in protection that **covers your payments for up to 6 months** when you're laid off, disabled or on strike
- **Health Savings Programs** cut your out-of-pocket costs at participating pharmacies, vision providers, dentists, doctors and hospitals



Christina Rickman, whose father Kenneth Jones is a member of USW Local 12136, applied for a Union Plus Scholarship and was awarded \$1,000.

Help with education costs:

- **Education rebates** for Union Plus Credit Card holders who make education-related purchases
- **Save 15-60% savings on college test preparation** with the Princeton Review to help students prepare for the ACT, SAT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT and more.
- **National Labor College (NLC)** offers **unique online degree programs** tailored for full-time working men and women.
- **College Savings Grants of \$500** to seed your college fund for the future