

USW@Work

A Regular Publication of the United Steelworkers

Volume 11/2

A Powerful Voice for Workers

**2016 RAPID RESPONSE AND LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE**

SOAR MEMBERS BRING MENTORING, EXPERIENCE AND ACTIVISM

More than two dozen SOAR members, representing every USW District in the United States, traveled to Washington, D.C., in April to take part in the 2016 Rapid Response and Legislative Conference.

They were part of nearly 700 Steelworker voices that learned together for two days before descending upon Capitol Hill. They carried a strong message of opposition to bad trade policy, while advocating for stronger health and safety protections and tougher penalties for companies that break the law when workers try to organize.

SOAR members provided much-needed perspective to the discussions that occurred in conference

workshops, district meetings and especially during visits with U.S. Senators and Representatives.

Mentoring

District 4 Director John Shinn and SOAR President Bill Pienta spearheaded an effort within the District 4 delegation to link young Steelworkers with SOAR members. Al Polk was one of the SOAR members taking part.

“When I went to Capitol Hill for the first time, I felt like a deer in the headlights,” he recalled. Over the years, he’d gain the experience that comes with repeated advocacy. Now, at this conference, he could give back.

Al partnered with Local 135L member Dennis Mitchell and USW Next Gen member Rob Sousa from Local 16031. Al and Dennis took the lead during an initial meeting with Representative Keating. They also spent

SOAR delegates, representing every USW District in the United States, participated in the union’s Rapid Response and Legislative Conference.

time sharing their experiences over the years with Rob. When it came time for the meeting with Representative Langevin’s staff in the afternoon, Rob took the lead.

“It was apparent that the knowledge passed from one generation to the next was invaluable,” Rob notes. “When it was my time to speak and represent my home state of Rhode Island, I had no reservations talking about our views. This was a substantial experience for me, especially being a Next Generation member.”

Sharing Critical Experiences

Retirees’ experiences bring added dimension to Rapid Response and legislative work. For instance, District 13

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BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

The Lesser of Two Evils

The election season is upon us, therefore a look at the two leading presidential candidates is in order.

On one side, we have a candidate that refuses to release the transcripts of speeches given to bankers and has, in the past, supported bad trade agreements. The other leading candidate has said American workers' wages are too high and condemns companies that move jobs out of the country; while choosing to have his company make suits and ties that could be made in America, made in China and third world countries.

I believe we, as a country, are getting what we asked for. With continued low voter turnout and allowing unlimited financial contributions, we have put ourselves in a spot where, after years of us saying by voter apathy, that we do not care who gets elected. We have left that decision up to a select group of wealthy individuals.

Do not believe the rhetoric about self-financed campaigns or millions of small contributions. In order to win the presidential election, both sides will spend a BILLION DOLLARS each! One candidate has so far LOANED his campaign most of its money. He will be expecting those loans paid back. The other has had a fundraiser that required a \$350K contribution per couple. Both will need money and those who make big contributions will be expecting a return on their investment.

Until term limits, public-financed elections and increased voter participation become a reality, we need to look at the party platform of the two parties and determine which platform has our best interests at heart. Do we think the economy works best from top down or bottom up? Are we better off acting as individuals or as a group? Should we help out each other when help is needed or let everyone fend for themselves?

Not real tough questions and pretty easy answers. So vote for the lesser of two evils on Election Day.



JIM CENTNER
SOAR Director

Primary Season

The presidential primary season is winding down for both parties. Once the anointed candidates leave their perspective conventions, the battle for the White House begins.

With the advent of the 24-hour news cycle and social media, we will be barraged with so much information and misinformation, that it will make our heads spin. Somehow we will have to sift through all of this rhetoric and make the decision on who we believe is the best candidate to move our nation forward. Which candidate will look out for our best interests and enhance the quality of life for average Americans.

Every election we hear that "this election is the most important election of our lifetime." Unfortunately, I believe this statement is true each and every time we vote for the President of the United States. We live in difficult times. Unrest in the Middle East, ISIS, along with an unstable economy in most of the world, makes for a very volatile situation. Stagnant wages and unfettered trade has decimated the manufacturing sector of our country and has created a downward spiral for the working class. The future of Social Security and Medicare, two successful programs that have kept millions of retirees from poverty, are in danger of being cut or privatized. All of these issues, and more, must be addressed by the next occupant of the Oval Office.

That is why who we elect this November is so critically important. Listen to the debates carefully and make an informed decision. We are faced with an awesome responsibility, one that many across the globe have never experienced. Don't take your role in this election lightly.

Every vote counts! The future of our children and grandchildren depends on us doing the right thing. Let's not screw it up!



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Chapter 13-PC-1 President, Charles Henderson presenting the check to Ashdown Police Chief Mark Ardwin.

Giving Back to Your Community

SOAR Chapter 13-PC-1 recently held their quarterly luncheon and presented a check to the Ashdown Chief of Police Mark Ardwin for their annual donation to the "Shop with a Cop" program. The program benefits local children by giving them an opportunity to shop for Christmas gifts at local businesses with an Ashdown Policeman. The program was started by Pete Price, who worked as a Reserve Deputy and later as an Ashdown Auxiliary Policeman, and passed away in 2013. The Auxiliary Police promised Pete before his death that they would see that his legacy lived on!

The SOAR Chapter has been involved in fund raisers, bake sales, selling raffle tickets on a handmade quilts and collecting donations toward this program for the past few years.



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.

SOAR Vice President Al Becco Honored

Al Becco, who serves on the SOAR Executive Board as Vice President of the Western Region and 20-year Chapter 38-3 President, was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Pueblo County Democrats at their Annual St. Patrick's Day dinner. The dinner has a long history and is one of the top Democratic events in Colorado, attended by Democratic and Labor leaders from across the state.

Al has spent over 25 years working in every aspect of the party. From knocking on doors during election cycles to running Friday Night Bingo, which is the primary funding for the party. The bingo games have provided the majority of the funds that just recently built the building that serves as headquarters for the county Democratic Party, which Al currently serves as First Vice President.

Al was the longest serving President of USW Local 3267 and has always worked to ensure that labor and the United Steelworkers' issues are at the top of the Democratic Party's agenda. Four years ago, he was elected to be a delegate at the Democratic National Convention, where he continued his efforts to ensure that labor was a central piece of the party's platform.



SOAR Chapter 34-2 President is JEFFERSON AWARD RECIPIENT

On Wednesday, June 1, fourteen USW Jefferson Award winners from all over the United States and Canada travelled to Linden Hall (the Steelworkers Education Center) in Dawson, Pennsylvania to be recognized during the International Union's Executive Board meeting that was being held there.



The Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees Jefferson Award winner is the very compassionate and humble Jeff Rains. As president of his local SOAR chapter in Illinois, Jeff has continued to serve the USW even in retirement. If anything, he is more active than ever.

Jeff and his fellow retirees have organized countless volunteer activities; including creating Christmas care packages to send to service members overseas, cleaning up the Arlington wetlands, and maintaining two community gardens to grow produce to donate to the needy.

Local Eagle Scouts have lent a hand to Jeff in creating an educational 'ozone garden' for area schools to visit. The garden will nurture milkweed plants and be a safe haven for the monarch butterfly as well as feature solar panels for reusable energy.

Kids are what drive Jeff to stay committed to his many causes. This is the seventh year that SOAR Chapter 34-2 has sponsored scholarships for graduating high school seniors. Along with his church, he also runs a program called TWIGS, which hands out around 50-80 lunches every day to kids during the summer while they're not in school. For some of them, it's the only meal they get throughout the day.

"I want the next generation to have the same opportunity that I did," Jeff said. "I have time now and I benefitted from what people did for me in the past. I think it's my turn to step up to the plate."



Louise Hinton
Executive Board
Member of CURC



Scott Duvall
NDP Member of Parliament
and SOAR Member



Steve Hunt
District 3 Director



Bill Pienta
SOAR International President



Ken Neumann
National Director of Canada



Alan Croteau
District 5 Director



Marty Warren
District 6 Director



Doug MacPherson
National Coordinator



Lawrence McBrearty
District 5 Executive
Board Member



Harry Hynd
SOAR International
Vice President

BETTER TOGETHER

Better Communities
Better Union
Better Activism

SOAR Conference April 3-4, 2016 Montreal, Quebec

More than 50 delegates attended the SOAR Canada 4th National Conference in Montreal. Gerard Lachance, president of chapter 5-05 and Lawrence McBrearty, District 5 SOAR board member welcomed the delegates to Montreal.

Keynote speaker Louise Hinton, executive board member from the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC) highlighted the important role SOAR played in the establishment of CURC back in 1991. She cited the valuable contribution made by Dan McNeil that continues with Doug MacPherson as a national CURC vice-president. She also acknowledged the contributions of many SOAR members at CURC's provincial and local area councils.

The conference theme was "Better together: better communities, better union, and better activism" and delegates adopted an aggressive agenda of progressive action to make that a reality. Twenty-two resolutions were debated and adopted without amendment. The resolution committee worked hard reviewing and consolidating the resolutions. These resolutions help set out the agenda for SOAR activism through our chapters across Canada for the next three years.

Our call to action includes:

- ▶ **Stopping the ratification of the TPP**
- ▶ **Immediate improvement to the CPP/QPP**
- ▶ **Protecting and saving our steel industry**
- ▶ **Protecting and improving our health care system**

Contact Doug MacPherson if you would like a complete list of resolutions. (dmacpherson@usw.ca, or c/o USW Canadian National Office, 234 Eglinton Avenue East, 8th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M4P 1K7)

Scott Duvall, recently elected NDP MP for Hamilton Mountain, spoke to delegates about the importance of political action to protect our pensions and benefits and how the NDP is holding the current government's feet to the fire on protecting the Canadian steel industry. Scott is a former Steelworker and SOAR member.

Jim Centner, SOAR Director and President Bill Pienta addressed the conference and were warmly received by the delegates.

Memory and Older Adults

Delegates to the 2016 Canadian SOAR Conference in Montreal welcomed psychologist and scientist Dr. Nicole Anderson who gave a presentation on memory and aging.



Psychologist and research scientist Dr. Nicole Anderson speaks to SOAR delegates about memory, aging, dementia and other seniors' health issues.

Approximately one in 13 people over the age of 65 and one in three over the age of 85 have dementia, Dr. Anderson noted. While those statistics may be discouraging, it is important to remember that most adults do not develop dementia and there are things you can do to prevent, delay or alleviate the condition.

Here are some suggestions to help prevent dementia:

- ▶ Develop a broad social network (be an active SOAR member).
- ▶ Consult your doctor about thyroid problems, pain, anxiety and diabetes.
- ▶ Maintain a healthy diet that is low in saturated fats.
- ▶ Remember that a little stress can be good for an active mind but too much can affect memory. To alleviate stress try yoga, meditation or take walks or naps.
- ▶ Keep your mind active by playing bridge or doing crosswords.

Many adults are concerned about memory loss as they age. Learning what is normal and what is not will allay many fears.

Aids to Support Memory

Occasionally we all have things slip our minds. Here's what to do about it. Use lists, notes, pill organizers and other people to help you remember. Use a planner like a portable calendar to keep track of things. Write them down immediately. Check it every morning and at every transition point like when you leave an appointment. Be organized. Keep things in a memory place by putting all the things you need every day like keys, glasses and wallet in the same place. Be aware of the time of day you are most alert and do your demanding tasks then. Usually the morning is best for older adults.

If you are trying to remember to do something try making a mental picture of you performing the task and saying out loud what you are going to do. If you are trying to remember someone's name, repeat it and try to slip it into the conversation a few minutes later on.

While it is true that our memory declines as we age, our vocabulary continues to increase which is why seniors tend to be much better at word games.

Normal

Forget groceries
Forget someone's name
Get lost in an unfamiliar place
Retell the same story
Not know the exact date

Not Normal

Forget you went to the grocery store
Forget your partner's name
Get lost in a place you frequent
Retell the same story in the same conversation
Not know the correct year

District 3 Charters New Chapter

Chapter 3-66 received their charter April 3, 2016 at the National SOAR Conference in Montreal. "This is a perfect example of how to get a chapter off the ground," stated SOAR National Coordinator Doug MacPherson prior to the presentation. "When the local union's leadership is committed to getting this done, it gets done."

Pictured receiving the charter from International SOAR President Bill Pienta are, left to right: Chapter President, Earl Timmons; Bill Pienta; Chapter Vice President, Neal Stapleton and USW Local 6166 President, Les Ellsworth.



DAY OF MOURNING

April 28, 2016—SOAR members across Canada fight for the living and remember the dead. Ceremonies were held in many communities—Vancouver, Regina, Calgary, Hamilton and others.

The Incredible, Irrepressible and Witty Nellie McClung

January 28, 2016, was the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in Canada. On that day, women were first given the right to vote and to hold provincial office.



Sonja Alton

by Sonja Alton
SOAR member Chapter 3-14

Nellie McClung is best remembered for her role in helping to bring about Manitoba women's enfranchisement.

She was born in Ontario as Nellie Mooney. At the age of seven her family moved to Manitoba. There she trained to be a teacher and by the age of 16 she was teaching in a rural school. While teaching she questioned traditional women's roles and became involved in several social reform groups. She was a charming and gifted speaker with an ability to win people over to her causes.

At 23, Nellie married Wesley McClung, who supported her social reform efforts. During their marriage the couple raised five children. Nellie was later to admit, "I am glad...that I kept alive my own ambitions even when it would have been much easier to become a home-loving heart who had no thought beyond her children."

In addition to her social reform advocacy, Nellie was a fiction writer: her first novel, published in 1908, *Sewing Seeds in Danny*, became a national best seller. Many other literary successes followed.

Nellie's strong religious beliefs and devotion to her family made her acutely aware of the desperate conditions faced by other women and their children. When the family moved to Winnipeg in 1911, she joined the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), a group which recognized the problems associated with alcohol abuse. Through her work with the WCTU, she recognized the importance of having a woman's viewpoint

expressed on the political front. This led her to form a passionate interest in the women's suffrage movement and in 1912 she became a founding member of the Political Equality League.

Political Equality League sought to gain the vote for women and improve working conditions for women and men. Her spirited leadership and articulate, reasonable and witty arguments convinced Manitoba's Premier Rodmond Roblin that factory conditions were appalling. However, the premier was not convinced that giving women the right to vote would improve matters and he refused to give women's suffrage any consideration.

In 1914, McClung and other like-minded women took a leading role in the Manitoba election in the hopes of unseating Premier Roblin's Conservative government. She and her fellow members of the Political Equality League staged a mock parliament, "A Woman's Parliament," an entertaining and effective play that satirized the dangers of allowing men the right to vote. The play was a factor in turning public sentiment in favour of enfranchising women. It was such a success that enough money was made to continue the financing of the League's campaign. Unfortunately, despite their efforts Roblin and his party were returned to power.

Roblin's scandal-plagued government fell the following year and an election was called in August.

By this time, McClung and her family had moved to Edmonton, but because the leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party Tobias Norris had promised women the right to vote, she was persuaded to return to Manitoba for the last week of the election to fight



Cyril Jessop, Library and Archives Canada,
Acc. no. 1966-094, PA-030212

for Norris's election. She spoke passionately at several venues and at a large Liberal meeting at the Walker Theatre in Winnipeg on the eve of the election. Her entrance into the theatre was met with great cheering and applause. Although well known for her clever sense of humour, her speech for women's rights that night held no levity. "I am not here to beg a favour, but to obtain simple justice," she stated. "Have we not brains to think? Hands to work? Hearts to feel? And lives to live? Do we not bear our part in citizenship? Do we not help build the Empire? Give us our due!"

Norris and the Liberal Party were elected and on January 28, 1916, Norris's government granted the women of Manitoba full suffrage. Manitoba was the first province to grant women this right. Women had taken another step in the march towards equality.

McClung returned to Alberta where women were granted suffrage in April, 1916, and where she was elected as a member of parliament. She would go on to be part of "The Famous Five" women who asked the Supreme Court of Canada to have females legally considered persons...but that's another story for another day.

NDP Convention 2016 Edmonton

A vision for a more equal, fair and progressive society

by Ron Fisher, SOAR Chapter 3-09 Vice President
and former NDP MP

Alberta is in Good Hands with Rachel Notley's NDP Government

As someone who has heard former Alberta NDP leader Grant Notley speak more than once, it was a particular pleasure to listen to his daughter, NDP Premier Rachel Notley, deliver the convention keynote address. Like her father, she exudes a sincerity about the NDP which is captivating.

Notley enthralled delegates as she listed the activist changes the NDP has brought to Alberta: replacing a regressive flat tax with a fair progressive tax; taking Big Money out of politics by banning corporate and union donations to political parties; rolling back \$1 billion in health care cuts threatened by the previous Conservative government; renouncing anti-science, anti-climate change policies in Alberta by phasing out coal and focusing on cleaner, greener policies for the wellbeing of citizens; and fostering gender equality by naming a cabinet with women ministers as the majority—including two pregnant ministers. As Notley noted, “Passing a baby around during cabinet meetings helps to keep you focused on who the NDP cares for.”

Renowned Parliamentarian Stephen Lewis and the Socialist Dream

After delivering a scathing attack on the current Liberal government, Stephen Lewis ended his speech by describing socialism's reason for being. It was a quote written 60 years ago by his father, David, then federal NDP leader. “**Equality** of men and women is a **socialist watchword**. A moral **struggle against injustice and inequality** is a **socialist duty**: to be a **strong counterpoint for common women and men** against the abuse and oppression of the privileged

minority is a socialist function. To be a source of ever higher and higher standards of **values** and a richer value of life, is a **socialist dream**.” It is as true today as it was back then, and why we never give up.

Party Principles Reflected in Policy Debate Panels

- ▶ Investing in a Canada Where No One is Left Behind
- ▶ Strengthening Rights and the Canadian Identity
- ▶ Redefining Canada's Place in the World
- ▶ Governing in a Fair and Inclusive Canada
- ▶ Party Affairs
- ▶ Innovating and Prospering in the New Energy Economy

A policy panel focusing on labour issues debated topics ranging from abolishing unpaid internships, enacting a \$15 minimum wage, developing a meaningful definition of “dangerous work” (put forward by the USW, due to elimination of this definition from the Canada Labour Code by the previous Harper Conservative government), enforcing the Westray Law (USW Stop the Killing campaign) and ensuring corporations pay their fair share of taxes (USW).

As the panel topics suggest, Aboriginal concerns, health care, pharmacare, child care, pensions, free-trade deals, proportional representation electoral reform and more were discussed meaningfully and thoughtfully in the resolutions that were submitted by party members from coast to coast to coast.

Building a Nation-to-Nation Relationship with First Nations Communities

Melanie Mark, B.C. NDP MLA, Romeo Saganash Quebec NDP MP and Cindy Blackstock, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, addressed the subject of aboriginal rights. It is important to remember that it was Cindy, mostly single-handedly, who took on Harper and his Neanderthal Conservative government in their attempt to appeal a Supreme Court decision that called on the government to make up significant funding shortfalls in social programs for aboriginal children compared to non-aboriginal kids. Cindy is an exemplary human being and it was a joy to hear her speak and be in the same hall with her.

And More...

There were two special panels, including one debating electoral reform and proportional representation. We know we've got to distrust the Libs on this one, but thankfully Tom Mulcair will be there to hold them to account, as only he can.

The second special panel explored tax havens. The title says it all; *It's Got to Stop*.

All in all a good convention with lots of consideration of pensioners. Not that SOAR can relax, but we know the NDP has our backs.



Pictured above are: Dorothea Fisher, Ron Fisher, Chapter 3-09 Vice President and Ben Medernach, 3-09 President.

Alliance for Retired Americans Holds Regional Conferences

The Alliance for Retired Americans held four Regional Conferences across the country this year. They were held in Las Vegas, Nev., March 8-9; Orlando, Fla., March 29-30; Detroit, Mich., May 4-5 and Washington, D.C., May 19-20.

SOAR representatives from across the country participated in these meetings. The conferences were a mix of plenary sessions and workshops. Alliance National President Robert Roach, Jr. opened each meeting and spoke on the importance of the senior vote in the upcoming election and the need to continue to grow our organization.

Executive Director Rich Fiesta discussed the challenges of the upcoming presidential election and what it would take for a Democrat victory this fall. He also gave an overview of the 2016 Senate and Congressional races; and the battles that lay ahead.

Other speakers included; Susan Arthur, Associate Director of FINRA (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.), who spoke on investor fraud and a number of scams to watch out for when investing. The delegates also heard from various AFL-CIO representatives about voting rights and election protection.

The workshops focused on Social Security, Medicare and the 2016 election. In addition, workshops were conducted on communicating our message, using issues to educate our members for the election, building and growing local retiree chapters, and how to organize and participate in media events and rallies.



SOAR representatives at the Western Region ARA Conference, left to right: Bill Gibbons, Executive Board Member/PACE Representative; Bill Pienta, President; Al Becco, Vice President West; Pam Landon, SOAR member; Steve Landon, President Idaho ARA; Joel Buchanan, District 12 Executive Board Member; Jim Centner, Director and Gerry Steffi, District 12 Coordinator.



SOAR representatives at the Southern Region ARA Conference, left to right: Jim Centner, Director; Theresa Bickhart member of Chapter 4-1; Jim Bickhart District 4 Executive Board Member; Don Badie, District 9 Coordinator; Charlie Averill, Secretary-Treasurer and Claude Karr, District 9 Executive Board Member.



SOAR representatives at the Midwest Region ARA Conference, left to right: Scott Marshall, District 7 Executive Board Member; Mike Pyne, District 2 Executive Board Member; Bonnie Carey, District 11 Executive Board Member; Bill Pienta, President; Bruce Bostick, District 1 Executive Board Member; Dorine Godinez, District 7 Coordinator; Bill Finkle, District 11 Coordinator; Drunita Steward, SOAR member and Dave Bilski, District 1 Coordinator.

SOAR representatives at the Northeast Region ARA Conference, left to right: Charlie Averill, Secretary-Treasurer; James Roberts, President Chapter 10-1; Dave McLimans, District 10 and Bob Adkins, Executive Board Member District 8.



Steel Industry Unites to STOP CHINA'S "DUMPING"

America's steel companies are under attack from China. Production continues to drop at American steel mills while China keeps its steel manufacturing at full throttle, creating an overcapacity of product that is being "dumped" in countries around the globe.

There were approximately 13,500 American steel jobs lost within the last year because state-subsidized steel mills in China continue to crank out steel that is no longer needed in China's rapid infrastructure development. One of the reasons China continues to produce massive amounts of steel is that it wants to keep its people working. But selling its cheap steel in the United States is causing massive layoffs at our nation's steel mills and the American steel companies are losing enormous amounts of money.

Among the bevy of products exported to the United States, China is now in the game of exporting unemployment.

There have been many steel mills across America that have been idled or permanently closed during the last 12 months. Major steelmakers such as U.S. Steel, Arcelor-Mittal USA, AK Steel and Nucor have felt the brunt of China's actions. These companies just can't compete with government-subsidized steel mills in China that sell their products in the U.S. at prices below what it costs to make the steel in the U.S.

But these and other companies have taken action now that the steel crisis has reached a critical level. They've banded together to reach out to the Obama administration and Congress to put an end to this unfair trade practice.

U.S. Steel recently filed a trade case that seeks to block illegally traded steel products from entering the U.S. market. The case is based on China's extensive trade cheating, which includes conspiring to fix prices, stealing trade secrets and mislabeling products to get around trade duties.

"There's no amount of cost-cutting American steel companies could do to keep up with the illegal activity that's supporting the steel industry in China," said United Steelworkers International President Leo W. Gerard. "The time for talk has ended. Action is needed. Too many lives and livelihoods are at stake, as well as the national security of the United States."

Could you imagine America without a thriving steel industry? It would be a threat to our way of life and a major national security problem. Well-paying steelworker jobs would be lost, further diminishing the middle class. And how would we supply our military with essential fighting equipment without American-made steel?

The Obama administration and members of Congress are finally taking note of this critical situation. It's time for all of us to take immediate action to save our steel.

Go to www.americanmanufacturing.org and click on "An Unprecedented Threat" to learn more about the steel surge. Click on Take Action/Stand Up button at the bottom of the page to help double our efforts to save American steel. You can also call

your representatives in Congress at their district offices or by calling the Capitol switchboard in Washington, D.C. **202-224-3121**. Ask for your representative by name and you will be connected to their office.





Washington Wrap

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



Political Experience Matters

The blame game is on!
Every election, it seems, is
open season on those that
run for political office.

Anyone with government experience, whether elected or appointed, make the best targets. Their public records are subject to review and question by their opponents, media and researchers. Personal information, such as tax records, is always high on the hit list. Find something, find anything!

Experience in government is important. Robert S. McElwaine, History Professor at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, studied the Presidential administrations from Herbert Hoover in 1929 through Barack Obama's first term. His studies included their business experience, if any and the country's growth or decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during their administrations. The bottom line of McElwaine's findings is that the GDP grew 45 times faster under presidents with little or no business experience than it had grown with presidents with successful business careers. In a related article, Nobel Prize winning Economist/Professor Paul Krugman in a Harvard Business Review column titled "A Country Is Not A Company" pointed out that the U.S. economy is tens of thousands times more complicated than the biggest corporation. Considering the above, do you really want



someone leading our country in what is considered as the most powerful office in the free world that hasn't one bit of government experience?

It is beyond my belief, that a party can endorse a candidate with no experience in governing — a person that has furthered the divisions within their party, has criticized its leaders, insulted women, disrespected a decorated, disabled veteran and used language unfit for a person seeking our highest office.

We, as voters, must keep in mind that the next president has the responsibility of appointing a cabinet that oversees every aspect of our government, appoint a Supreme Court that will make crucial decisions that deal with every facet of our lives, and agency appointments that ensure that our government runs smoothly. He or she will also hire a White House staff that must build a relationship with the leadership and members of congress to ensure the needs of the people are met. In all these obligations of office, political experience matters. Hopefully, voters will decide that experience matters and demonstrate their decision by voting in the general election. In brief, Donald Trump has demonstrated as a businessman,

celebrity and candidate that he does not come close to meeting even the minimal standards of representing all the people of America. He doesn't deserve to be seated in the highest office of this great country of ours!

SOAR Chapters to Hold Elections

In accordance with the SOAR Chapter By-Laws; Article 6; Section 2 — nominations shall be held at a membership meeting during the month of October 2016 and nominations and elections of officers will be held in November 2016. Each term of office shall be for a period of four (4) years commencing with the month of November 2016. No member shall hold more than one (1) office in a Chapter however; Chapter officers shall be eligible to serve on the SOAR Executive Board or as a District SOAR Coordinator.

Article 6; Section 3 — states, "Members in good standing as of the date of nominations and election shall be eligible to hold Chapter office."

Any questions, please call the SOAR office at 866-208-4420.



Manufacturing, Union Membership and a Secure Retirement go Hand-in-Hand

by Robert Roach, Jr.

On May 13, writer Ben Casselman, laid out a detailed analysis of the status of manufacturing jobs in the United States for the blog fivethirtyeight.com.

We know that there are far fewer factory jobs now than in the past. Unfortunately, the jobs being created today in their place often pay less — sometimes far less. Temps now account for a growing share of factory employment, meaning that the benefits that go with those lower wages are nothing to write home about either.

Many politicians still pledge to protect manufacturing jobs, but Casselman explains they really mean a certain kind of job: “well-paid, long-lasting, with opportunities for advancement.”

Those aren’t qualities associated with working in a factory, they’re qualities associated with union membership.

Obviously these dynamics affect retirement as well. Once those workers with union jobs retire, it is far more likely to be with pension and retiree health benefits.

Casselmann also notes that for those who are employed in manufacturing, geography plays a big role in their

compensation. The average manufacturing production worker in Michigan earns \$20.80 an hour, vs. \$18.86 in South Carolina, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Again, this difference can be explained by the role that unions play. The Midwest has traditionally been a bastion of union strength. Southern states, by contrast, are mostly “right-to-work” states where unions never gained a strong foothold. In Michigan, 23 percent of manufacturing production workers were union members in 2015; in South Carolina, less than two percent were.

The best way to keep high-paying jobs in America is to do what we’ve done for decades: keep our unions strong. It will work for active workers and it will work for retirees.

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 MEMBERS BRING MENTORING, EXPERIENCE AND ACTIVISM

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SOAR member Richard Rock is not only able to talk about trade proposals and how they might impact those currently working, he is also able to offer up insight on how these issues could ultimately impact hard-earned retirement security.

Richard shared his story in multiple meetings with Texas Representatives.

“Trade has affected me personally. I started with U.S. Steel’s McDonald Works near Youngstown, Ohio — a facility that would ultimately be shuttered in the mid-80s. Seeing the future of that facility, I moved to Baytown, Texas, thinking that was good until I retired. That lasted 10 years, ending once again because of trade. I then got hired at the Reynolds Aluminum Sherwin Plant, retiring in 2010. This facility is being harmed by aluminum imports and falling prices due to Chinese overproduction. Now that Sherwin has filed for bankruptcy, I am concerned about the security of my pension.”

It’s often these personal stories that resonate the most with both staff and Members of Congress, helping to bolster our arguments.

Outcomes

As attendees headed home, they could point to a boost in the number of cosponsors on key bills as a sign of their work in Washington, D.C. They also left with additional knowledge, both for passing along to others and for using as fuel for local efforts.

Joel Buchanan, District 12 SOAR Executive Board Member, provides a great example. Upon heading home, he joined with District 12 Director Bob LaVenture, staff and active members to lead another round of work to stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership in Colorado. This time, Steelworkers stood with the Pueblo County Commissioners as they passed a resolution of opposition to the TPP — the first county in Colorado to do so.

If we’re going to be successful in the TPP fight, as well as all others, it’s going to take these continued joint efforts at conferences, at our locals and in our communities. We’re grateful for the contributions of SOAR members to the 2016 Rapid Response and Legislative Conference and look forward to what’s to come.



USW Membership Department
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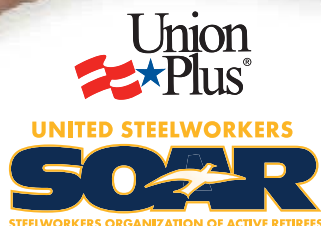
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