

USW@Work

A Regular Publication of the United Steelworkers

Volume 11/3

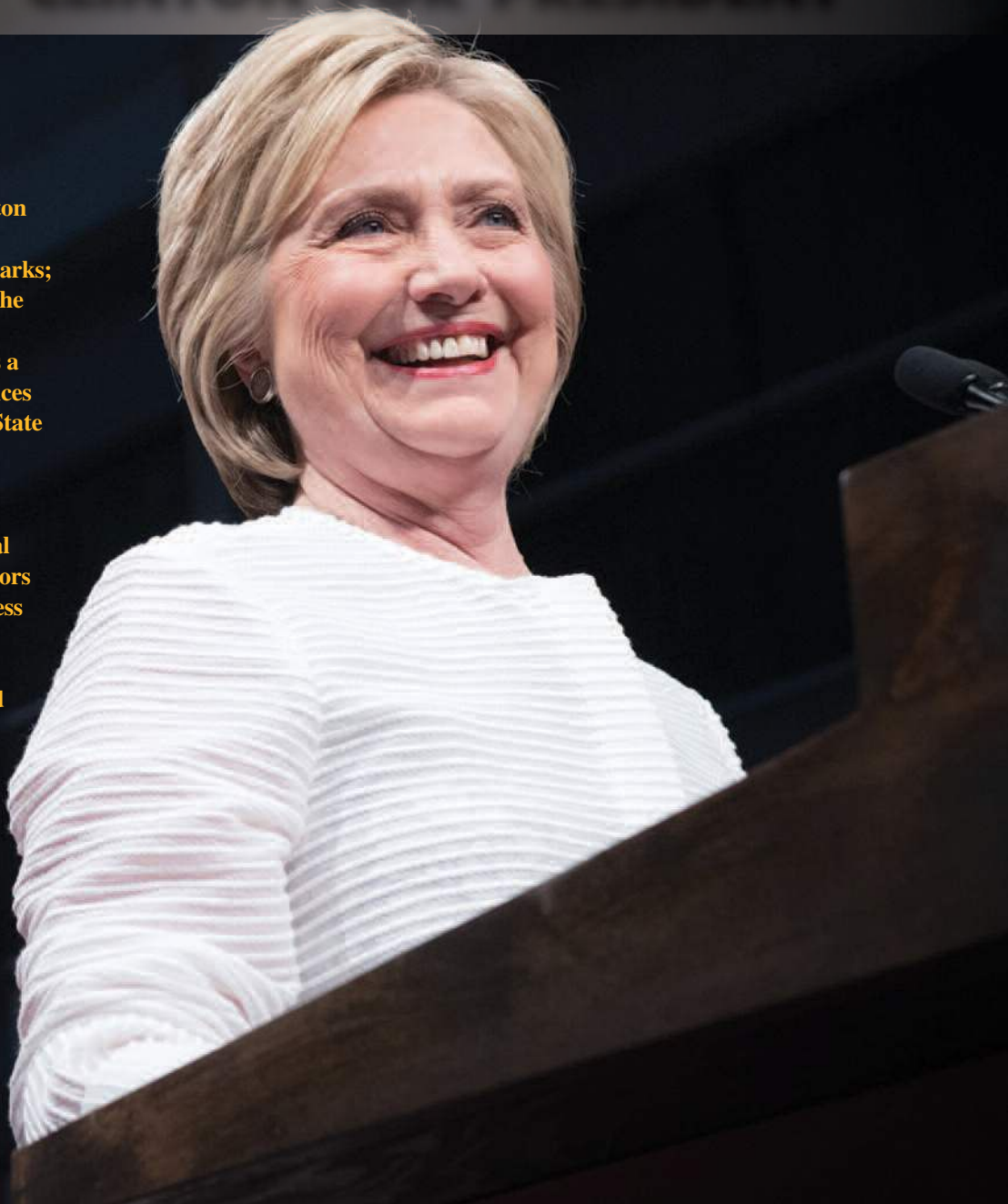
A Powerful Voice for Workers

SOAR EXECUTIVE BOARD ENDORSES HILLARY CLINTON FOR PRESIDENT

The SOAR Executive Board unanimously endorsed Hillary Clinton for President. SOAR International President, Bill Pienta, said in his remarks; “that he believes Hillary Clinton is the best choice to continue to move our country in the right direction. She is a proven leader and her past experiences both as a Senator and Secretary of State make her uniquely qualified to be President of the United States.”

As President, Hillary Clinton has pledged to expand and protect Social Security, defend health care for seniors by continuing the free annual wellness checks, lifesaving cancer screenings and other preventative treatments through Medicare. She is committed to building our economy and creating family-sustaining jobs for working Americans.

SOAR Director Jim Centner stated, “Hillary Clinton is by far, the most experienced and prepared candidate in this election, she deserves our support, I am pleased that the SOAR Executive Board has unanimously endorsed Secretary Clinton for President.”





BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

Experience Matters

While watching my favorite baseball team, I noticed that all of the Major League Baseball teams build their organizations based on talent, dedication and the ability to get the job done. This seems to be the correct model to use in building for success and this model should be applied to business and government as well.

Unfortunately, in recent years we have not followed this policy in electing our leaders in government. As a result less talented people, without dedication to public service, have been elected and as a result the job is not getting done and our nation suffers.

Washington, D.C. is not broken, it is just a city. The problem is in the people we have sent there to represent us. I have gone to Washington many times and have seen the lobbyists parading the halls going to their meetings with the

Senators or Congressman, while people from the Representative's District must settle for meeting with an aide.

We caused this to happen and we can change it. We do not need to elect people who do not know how to work with people. We do not need to elect people who have never spent time in public service. I have never heard someone say that they were in favor of starting a player on the mound who had never pitched before, or hiring someone who had no business background to run a major company. No one would choose someone without a legal background to defend them in court. Yet, we consider turning over the running of the most powerful country in the world to people who have no experience in government.

We can and we must get big money out of politics and we must continue to speak out and be involved when our elected officials select the wishes of big contributors over the wishes of the people. ***Stay informed, stay involved and most of all, vote!***



JIM CENTNER
SOAR Director

This Election

This election represents a real challenge for those of us who have real ideological differences with the two mainstream candidates. Progressives, such as me, were delighted with Bernie Sanders candidacy and the platform he was running on. For many of those on the right, Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio seemed to be the ideal candidate that represented old party ideology. Both groups were disappointed by the primary process and now find themselves searching for the candidate they should support this November.

This choice is made even more difficult by the nasty tone of the campaign. The candidates seem to prefer frolicking in the mud rather than campaigning on the issues that are important for you and me. This is made even more difficult by the 24-hour news machine that can't seem to get enough of the name calling and mudslinging to promote their telecasts.

So that really leaves us to our own devices, so to speak. We have to really dig to find the positions these candidates are taking on issues that are important to us in our everyday lives. I looked at a number of issues that are important to me and the candidates' positions on them. Protecting and enhancing Social Security, preserving and improving Medicare, affordable health care, fair trade policies, strengthening our economy, keeping good family-sustaining jobs and creating new ones that will prepare us for the jobs of the future. My research took me beyond reading the candidate's website and white papers. I looked at their life's work. Looked at where they stood on issues, not just today but throughout their entire career. After all that, I am convinced Hillary Clinton is the best candidate to move our nation forward and on the continued path of prosperity. I believe she has the necessary character, experience, heart and temperament to be the next President of the United States.



Published as an edition to *USW@Work*
for the United Steelworkers
60 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**Winner of ICLA's
journalistic competition
awards for General Excellence
in 1986, 1990 and 1993**

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Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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USW Membership Department
60 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**When submitting address change, please
include address label from last issue.**

USW@Work (ISSN 0883-3141) is published four times a year by the United Steelworkers AFL-CIO-CLC, 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Subscriptions to non-members: \$12 for one year; \$20 for two years. Periodicals postage paid at Pittsburgh, PA and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: **USW@Work**, USW Membership Dept., 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

WHERE THEY STAND

As you can see below, if you are concerned about retirement security, the choice is clear. Hillary Clinton gets it! These three issues say a lot about the candidates. In these uncertain times, when it's getting more and more difficult for our seniors to make ends meet, Hillary Clinton comes down on the side for retirees and working families!



Retiree Issue



Hillary Clinton



Donald Trump

Expand and Protect Social Security

Increase the average monthly benefits for seniors, strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund by lifting the Social Security payroll tax cap, making millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share.

(The Fiscal Times, July 27, 2016: <http://ow.ly/Eudr303Cnig>)

Supports

Opposes

Defend Health Care for Seniors

Allow seniors to continue to receive free, annual wellness checks, lifesaving cancer screenings and other preventive treatments through Medicare.

(Forbes, July 29, 2016: <http://ow.ly/5XE0303CnBV>)

Supports

Opposes

Lower Prescription Drug Costs

Close the large doughnut hole in prescription drug coverage costing seniors billions and cap what insurers can charge consumers in out-of-pocket costs.

(Forbes, August 12, 2016: <http://ow.ly/HJZu303CnVD>)

Supports

Opposes

Labour Day 2016

Once again SOAR members joined with their active USW brothers and sisters to celebrate Labour Day in cities across Canada. In Ontario the slogan was "Fairness for all workers." The USW along with the Ontario Federation of Labour and its other affiliates are participating in a campaign to review and renew the Labour Relations Act, the Employment Standards Act and other legislation that affects the quality of workers' rights.

A major family-friendly rally will be held October 1, 2016, at the Ontario Legislature in support of the Fairness Works campaign. SOAR members and their families will be there to support the next generation of workers and advocate for a future that is fair for all workers.



Doug Macpherson, National Coordinator SOAR and George Henry, trustee from Chapter 6-10 at the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC) booth in Hamilton's Dundurn Park promoting SOAR.

Don Arkell, president of SOAR chapter 6-16 in Kingston and Peggy McComb prepare for the Labour Day parade in Kingston, Ontario.

B.C. SENIORS ADVOCATE LAUNCHES SURVEY TO REVIEW QUALITY OF CARE FACILITIES



By Birgit Haggstrom,
Vice-President Chapter 3-14

British Columbia Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie in May announced the launch of a province-wide survey of 27,000 residents living in 303 provincially subsidized care facilities.

The Seniors Advocate is reaching out to B.C. seniors and their families to get first-hand feedback on the quality of their residential care and accommodations. The survey results will give residents and their families a voice in the quality of care residents receive and will provide a road map for service improvements. Survey data will be collected by volunteers who will conduct in-person interviews.

I became a volunteer interviewer in August and since then I have met and interviewed many residents. Initially,

I was keen to assist in finding solutions to make life at a care facility richer and more fulfilling. However, the job turned out to be more fulfilling for me. I have met funny, lively and keen residents of all ages. Spending time with our seniors can enrich all our lives. They are also a terrific source of ideas and information that will improve their daily life in a care facility.

I sincerely hope this survey will benefit all seniors in British Columbia and across the country.

Note: The Office of the Seniors Advocate monitors and analyzes seniors' services and issues in British Columbia and makes recommendations to government and service providers to address systemic issues.

Established in 2014, the OSA is the first of its kind in Canada. www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca

Birgit Haggstrom

SOAR Chapter 3-19 Update from Regina

Make October 1 “Day of Older Persons” SOAR Chapter 3-19 asks Regina

Chapter 3-19 has asked the City of Regina to proclaim October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons. The United Nations has marked this day to celebrate the contributions made by older persons to the economic and social wellbeing of nations. SOAR member John Szala presented the request to Regina city council and one of the councillors promised to expedite it.

Last year SOAR joined with over 50 other seniors' organizations to hold more than 20 events across Canada to recognize this day. We hope to have many more this year.

Left to right: President LU 5917 Kael Dolesjsi, unit chair Syed Tyyab, bargaining committee members Adnan Baywa and Ameer Mohmed receive a cheque from Chapter 3-19 President Dennis Carrigan.

Chapter 3-19 Helps Out New USW Local

When Chapter 3-19 was informed that the newest unit of USW LU 5917 would be celebrating its first anniversary of joining the Steelworkers, our members were only too happy to help out by donating \$200 towards a picnic. This is a taxi driver unit that still does not have a first contract.



Bankruptcy Laws Must Protect Retirees' Pensions and Benefits

“Sick and tired and mad as hell!”

— Howard Elliot, *Hamilton Spectator*, July 20, 2016.

By Doug Macpherson
National Coordinator SOAR

This shout is echoed across Canada from thousands of retirees and surviving spouses who see their hard-earned and pensions and post-retirement health benefits—achieved through generations of labour struggles—under constant attack.

Pensions are being cut and benefits eliminated by judges in charge of court proceedings under Canada's bankruptcy law known as the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA). We see this happen too often in too many communities across Canada. I am reluctant to mention specific communities or local unions for fear of leaving any out, as it is happening in so many places, from coast to coast to coast.



It is more than enough and has to stop.

The most recent and perhaps the largest group affected by this outdated law is the ongoing case of U.S. Steel Canada (USSC) and its 20,000 retirees and surviving spouses. The USW and its local unions, along with SOAR, petitioned the judge to reinstate the post-retirement health benefits he removed almost a year ago. He refused to do this despite USSC operating profitably and sitting on \$150 million in cash reserves, and at the same time giving \$1.5 million in bonuses and pay increases to managers too. This is shameful—while retirees suffer because they cannot afford their medications.

The USW and local politicians like Scott Duvall (federal New Democratic Party Member of Parliament for Hamilton Mountain) are calling for a public inquiry into the entire restructuring and creditor protection process.

In my opinion the CCAA must be fundamentally changed so that workers and retirees are protected in the process rather than being pushed to the end of the line after all other stakeholders with little or no protection.

We live in a new age with new challenges; we need new laws to address them. Let's call for a workers' and retirees' protection law!

Rob Clark, president SOAR chapter 6-05 USSC listens intently with disgust and concern, with other retirees, as Bill Ferguson, president local 8782, relays the judge's decisions outside the Toronto court on October 7, 2015.

FIGHTING FOR PENSIONS

Your Help Needed to Improve the Canada Pension Plan

BC government appears to be backing away from signing agreement to enhance the CPP

By Diane Wood
President, BC FORUM

I HAVE RECENTLY emailed every BC FORUM member for whom we have an email address, asking them to please take action and to ask their friends to do likewise.

If you're not yet a member, or if you didn't receive the email for some other reason, then I urge you to join us in taking action on this important issue.

The BC Government appears to be backing away from its support for the federal-provincial agreement to make modest improvements to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

This would destroy the entire deal. The CPP enhancement may not help us all but it will sure help our younger colleagues, our kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews.

It requires your attention very soon.

Note that 80 percent of the cost of the increased benefit is paid for by investment income. This will save money in the long run because it will decrease the need for the Guaranteed Income Supplement which is paid from current operating funds.

The provincial governments, with the exception of Manitoba and Quebec, have agreed to enhance Canada Pension Plan benefits.

BC's participation is essential to make sure the agreement meets the population requirements for amending the CPP.

Websites for more info:

engage.gov.bc.ca/canadapensionplan/
engage.gov.bc.ca/canadapensionplan/for-employees/
engage.gov.bc.ca/canadapensionplan/for-employers/

Email address for your response:

citizenengagement@gov.bc.ca

BC has now slowed down the actual signing of the detailed agreement. The government signed the agreement in principle, but are now holding a "public engagement."

This will give organizations that oppose the CPP enhancement a stage for their self-serving propaganda (CFIB, Fraser Institute, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, etc).

The labour movement and ordinary workers who will benefit from this increase in pension at retirement must also become engaged and let the BC Government know that they support this retirement security enhancement.

The BC Government websites listed above have material that is basically supportive of the CPP enhancement. These websites and email addresses are very hard to find on the government's website.

However, anyone can take a quick look and write an email to support the enhancement. The more citizens who write in, the greater the impact.

My fear is that the BC Government may be yielding to pressure from these organizations to back away from the agreement, which would then terminate the whole deal.

The government will hear from those organizations opposed to the

enhancements very soon and may then shut down the website, so the sooner you can respond the better.

Individual emails are just as effective as long submissions.

Please respond soon. And please share this email with your friends, family, members, colleagues and co-workers.

A simple email is all that is required to counteract the comments and attacks by those above organizations.

CLC pledges continued push for improvements

THE CANADIAN Labour Congress has welcomed an agreement-in-principle by finance ministers but will continue to push improvements to the Canada Pension Plan.

Signed by all provinces except Manitoba and Quebec, the proposed phased-in expansion of the CPP will provide a maximum one-third increase in annual benefits to Canadians when they retire.

CLC president Hassan Yussuff said the changes are a "success" because they expand the pension plan, but the increase isn't enough.

"We will continue to push," said Yussuff, calling for improvements that would allow Canadians workers to "live a decent life" at retirement.

JANE BECKER

Scholarship Luncheon

Granite City SOAR Chapter 34-2 held their 7th Annual “Jane Becker” Scholarship/Award Banquet in August.

By Doug May

Never has there been a time in our nation’s history that the subject of Women’s Suffrage, this year’s Granite City, Illinois SOAR Chapter 34-2 Seventh Annual Scholarship essay contest topic, has been more relevant. For the first time in our nation’s history, we are witnessing a female candidate for President, 96 years after the 15th Amendment, women’s right to vote.

Megan Quick, granddaughter of Chapter 34-2 Marlene Carey and Michael Horton, son of USW Local 1899 and SOAR member Bob Horton were each winners of a \$3,500 Granite City SOAR Chapter Annual Scholarship.

Fittingly, two women who serve as elected Madison County officials were part of the packed house in attendance that day. Amy Meyer, Recorder of Deeds, and County Clerk Debbie Ming Mendoza, can certainly provide testament for women’s role during this historic time in our U.S. history as well.

Katie Stuart, a mother of two and an educator, running as a candidate against Dwight Kay as Illinois Representative in the 112th District, and Joe Beth Weber for Southern Illinois’ 5th

Appellate Court Judge, both guests at the event, are a reflection of women’s tremendous contributions to our country, long after women were finally allowed to vote.

USW Locals 1899, 50 and 68 Presidents Dan Simmons, Jason Chism and Dan Sykes introduced USW District 7 Director Mike Millsap, who was honored by the SOAR Chapter for his hard work in bargaining during difficult times within the steel industry. Millsap’s efforts for active members and securing retiree health care benefits after U.S. Steel—from the outset of negotiations—displayed committed determination to eliminate, were recognized.

The chapter also gratefully acknowledged the many years of support for the Scholarship program from Madison County Illinois Regional Office of Education, Dr. Robert Daiber with the Friend of SOAR award. Dr. Daiber presented the two students with their Scholarships, and told a family story about his mother being married with

children, but still too young to vote, that linked back to this year’s theme of Women’s Right to Vote.

Chapter members George and Mary Mitchell were honored for their volunteerism. Shirley Luffman was recognized by the SOAR chapter for her good work, and committed efforts to send care packages to our military troops overseas.

Nora Boland and Janice Donaldson from The Good Samaritan House, one of many community organizations that the Chapter assists throughout the year, were also in attendance. They were pleased to announce that their funding has been restored in this year’s state budget after Gov. Rauner’s budget proposal held them hostage and nearly caused them to shutter their doors.

The Catholic Faith in Action, Sierra Club, Teamster Retirees and the Greater St. Louis Labor Council retirees, Missouri Alliance Retired Americans and representatives from the United Way, all organizations the Granite City SOAR chapter works closely with, enjoyed the stories of common goals while breaking bread with like-minded friends.

Illinois’ 113th District

Representative Jay Hoffman, who has always shown strong support for organized labor and recently introduced legislation to extend unemployment benefits to those U.S. Steel Granite City Works steelworkers who, by no fault of their own, have been on extended layoff and have exhausted their benefits now due to foreign trade cheats.

Hoffman introduced C.J. Baricevic who is running for Illinois’ 12th Congressional District as one who will oppose trade deals that are great for Wall Street, but cost us jobs.

Editor’s note: The scholarship has been named as the “Jane Becker” Scholarship in honor of Jane Becker’s activism as a gifted labor and political organizer who mentored a generation of activists. Jane was the wife and working partner to the late United Steelworkers President, George Becker, but she built a reputation on her own as a tireless advocate for working people and was one of the pioneer organizers of SOAR.



Social Security Administration **CUTS HURT AMERICANS IN EVERY STATE**

Congress has cut the Social Security Administration's core operating budget by 10 percent since 2010, after adjusting for inflation. Incredibly, this is happening at the same time a record number of Americans retire each year. It's not like the baby boom generation is a surprise. Our nation built extra schools when they were young and housing as they reached adulthood; however, today's Congress has chosen to ignore the fiscal realities of their retirement.

A new report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities details the dramatic impact Congress' SSA budget cuts have on service nationwide:

- ▶ **SSA's staff has shrunk six percent nationwide since 2010.**
Five states — Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and West Virginia — have lost more than 15 percent of their staff since 2010.
- ▶ **Disability Determination Service (DDS) staff, who decide whether applicants' disabilities are severe enough to qualify for Disability Insurance (DI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) has shrunk 14 percent nationwide since 2010.**
Seven states — Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas — have lost over 20 percent of their DDS staff.
- ▶ **Staff shortages** have contributed to a record-high disability hearing backlog of over one million applicants.
- ▶ **SSA has been forced to close 64 field offices since 2010,** at least one in nearly every state.

Added to this list, according to a recent audit of the SSA, are reduced hours of service at the remaining offices, the limited mailing of the annual earnings statement, increased wait times, crowded lobbies and limited appointment availability.



Two Big Reasons Prescription Drug Prices Are So Much Higher in the U.S.

A recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that American prescription prices will continue to rise due to pharmaceutical companies' hold on the industry.

Americans paid, on average, \$858 per capita in 2013 for brand name drugs, whereas the other 19 industrialized nations paid an average of \$400. Compared to Great Britain, the U.S. pays over three times as much for the same drugs.

This difference is partially due to pharmaceutical companies' marketing monopoly. Many companies have exclusive and long-term patents with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) so they are able to set high prices. Competitors are forbidden from replicating these life-saving drugs and generic companies struggle with legal delays.

In addition, Medicare is unable to negotiate pricing directly with drug companies. Despite covering over 40 million Americans and 29 percent of the country's drug expenditures, Medicare cannot lower drug prices. In 2003 when Medicare Part D was passed, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services was expressly prohibited from setting prices—a common practice in other countries.

"It is no secret that drug prices in the U.S. are out of control," said Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans, "We must empower Medicare and weaken drug companies' marketing control. Americans cannot afford to be at the mercy of the pharmaceutical industry."



DISTRICT 7 SOAR JOINS PROTEST

District 7 SOAR group gathering before an “Anti-Governor Rauner (Illinois)” rally and march September 12, 2016 in downtown Chicago. SOAR joined hundreds of others in denouncing Rauner’s anti-labor, anti-people agenda. SOAR’s Scott Marshall who attended the event said, “It was great to march with unions, women, youth, civil rights, immigrant rights, community and faith-based organizations, just the kind of coalition we need to send Trump back to his Manhattan penthouse in November.



Chapter Members Learn CPR



SOAR Chapter 1-979 in Cleveland, Ohio, has always had strong support from USW Local 979. Just recently the local’s leadership offered to train interested chapter members in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) the lifesaving technique useful in many emergencies, including heart attack or near drowning, in which someone’s breathing or heartbeat has stopped.

The training took place at the local’s hall on September 14, 2016. Matt Mahon, member of Local 979 and a certified instructor, taught the course.

Pictured with the instructor are the chapter members who participated in the training: Standing, left to right: Clarence Everett, Matt Mahon, Larry Lawson and Bob Parker. Seated, left to right: Lillian Lawson and Virginia Robinson.

SOAR Continues to Grow in District 9

SOAR's newest chapter received its charter in June of this year.

Chapter 9-PC-5 was created to represent the retirees of Local 9-01924 and Local 9-00925; that represent the production and maintenance workers at the former Bowater facility now Resolute Forest Products in Rock Hill, South Carolina. This is the fifth former PACE Local Union in the district to establish a chapter. To demonstrate their support, Local 9-01924 has committed to honor their retirees with a 10-year membership to SOAR as a retirement gift, and Local 9-00925 is giving serious consideration of doing the same. District 9 SOAR Executive Board Member Claude Karr congratulated the locals for getting this chapter off the ground and thanked them for their support of our retiree organization.



Pictured left to right: Michael Godfrey, President Local 9-01924; Claude Karr, District 9 Executive Board Member; Mark Cable, Chapter President and Cardero Gilliam, President Local 9-00925.



Pictured manning the SOAR table at the District 9 Conference in September are right to left: Jim Centner, SOAR Director Greg England, District Coordinator; and Claude Karr, District Executive Board Member.



SOAR International Conference Scheduled

April 2017 in Las Vegas

The SOAR International Conference is scheduled for April 7-8, 2017, at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nev. Chapters large enough to send delegates will be notified by mail and must schedule their delegate elections in November of this year.



Al Polk, District SOAR Executive Board Member; Bill Pienta, International SOAR President; USW District 4 Director, John Shinn; Jim Bickhart, former District Executive Board Member and Del Vitale, USW District 4 Assistant to the Director.

SOAR Board Member Steps Down and is Recognized for his Service

Jim Bickhart, President of SOAR Chapter 4-1 recently stepped down as the SOAR Executive Board Member in District 4. He was honored for his years of service to both active and retired members at the District Conference held August 21-25, 2106 at Caesars's Palace in Atlantic City, New Jersey. District Director John Shinn presented Jim with an Lifetime Achievement Award. The plaque reads: In recognition of your decades of outstanding efforts on behalf of the United Steelworkers in your capacities as Local Union President, International Staff Representative and SOAR Executive Board Member. The active and retired members of District 4, Director John Shinn and all the Staff. Thank you for dedication and lifetime of service to the hardworking men and women of the United Steelworkers.

SOAR Continues to Receive Strong Support from USW

The United Steelworkers continue to show strong support of our retiree organization.

This year SOAR had the opportunity to attend a number of the USW District Conferences all across our great union. When afforded the opportunity, SOAR leaders attend these conferences to promote our organization and to share with local union leaders the value SOAR adds to our union.

SOAR leaders and activist play a major role in promoting the union's social, economic, and political agenda. Our attendance at these meetings allows us to showcase our work. We are also provided a chance to address the delegates to explain the structure of our organization and how to get a chapter up and running.



A special thanks to the leadership of the USW! Our continued involvement in the union's conferences and activities, play a critical role in our survival and growth.

SOAR at District 4 Conference in Atlantic City, N.J. August 22-25, 2016. Pictured left to right seated: Al Polk, District Board Member; Bill Pienta, SOAR International President; Marty Maniscalco, SOAR District Coordinator and President of Chapter 4-UR1; and Jim Bickhart, former SOAR Board Member.

AL POLK Appointed to SOAR Board



USW International President Leo W. Gerard appointed retired Assistant to the Director of District 4 Al Polk to the SOAR Executive Board to fill the vacancy created when District 4 Executive Board Member Jim Bickhart stepped down.

Al became a Steelworker when he was hired by the Cleveland Twist Drill Company in Mansfield, Massachusetts and became a member of LU-3638 and worked there for 23 years. He served his local as a steward, grievance committee chairman, Vice President and President.

Al was appointed to the staff in 1985 by International President Lynn Williams. In 1998, then District 4 Director Lou Thomas, appointed him Sub-District Director for the New England area. Al became the Assistant to the Director in 2006; serving with Bill Pienta until he retired and served as the Assistant to the current Director John Shinn until he retired in April of 2015. He became active in SOAR immediately after his retirement and served as a District Coordinator in the New England area.

Al grew up in Norton, Massachusetts where he still lives today with his wife Betty. They have two sons and six grandchildren. In his spare time he enjoys boating, and tinkering with antique autos.

RETIREES AND RAPID RESPONSE

The importance of lifelong activism cannot be understated in the labor movement. Often the best activists remain engaged into their retirement—it is just in them to do so. Rapid Response caught up with the Director of SOAR, Jim Centner, to ask him about his roots in the program and how important it is for our union's retirees to remain engaged.



How did you initially get involved in Rapid Response?

Rapid Response was part of a larger effort originally. We were developing a political action course when I worked in the union's Membership Development Department. I remember the first meeting we held to discuss it. We were in former President George Becker's office on a Saturday.

At that meeting, President Becker and Vice President Dick Davis shared their frustration with the difficulties the union was having in getting our message to our members. They felt the union did a great job reaching out to the leadership of our locals, but somehow we fell short when it came to communicating with our membership as a whole. They discussed a presentation made to the Steelworkers Executive Board by members from Local 5724 on a method they developed to reach out to their membership. After a great deal of discussion, it was decided that our department would develop a program that would utilize the communication network used by Local 5724 to get our legislative issues to our membership. Thus began my involvement with Rapid Response.

Why should retirees remain engaged in legislative issues?

Our issues are the same whether we are working or retired. The fight to save jobs from unfair trade is as critical to a retiree as it is to an active member. The jobs that are saved keep the employer in business. As long as the employer is still operating, and hopefully making a profit, they can continue to pay for the benefits our retirees fought for and expected to be there for them when they retired. It also keeps people paying into Social Security and Medicare to ensure the solvency of these two critical programs for retirees. Rapid Response has also been involved in the fight



In 1996, Jim (front, fourth from right) was part of the team that did the initial trainings for Rapid Response. Groups like the one pictured were the pioneers in getting the program started in locals across the U.S.

to save both of these vital programs that have kept millions of retirees out of poverty. These are just two examples of why our retirees should be actively engaged in Rapid Response.

What are ways that they can engage in Rapid Response actions?

Retirees can play a very important role in Rapid Response. They can share the information they receive with others and move forward with the necessary information to get their points across in a factual manner. They can call and write their elected representatives knowing that they have the facts in front of them to influence or convince a representative to support our position. They can attend town hall meetings, visit representatives' offices and attend rallies to make sure our elected officials understand the importance of our issues and they are everyone's issues, not just the union's.

What is the most important aspect of the program, in your experience, that makes it successful?

I truly believe the information that is disseminated out of the union's headquarters is critical to its success. Arming our active and retired members with the necessary information in a well-written, easy-to-understand format is very important. This provides the facts and background to allow them to talk comfortably on the issues.

Without that background the rest of the program simply cannot work.



Here are your SOAR Coordinators in action! District 9 SOAR Board Member Claude Karr and SOAR Coordinator Greg England talk about retiree issues during a Rapid Response training class at the District 9 Educational Conference in Florida.

It's **STILL** the Economy



There are less than two months to the presidential election and for the first time in many years, the issues of American manufacturing and global trade have become the centerpieces of candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton's campaign stump speeches.

When Bill Clinton was president, the campaign's inside slogan was, "It's the economy, stupid."

Well, it's still the economy. But during the past 20 years it is a new, global economy where Americans build less and less and our imports continue to skyrocket while our exports lag far behind.

Among America's many thriving industries, it is United Steelworker members who are feeling the worst of the economic pain. Steel mills across the country have shut down permanently while others have been idled for months at a time, only coming back online in hopes they will one day return to full-capacity production.

These days, the American steel industry strives to reach anything close to full capacity. But in matters of trade and a reeling American steel industry crisis, it's overcapacity that has threatened the livelihood of our USW brothers and sisters.

And, once again, the culprit is China.

At the G20 Summit held on September 4-5 of this year, the group included government leaders and central bank governors from 20 major economies including the European Union. Collectively, the G20 economies account for 85 percent of gross world product, 80 percent of world trade and two-thirds of the world's population.

The G20 agreed that China's steel overcapacity is a global problem and should be addressed as such.

But the United States realizes it has to do much more on its own before America loses its own steel capacity production. In addition to saving good-paying, benefit-friendly jobs, the U.S. steel industry is essential to our national security.

Many older Americans remember the massive success during World War II when large factories and plants retooled their production to build tanks, ships and warplanes. The country quickly came together and built the world's most impressive war machine in a short period of time.

Could America do that today? It's most likely we could, but if the steel industry continues to take further "unfair" trade hits from China, ramping up our national defense machinery may pose major problems. A new report, released by Duke University's Lukas Brun http://www.americanmanufacturing.org/page/-/uploads/resources/OvercapacityReport2016_R3.pdf outlines how China is driving the global steel glut and has led to more than 14,500 U.S. steelworker layoffs and dozens of plant closures in the past year.

The steel trade game is not being played on anything close to a level playing field.

China's steel companies are government-owned and operate without any regard to market forces. So China continues to mass produce its steel— 75 percent of the world's steel stock since 2000 has come from China. China's excess steel capacity is more than what U.S. steelmakers produce in an entire year. China can produce more steel than the world needs and sell it below market cost. A series of "unfair" trade agreements and China's entrance into the World Trade Organization in 2001, opened world markets to its unfair, manipulative steel trade practices.

One of the many American steel mills forced to shut down while Chinese mills continue to manufacture more steel than is needed to meet global demand.

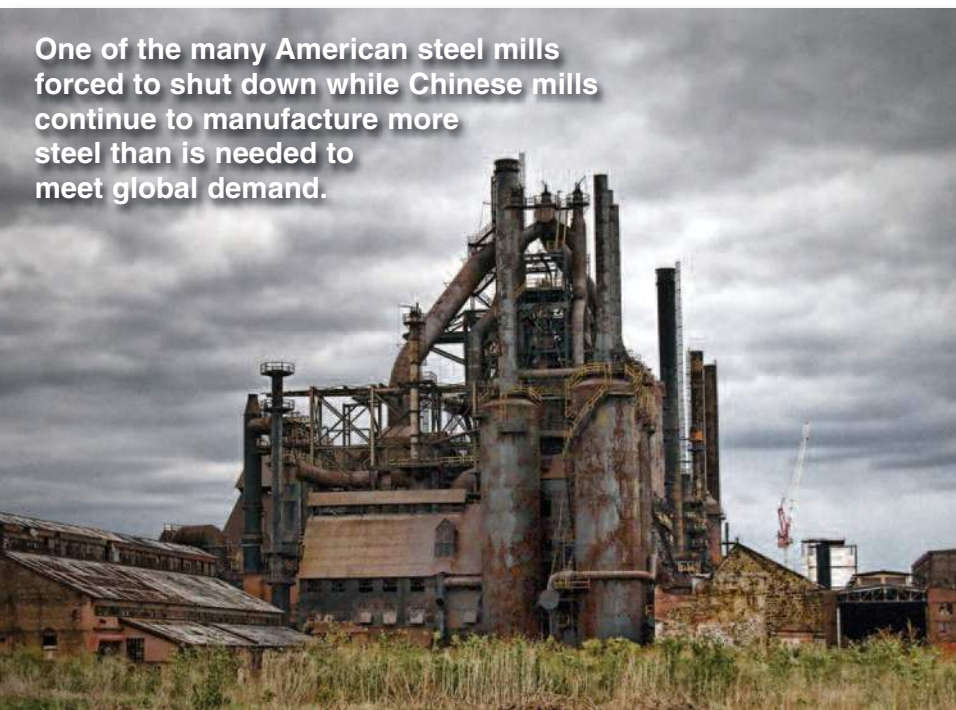


Photo courtesy of Bob Jagendorf

The G20 Summit members have wrapped up their discussions but all Americans can still Take Action.

Go to the AAM home page www.americanmanufacturing.org and click "Enough is Enough-Take Action Now" to let President Obama and his successor know you are still feeling the pain. If you lose your steel industry job and find work at one-third the pay with no benefits, you will find yourself saying, "It's the global economy, stupid" or "it's China, stupid."

Jeff Bonior is a staff writer for the Alliance for American Manufacturing.



Washington Wrap

By Ken Kovack
SOAR Legislative Director
Washington, D.C.



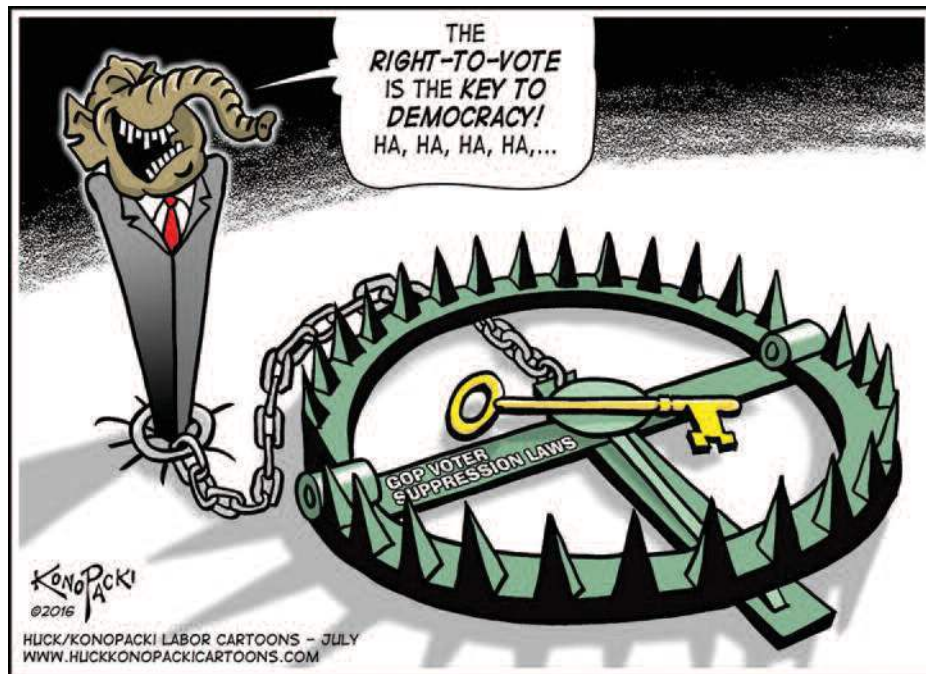
Down to the Wire: VOTE

As Election Day nears our Constitutional right to vote must always be encouraged.

This is especially true in the states that have passed laws creating voter obstacles, under the false pretense to supposedly to stop voter fraud. Data proves that fraud is virtually non-existent and the laws were passed to target specific groups, including seniors. Of the more than 20 states passing such laws, Texas was judged the worst and North Carolina is a close second. These states took advantage of the split 5 to 4 Supreme Court decision of 2013 striking, in effect, the “coverage formula” in the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Several of these state laws have been repealed, either in part or in total. The right to vote should not be hampered or denied by state or national politicians. We all know who the governors are that tried to obstruct voter turnout. We should remember this on Election Day.

Supreme Court Justice Ruth B. Ginsburg wrote a statement against the courts narrow decision. She stated that the Court action was “punishment” for the law having some “success” in achieving its objectives in states that passed laws targeted to reduce voter turnout among certain groups.

In every election, voter turnout is encouraged. Voter turnout in recent presidential election years averaged just barely 60 percent; midterm



elections about 40 percent. Compare this to 1908 when the percentage was 65.4 percent.

Senior legislative issues are at risk, Social Security, Medicare, tax reform and dozens of other important issues. It is embarrassing that we fall far below voter turnout compared to other countries such as Belgium (87.2 percent), Turkey (84.3 percent) and Sweden (82.6 percent). What does this say about the American voter? Are we, as citizens, less concerned than our foreign counterparts?

It's important to remember, that each and every vote counts. President Kennedy's margin of victory was slim. It equaled the sum of one vote in every precinct. Seniors must vote, it is our opportunity to demonstrate to the entire nation that we are a force for good and to be reckoned with. VOTE on or before Election Day. Make a rational/practical choice, an informed decision. Vote for the candidates that support the issues important to you. Our union and the AFL-CIO provides lists of recommended candidates. These recommendations are not made lightly. Candidate's voting records and public statements are fully examined before endorsements are given.

EVERY VOTE COUNTS!

Chapters to Elect Officers

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

- ▶ According to Article 6 of the SOAR Chapter By-laws, elective chapter officers are: President; Vice President; Secretary-Treasurer (which can be separated in large chapters); three Trustees; and if provided for, a Financial Secretary. All positions serve four-year terms.
- ▶ Nomination of officers is to be held at the chapter meeting held in October, with the election to be held at the November meeting.
- ▶ No member is allowed to hold more than one office in a chapter, although chapter officers may serve on the SOAR Executive Board or as a District Coordinator.
- ▶ To hold a chapter office, members must be in good standing at the time of nomination and election.
- ▶ If a chapter does not regularly meet during October, it must hold both the nomination and election of officers during the November meeting.
- ▶ Any vacancies caused by ineligibility, death or resignation shall be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the chapter executive board until the next election, except if the vacancy is in the office of President, the Vice President shall serve as President for the remainder of the term.



The Differences Between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump Go Beyond Style

by Robert Roach, Jr.

There are sharp, clear contrasts between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump on retirees and senior issues.

Secretary Clinton has a 100 percent pro-retiree voting record from the Alliance for Retired Americans. She has pledged to protect and expand Social Security. Donald Trump once called Social Security a “Ponzi Scheme,” and the Republican Party platform calls for privatizing it.

Only Hillary Clinton will strengthen and expand Social Security by lifting the Social Security payroll tax cap, protecting the program for future generations by making millionaires pay their fair share. She will expand Social Security for those who are treated unfairly by the current system — including women who are widows and those who took significant time out of the paid workforce to take care of their children, aging parents, or ailing family members.

She will defend health care for seniors. She has and will oppose Republican efforts to privatize Medicare, raise the eligibility age or shift costs to seniors.

In addition, Secretary Clinton will defend and expand the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which provides free wellness checks, lifesaving cancer screenings and other preventive

treatments through Medicare. It also closes the doughnut hole in prescription drug coverage which costs seniors billions and caps what insurers can charge consumers in out-of-pocket costs.

Donald Trump, on the other hand, has vowed to repeal the ACA, and with it these senior health care benefits.

Last but not least, Secretary Clinton is the candidate who has a comprehensive plan to stop unfair practices by pharmaceutical corporations and rein in skyrocketing prescription drug prices.

As a New Yorker, I’ve had the opportunity to watch these candidates up close over many years. The pro-worker and pro-senior candidate is clear. Please keep these differences in mind and vote for the candidate who has always put your interests first.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously the General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW.

For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.



SOAR ACTIVIST HONORED Carl Ramich



Carl Ramich, President of Chapter 10-6 and longtime union and SOAR activist was recognized by District 10 for his service to working and retired members of our great union. Carl worked at the now shuttered Dana Corporation facility in Reading, Pa. He was an active member of USWA Local 3733 until the plant closed in 2000 and has remained active as a retiree ever since. In 2007 Carl recognized that the retirees still needed a voice and spear headed the effort to form the SOAR group. Carl is a chartered member of the chapter and has served as President since its creation.

Carl is an active member of the district’s Rapid Response team. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the District Conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey on July 21, 2016. The plaque reads, “In recognition for your years of outstanding service and dedication to the labor movement in Pennsylvania. Your commitment has been critical to the Rapid Response Program and has earned its highest honor. The difference between success and failure is often determined by one’s dedication. On behalf of the active and retired members of District 10 and our Rapid Response Program, we thank you for helping to educate new future leaders and improving the quality of life for working men and women in Pennsylvania. — Presented by Bobby “Mac” McAuliffe, USW District 10 Director and George Piasecki, District 10 Rapid Response Coordinator.”



USW Membership Department
60 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh, PA 15222



Programs Designed With Union Members In Mind

AT&T WIRELESS

- 15% off the monthly service charge of qualified plans¹
- 20% discount on select accessories²
- Only unionized carrier

CREDIT CARD³

- Several card choices
- Competitive rates
- U.S.-based customer service

MORTGAGE

- For union members, their parents and children
- Hardship assistance
- Competitive rates

OTHER PROGRAMS

- Savings on more than 25 programs available to union members including flowers, theme parks, movie tickets and more!



¹ Available only to current members of qualified AFL-CIO member unions, other authorized individuals associated with eligible unions and other sponsoring organizations with a qualifying agreement. Must provide acceptable proof of union membership such as a membership card from your local union, a pay stub showing dues deduction or the Union Plus Member Discount Card and subscribe to service under an individual account for which the member is personally liable. Offer contingent upon in-store verification of union member status. Discount subject to agreement between Union Privilege and AT&T and may be interrupted, changed or discontinued without notice. Discount applies only to recurring monthly service charge of qualified voice and data plans, not overages. Not available with unlimited voice plans. For Family Talk, applies only to primary line. For all Mobile Share plans, applies only to monthly plan charge of plans with 1GB or more, not to additional monthly device access charges. Additional restrictions apply. May take up to 2 bill cycles after eligibility confirmed and will not apply to prior charges. Applied after application of any available credit. May not be combined with other service discounts. Visit UnionPlus.org/ATT or contact AT&T at 866-499-8008 for details.

² AT&T will apply the Accessory Discount to the prices of select Accessories available through AT&T, which may be modified by AT&T from time to time. The term "Accessory" or "Accessories" means supplementary parts for Equipment (e.g. batteries, cases, earbuds). The Accessory Discount will not apply to Accessories purchased for use with datacentric Equipment such as modems, replacement SIM cards and car kits or to Apple-branded Accessories, and the Accessory Discount may not be combined with any other promotional pricing or offer.

³ The Union Plus Credit Cards are issued by Capital One, N.A., pursuant to a license from MasterCard International Incorporated. The MasterCard Brand Mark is a registered trademark of MasterCard International Incorporated. The credit card in this image is for promotional illustration; it does not contain actual cardholder information combined with any other promotional pricing or offer.