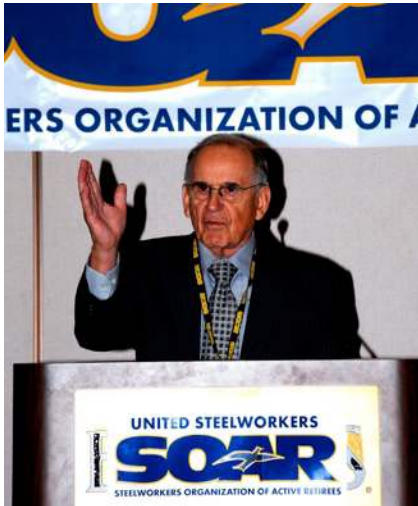


Connection

Retired USW International President Lynn Williams Dies



PITTSBURGH (May 5) – Lynn R. Williams, the son of a Canadian mill-town minister who led the United Steelworkers (USW) as its international president during a turbulent decade of steel industry consolidation, died May 4 at age 89 in Toronto, Canada.

The first Canadian to lead the USW, Mr. Williams was its president from 1983 to 1994, a time of crisis in the North American steel industry, which, confronted by unfairly traded imports, underwent unrelenting bankruptcies and consolidations.

“Lynn Williams held this union together through the worst of times, the massive bankruptcies and consolidations in the U.S. steel industry,” said USW International President Leo W. Gerard. “Lynn showed that he was a leader of great compassion and ingenuity;

securing deals to help save as much of the industry as possible, while at the same time preserving pensions and benefits for workers.”

Mr. Williams was appointed USW International President on Nov. 17, 1983, following the death of his predecessor, Lloyd McBride. He won a special election in 1984 to complete the final two years of Mr. McBride’s term and was re-elected to full terms in 1985 and 1989 to lead the union that represents workers in the United States, Canada, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Aruba.

In the years between 1981 and 1985, the basic steel industry lost some 350,000 jobs in the United States. Mr. Williams later called it a “frightful time” for the union, its members and retirees. The crisis created a wave of early retirements and, in many cases, threatened retiree health benefits and pensions.

“If you can imagine an old mattress out in the junkyard with the springs popping up, I was like a guy lying on the springs trying to hold them all down,” Mr. Williams said in a 2010 interview. “And I didn’t have enough body parts to put a hand on this one, a hand on that one and a knee on another one. I didn’t have enough body parts to hold them all down.”



From The Director's Desk



On May 5, 2014, the world lost a respected labor leader and a champion of social justice. I lost a mentor and a friend. Many knew Lynn R. Williams as the courageous and compassionate President of the United Steelworkers. I knew Lynn on a much more personal level. We traveled around our great union, working with the union's retirees, helping them come to grasp with the horror of employer bankruptcies; pledging that the Steelworkers would do all they can to soften the devastating blow delivered by uncaring corporate titans and a hapless government ill prepared for the downfall created by corporate greed and our nation's failed trade policies.

During that time I really got to know Lynn. Not as much as a boss or a colleague but as a friend. We shared stories, laughed and discussed and debated the important issues of the day. I got to see him up close and personal. I saw not only the brilliant, strong union leader, but the heartfelt compassion he had for the struggling working class and the poor.

I had the marvelous opportunity to work for and with him for over 25 years, for the last 12 years in SOAR. SOAR was his vision. He thought the union was always "too hard on our retirees." He told me many times that SOAR "was established to provide an opportunity for our members to continue their life long involvement in their union and to provide them a platform for their continued activism for economic and social justice." Not only did Lynn see this as his vision, he dedicated the last years of his life making it a reality.

I feel honored and privileged to have had the opportunity to work hand in hand with the most respected labor leader of my generation. I can only hope that the work I do continues the vision and compassion that Lynn set forth for all of us to follow.

Jim Centner, SOAR Director

Emeritus Report – Dan McNeil



Many years ago, Lynn Williams called me and asked me to become involved in SOAR. I was most happy to do so. Lynn and I go a long way back. He had been my mentor for several years, as we were both steelworkers our bond was strong. I will always hold Lynn in my thoughts and prayers. We all lost a very much loved man far too early. God bless you Lynn.

It's election time in Ontario. We go to the polls on June 12 to elect the Premier of our Province. The three main party leaders are making a lot of promises. I believe the New Democratic Party (NDP) will put more effort into building a better Ontario than the Liberals or Conservatives. We must do all in our power to get out and vote. Tell your families/friends how important it is to move forward. Remember what happened when the Conservative party under Mike Harris were in power? We sure don't want that to happen again.

Just a reminder to all our SOAR chapters that it is time to renew your affiliation with The Congress of Union Retirees (CURC) and your provincial Federation of Retirees.

In April, the Ontario Federation of Union Retirees (OFUR) held its biannual conference. Once again SOAR had a very good turnout of delegates. There were many good resolutions which brought about a lot of discussion.

Dan McNeil, SOAR Emeritus Member

Billy's Banter



I recently returned from an Alliance for Retired Americans convention that I attended along with a number of other SOAR delegates. I must tell you how impressed I was with the way that convention was put together. There were interesting speakers who focused on retiree issues and workshops that provided a wealth of knowledge for those who attended them. The staff of the Alliance were very helpful and was always available to lend a helping hand. Wouldn't it be great if SOAR had the largest represented group at the next convention gathering all of this information so that we could bring it home and share it with our members?

What impressed me the most was the amount of information that was made available to the delegates. The Alliance has been able to put together Congressional voting records on issues that are a priority to retirees and their families. They list legislation that has been introduced that supports our position and legislation that could hurt retirees. It also provides information on what we can do to influence passage of legislation that we support.

I am bringing this to your attention so that you can think about becoming involved in the ARA and also get your SOAR chapter involved with the Alliance. You could have an ARA representative speak at your SOAR meetings. Get other organizations that share our beliefs to speak at your meetings and offer to speak at their meetings. Together we can do anything we set our minds to.

Bill Pienta, SOAR President

R.I.P. Bob Pryor, SOAR Insurance Coordinator

After WW II, Bob Pryor went to work for Reynolds aluminum in McCook, Illinois. He was a scale clerk, and worked for that company about thirteen years. He was a member of USWA Local 3911 and began work with the union as a shop steward. Bob also served the local union as a Grievance Committeeman, Treasurer, and eventually became President of the local. He was also a member of the Wage Policy Committee.

Bob then spent about two years in the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department as an organizer. In 1962, he became a staff representative in District 31 in the Chicago area and served in that capacity for about six years. He was then transferred into the Pension and Insurance Department as a technician in Pittsburgh and in 1987 he retired from USWA. Bob immediately joined our SOAR organization and a year later became a member of the SOAR Executive Board.

Consider Writing a Letter

I'm discovering that letter writing, the kind with pen and ink and paper, is fast becoming a lost art. Some years ago in writing a "profile" of Lynn Williams, I copied what I could find on the internet and sent it to Lynn to check it for accuracy. Lynn made several corrections and changed some of the wording to give it, "a little different emphasis." When I told him of my experiences in the Navy as a Signalmen, Lynn explained some of his exploits as a Telegraphist S.O. (Special Operator) in the Navy picking up German subs as they surfaced. He then radioed reports and received instructions from their control station in Berlin."

I find whenever I write a letter with pen and paper, it gives me a much different result than if I simply email a message to someone or even speak on the phone. Give it a try.

Charlie Averill, SOAR Secretary Treasurer

Sen. Rubio Wants to Lead Us Down the Wrong Retirement Path



Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) is sometimes mentioned as a potential presidential candidate for 2016, but his vision for the country would be disastrous for seniors and anyone who hopes to retire. Sen. Rubio recently unveiled his plan to tackle our nation's retirement security crisis. At the core of his plan are the same tired calls to raise the Social Security retirement age and dismantle Medicare in favor of a privatized voucher system.



Sen. Rubio envisions an America where workers toil for years longer only to see more of their modest retirement incomes gobbled up by out-of-pocket health costs. His plans are not about protecting older Americans. They are about protecting the super-rich and shifting Medicare dollars into the coffers of giant insurance companies.

Increasingly, workers are struggling to save for retirement and forced to rely more heavily on earned benefits like Social Security and Medicare. Cutting these programs, as Sen. Rubio has proposed, would only make matters worse.

There is a better way. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) has introduced the Strengthening Social Security Act, S. 567, in the Senate, and Congresswoman Linda Sanchez (D-CA) filed a companion bill, H.R. 3118, in the House of Representatives. If Sen. Rubio were serious about retirement security, he would join them in calling to strengthen our Social Security system by enhancing benefits and requiring everyone to pay their fair share. We have to stand up to Marco Rubio and chart a different course. The future of retirement in America is at stake.

Barbara J. Easterling, President of the Alliance for Retired Americans



Sign Up For, Share Our Spanish Friday Alert - Alerta Semanal

The Alliance for Retired Americans Friday Alert is now available each week in Spanish! Find last week's Alerta Semanal, at <http://bit.ly/1kMauwN> or on the Alliance's Spanish language page <http://tinyurl.com/nllcz6n>. You can also sign up for Spanish-language emails at <http://bit.ly/1jbQ0fd> or on the Spanish language page.



“I trust the day will never come when the workers will surrender the right to strike.”

Samuel Gompers

Report From the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM)



Getting serious about our infrastructure is long overdue. America has miles of crumbling roads, 66,503 structurally deficient bridges, and our national transportation law expires this year with its funding source depleted before that. Can we afford to take this situation lightly? The answer is no!

MAP-21, the law that authorizes the Department of Transportation's (DOT) federal highway, transit, and highway safety programs expires on September 30. But the Highway Trust Fund, the pool of money used for infrastructure projects across the country, is projected to run out this summer. Since almost 50 percent of funding for roads, bridges, and transit systems nationwide comes from that fund, fixing and maintaining our infrastructure could be halted if the money dries up. State and local governments that fund projects through various taxes, partnerships, and tolls, will likely have a greater burden to bear if we allow the fund to deplete.

The federal gas tax is the only revenue source for the fund. That's right: The 18.4 cent per gallon tax we pay at the pump is all the money the fund is built upon. As vehicles are becoming more fuel efficient and alternative fuel vehicles are increasing in popularity, less money is directed into the fund. But the gas tax hasn't been increased since 1993, and no other alternative funding mechanism has been widely supported.

Every \$1 billion in infrastructure spending creates 18,000 jobs that we desperately need. To find structurally deficient bridges in your area, visit T4America here: <http://goo.gl/XBD3dh>, then tell your legislators to roll up their sleeves, find a way to fund our country's infrastructure upgrades, and put America back to work!

Rachel Bennett Steury, AAM Field Coordinator

Hearings Examine Strengthening Social Security, Medicare's "Observation Status"

On Capitol Hill, two separate subcommittees held hearings on retirement issues championed by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH). The Senate Finance Committee Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy, which Sen. Brown chairs, held a hearing entitled "Strengthening Social Security to Meet the needs of Tomorrow's Retirees." In order to counter stagnant wages and lack of access to private pensions, Sen. Brown called for expanding the Social Security program by changing the benefits formula, adopting a more accurate means of calculating cost of living adjustments (COLA), and increasing benefits for the most vulnerable populations.

A Bipartisan Alliance That's True As Steel

Dumped steel from abroad threatens thousands of American jobs

Steelworkers and CEOs, Democrats and Republicans are rallying together this month across the country to alert their fellow Americans to a threat to independence.

These groups, often at each other's throats, have allied to confront a surge in dumped foreign steel, an illegal practice that jeopardizes the viability of American mills. Steelworkers and steel company CEOs, red and blue politicians celebrate the energy independence achieved through shale gas drilling but condemn the dependence on foreign steel that failure to enforce trade laws will cause.

Elections Have Consequences



Leaders in the Republican Party are at it again with their legislative proposals to destroy Social Security and Medicare as we know it. Senator Marco Rubio, (R-Fla.), who is considering a presidential run in 2016, has proposed legislation in the senate on May 13 that would underfund Social Security and end up destroying it. The published agenda of the Republicans includes the elimination of Medicare and Social Security as we know it.

During this past Memorial Day we are reminded of the sacrifices of those our country called on to fight for us.

Recent reports of denied or delayed care to veterans have been in the news and guess what has not been reported much? That is recently: Republicans in the senate including Rubio voted to block a bill by Bernie Sanders (I-VT.) to provide additional funding to the VA for veterans care.

If this is not enough to upset you, consider the unrelenting attack on workers and the following: The failure to increase the minimum wage, efforts to destroy collective bargaining rights, favorable treatment of the wealthy at the expense of workers, the refusal to enact programs to create living wage jobs and protect the manufacturing sector of our economy. And don't forget, at least 50 unsuccessful votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act that would have cost seniors benefits and adversely affected millions of others and the unnecessary shut down of our Government.

Things could get worse if Republicans gain control of both houses of congress and the Presidency. Make sure you're registered and vote. Remember that bad things can happen to good people if the good people allow it.

Bill Gibbons, PACE Representative

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Westray Anniversary a Reminder to Hold Companies Accountable-TORONTO



The 22nd anniversary of the Westray mine tragedy in Pictou County, N.S., underscores the need to enforce the law, say the [United Steelworkers \(USW\)](#).

"Today we stand in solidarity with families and former co-workers to honour the memory of the Westray miners. They are victims for whom the law failed. We will never forget them and the price they paid for going to work," said USW national director Ken Neumann on May 9.

"This also is a day to reflect upon what was lost and what has been learned," he added. "It is important to appreciate how the Westray mine disaster led to changes in Canada's Criminal Code. But the sad truth is that workers are still being killed on the job at a rate of 1,000 every year."

SOAR Chapter Connection

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Upcoming Events

July 9 Resolutions must be
received in SOAR office by this
date.

August 8-9 International SOAR
Conference



Elaine Sez...

Men are like fine wine. They all
start as grapes and it's our job to
stomp on them and keep them in
the dark until they mature into
something you'd like to have
dinner with.

The Ruth McNeil Report

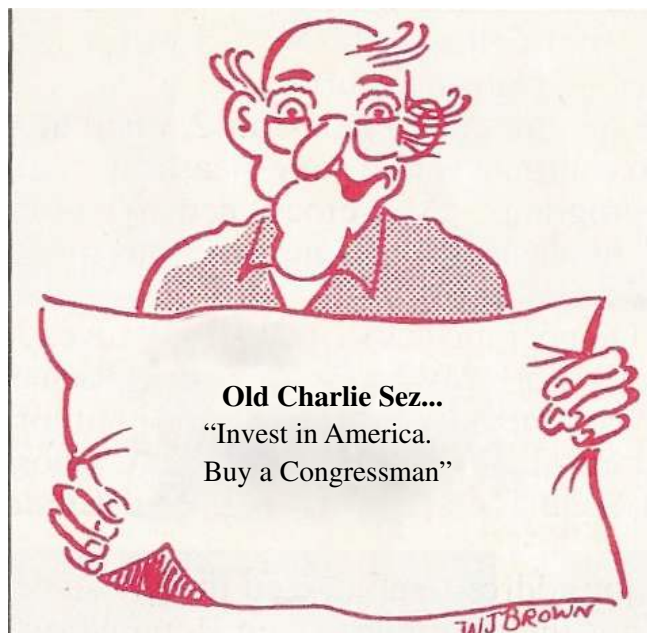
#1 -A good man doesn't happen. They have to be created by we women...so,
first you've got to get rid of the stuff his mom did to him. And then you've
got to get rid of all that macho crap they pick up in beer commercials.

#2 – Women are like cell phones. We like to be held and talked to. But push
the wrong button and you will certainly be disconnected.

From the Editor

- Don't forget that this newsletter is online at www.usw.org Just type
Connection in the search box located in the upper right hand corner.
- Please share this newsletter with your chapter members.
- On a rainy day, do a Google search for Charlie Averill where you will
find links to my blog, SoundCloud, Facebook page, twitter account,
Youtube videos and images. There's also a Facebook page for SOAR,
please join it. More SOAR Photos can be found here:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/usw>
- District and Chapter articles and photos should be emailed or mailed to
the SOAR office at the address at the left. Email is the preferred
method.
- Please take action on the petition on page 9.

Charlie Averill, Secretary/Treasurer and Editor



SOAR Priority: Protect Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid:



Attention to these legislative issues have been going on for months. These remain and continue to be “Everyone's Responsibility” to do what you can, as often as you can to avoid the harmful changes on these pocket book issues affecting seniors, veterans, the eligible disabled and widows with minor children.

Harm to anyone of these programs leads those listed above to personal painful economics. It is a reckless path, an unfair path condemning one group to shoulder the brunt of balancing the budget while protecting the tycoons/millionaires and billionaires of America from carrying a fairer share of the burden to resolve the nations deficit problems.

The changes proposed by the Republicans include, but are not limited to, the following: a chained method of calculating your Social Security benefit thereby reducing monthly benefits; increasing the age of retirement to 70 thereby delaying your retirement at full benefits; turning Medicare into a voucher program, another step toward more costly privatization of Medicare health care services and raising the age of Medicare eligibility to 67. In addition, the Republicans would repeal the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act (Obama Cares Act) in a heartbeat, if given the opportunity, thereby denying health care to the millions of uninsured and under insured citizens who, in turn, rely on much more costly emergency room care.

Social Security has the further concern of the Presidents offer to consider the “chained” formula to arrive at a solution to solve the budget deficit problems. There is small satisfaction that earlier this month the President stated that the “chained” method of calculating SS benefits is “off the table” if additional revenues are not part of the final agreement. The position of SOAR is that SOAR will oppose the chained method regardless of a tradeoff of revenue especially considering that our tax laws already favor the most wealthy with loopholes that their hired lobbyists have been successful in getting the members of Congress to pass. Need I remind you of the statement by multi-billionaire Warren Buffet as a factual case of the false premise that taxes are too much among this well-healed group. Buffet stated that there is something unfair about our tax system when persons like me can pay a lesser percentage of income tax then his secretary pays on her income tax. At the time of that statement the news media mentioned that the tax rate paid by Buffet was about 14% while his secretary's tax rate was above 17%. Millionaires and billionaires pay more money in taxes because they have more money to tax and not because their actual tax rate that they pay is too high. We can feel justified in doing what we have to do to protect our self interest just as they have protected their self interest.

Another reminder: U.S. tax codes have seven income tax brackets ranging from 10% to 39.6%. There are four tax classifications - Single; married filing jointly; married filing separately; and head of household.

Second reminder: The Social Security payroll tax stops after one's income reaches \$110,100 and beyond. We, all of us, still have our work to do in protecting these programs.

Ken Kovack, SOAR Legislative Director

Fairness Works You Can Make a Difference... So Speak Up

It's time for you to speak up. You can join the conversation, or start a conversation yourself. But you can't afford to be silent any longer.

Why? Because you are a retired union member.

Retired union members like you all across our country are facing an unprecedented and very real threat. A threat to your rights, to your values and to the future you want for yourself and your children and grandchildren.



Immediate Attention Requested - Help Save Jobs

Two Ways to Take Action

1. Go to <http://bit.ly/SOSJOBS>
2. Mail the following to: AAM-Pgh, 60 Blvd of the Allies, 9th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear [Elected Official] _____

America's steel producers of Oil Country Tubular Goods (OCTG) are facing an enormous threat from illegal foreign competition. Your leadership is needed to ensure that our trade laws are enforced and that those who break the rules are held accountable.

OCTG are the steel pipe products used in the extraction of oil and natural gas and play a critical role in our quest to become energy independent. Domestic producers employ thousands of dedicated American workers who use state-of-the-art technology to ensure that these products meet the highest standards.

But these jobs are in jeopardy due to an alarming and rapid surge of OCTG imports into the U.S. market, primarily from South Korea. There is overwhelming evidence that these foreign OCTG products are being illegally dumped in the U.S. market – at prices below fair value and in deceptive ways designed to circumvent international trade laws.

In July 2013, domestic steel producers filed a trade case that is now pending at the U.S. Department of Commerce. A final decision will be made in early July 2014, and it is critical that our government fully investigates South Korea's cheating. The jobs of thousands of dedicated American workers are on the line.

This blatant, continued rule-breaking at the expense of American manufacturing companies and workers cannot be tolerated. I am counting on you to tell the Department of Commerce that our trade laws must be enforced. Our trading partners – including South Korea – must play by the rules in our market.

Sincerely,

Name (Signature) _____

Name (Printed) _____

Street _____

City/ST/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone: (_____) - _____ - _____

☐ By Checking (X) this box, I give my permission to have AAM transmit this letter to my elected officials electronically.



