

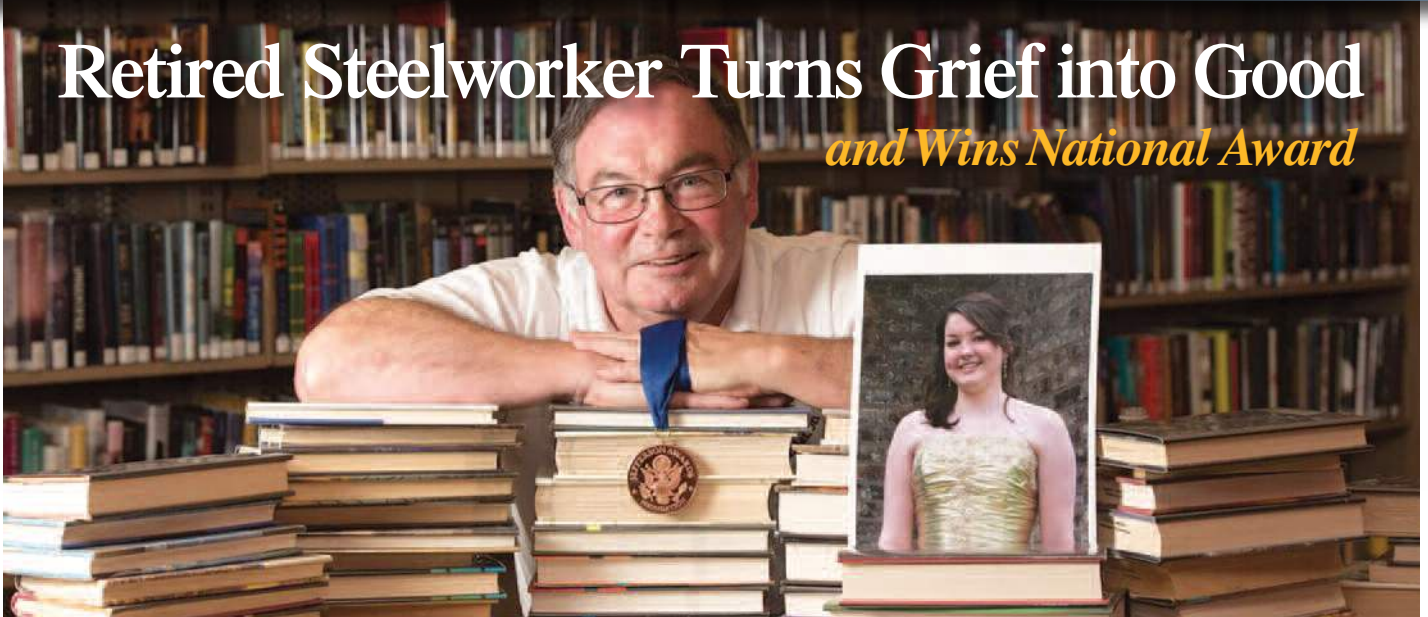
# USW@Work

A Regular Publication of the United Steelworkers

Volume 13/4

A Powerful Voice for Workers

## Retired Steelworker Turns Grief into Good *and Wins National Award*



**A retired United Steelworkers member from Pennsylvania who channeled his grief into good after his teenaged daughter died from liver cancer has won top honors from the Jefferson Awards Foundation, marking the third-straight year the Union has taken a national prize for members' community service work.**

Marc Scott, a member of Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Chapter 15-20 and former member of USW Local 7139 in Washington, Pa., was among grassroots heroes honored with national Jefferson Awards on June 28 at this year's Jefferson Awards Foundation National Ceremony.

Scott channeled his grief into good after his only daughter, Olivia, died from liver cancer at age 17. He wanted to honor her memory and pay forward the generosity and compassion his family received in some of their darkest days.

Nine years later, the Olivia Scott Foundation has donated over \$300,000, provided assistance to youth in life-altering situations, given scholarships, promoted sportsmanship, supported community service events and given back to Pittsburgh's Children's Hospital—where you can find Olivia's Coffee cart, Olivia's Stockings filled with toys at holiday time, and Olivia's Books for patients

and their families. The Foundation also hosts holiday parties for hospital staff and patients.

"Marc's strength and compassion, especially after such personal tragedy, represent the resilience of our union and the amazing people in it so well," said Leo W. Gerard, USW's International President. "We are humbled that USW has taken the Jefferson Awards' top award for the third-straight year, but the recognition isn't why we're so active in our communities. It's because it's the right thing to do."

*"Olivia's courage, hope and grace is the reason we give," Scott said. "I'm humbled by this award and grateful for my union for helping shine a spotlight on the Olivia Scott Foundation so that we can continue to do the work of helping others."*

The USW is a Champion with the Jefferson Awards Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to building a culture of service through a variety of programs and awards. As a Champion, the union was able to create a formal structure to allow members and retirees to be nominated for Jefferson Awards and put a spotlight on USW Cares efforts in

*continued on page 3*



**BILL PIENTA**  
SOAR President

## Under Attack

Unions have been threatened by the recent decisions regarding union membership (Janus); denying workers the ability to sue employers as a group and limiting the information a company provides a union in an organizing attempt. Now Labor 411 is reporting that the National Labor Relations Board has ordered field office staff to start pursuing charges against unions for 'negligent' behavior such as losing an employee's complaint or not returning phone calls when the worker has questions.

The change in how the board interprets federal labor law means unions can now be prosecuted for a range of careless and unprofessional behavior that was traditionally viewed as harmless error. The move is a shift of the agency's focus and resources to include prosecution of unions in those types of cases. The board's new standard essentially obligates unions to a greater 'duty of fair representation' by requiring them to show and prove that they have reasonable tracking systems and make meaningful efforts to update workers who file a grievance against their employer. The General Counsel is aware that the new directive may be

inconsistent with the way the Board and Regional Directors have historically interpreted duty of fair representation law in the past.

Also, companies are locking out our members, now more than ever. In turn, those same companies that received significant relief from USW members when they were in trouble, are now demanding more relief even when highly profitable; all while upper management receives million dollar bonuses. Many of these company demands include issues pertaining to future and present retirees.

With right-to-work legislation proposals, along with the above-mentioned issues, as well as the attacks on Social Security and pensions, it is clear that organized labor and its retirees are in a fight for our lives.

SOAR must and will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the active members on issues that pertain to them as well as retired members. If the employers or the politicians think that they can divide us, **let us show how them how wrong they are!**

**Sources:**

[www.labor441.org](http://www.labor441.org)

<http://labor411.org/411-blog/trump-administration-orders-nlrp-staff-to-step-up-prosecution-of-labor-unions/>

## You've Got Mail!

Have you ever wondered how your renewal card is prepared for mailing? Our SOAR renewal cards are hand stuffed by our dedicated volunteer retirees in Pittsburgh. Thank you to this year's SOAR Renewal Mailing Volunteers. We appreciate all of your hard work, and thank you for all that you do to help build SOAR!

**Pictured top photo, left to right:**  
Mel Moore, Chapter 20-15;  
Charmane Moore, Chapter 20-15;  
Beth Jedzejewski, volunteer;  
Sherry Boler, Chapter 20-20 and  
Gerald Sokolow, Chapter 20-15.

**Not Pictured: Beverly McCoy and Linnie Hatcher, Chapter 20-15; and Kathy Wilson, volunteer.**







**JULIE STEIN**  
SOAR Director

## Could Paul Ryan's Farewell be an End to Social Security?

As a life-long resident of Northeast Wisconsin, I am familiar with House Speaker Paul Ryan and his anti-worker conservative agenda. I simply don't trust the guy. I am convinced that Ryan is determined to modify, if not eliminate the Social Security and Medicare programs during the lame duck session. That is a risk we can't take. Remember, Ryan is retiring in January and is anxious to build a lasting legacy of his Speakership. And what better send-off could he give himself than taking a last shot at Social Security and Medicare? Conservatives have hated those programs since their inceptions and it could be years before the GOP gets another shot at making major changes to the programs.

During the "lame duck" Ryan will have a lot of things in his favor if he wants to take a shot at kicking the heart of the New Deal in the gut. First, 26 Republicans are retiring from Congress after the election. And with many pundits predicting the Democrats will regain control of the House, the number of Republicans exiting next year is only going to increase. That means there will be a large number of Representatives, some of them angered by defeat, who will never have to face voters for their actions. That means they will be free to vote as they please regardless of what their constituents are telling them.

Second, the tax cuts that Congress passed earlier this year are starting to be a major drain on the budget and are greatly contributing to our rising national deficit. Budget hawks are already crying that something must be done to bring spending under control. They have framed the fight as one to save our economy and a lot of folks are drinking the Kool-Aid.

Third, the issues of the budget and debt ceiling are pending. That means that Ryan and his cohorts can attach changes to Social Security and Medicare to a bill addressing one or both of those issues. Why is that significant?

It's important because under current rules of the Senate, budgetary items cannot be filibustered. That means that all that is needed to pass any type of changes is a simple majority. Just 51 yes votes are needed.

And one more thing to think about, as we welcome the New Year, 26 Republicans are going to be looking for a job and privatization of Social Security and Medicare promises to be a boon for Wall St. You can bet that as the vote is taken, the banking lobbyist will be passing out millions to friendly Congressmen and promising jobs to those who vote their way.

As you can see, a perfect storm potentially exists for Ryan and his minions this fall and we have to be ready to fight. The best way to begin that fight is to contact your two U.S. Senators and member of the House and demand that they oppose taking up Social Security or Medicare during the lame duck session. Social Security is too important to many Americans to be trusted to Representatives who are unaccountable to voters. Make calls today and urge your family and friends to make their voices heard too. Working together, SOAR members can stop any attempt to change Social Security and Medicare. Then, when Democrats take control of the House and Senate, we can begin the work to strengthen and improve the programs.

***Band with us, as we continue the fight to protect and enhance the quality of life of our retirees and working families.  
We Are Stronger Together!***

## Retired Steelworker Turns Grief into Good and Wins National Award

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communities across North America. The program includes training to help build leadership and other skills through effective community service.

The National Ceremony, now in its 46th year, took place at The Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., and was sponsored by the NFL, Vodafone, Clearlight Advisors, Deloitte, The Glover Park Group and USW.

Scott was selected as the USW's overall Jefferson Awards Foundation Champion volunteer for 2018. The union had over 150 nominations from each of its districts in the United States and Canada and from among its Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR).

**SOAR in ACTION**

## USW@Work

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## SOAR Members a Mainstay of Canadian Retirees' Group

By Doug Macpherson  
SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

**Canadian SOAR members continue to be a driving force within a national group that represents more than 500,000 retired union members across the country.**

At the 13th Convention of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC) held in Toronto from Sept. 19 to 21, SOAR members represented one-quarter of all registered delegates.

The SOAR delegation helped lead the way as CURC delegates debated and adopted a progressive policy agenda.

For the first time in the organization's history, contested elections were held for nearly all of the seven officers' positions on the CURC executive. A new president was elected, along with four other members of the same team, representing an aggressive leadership style and commitment to pursue a more progressive agenda.

Special congratulations to Sister Lena Sutton who was appointed to the executive committee when I resigned



**Newly-elected CURC executive committee members, from left to right: Janice Bernier, 2nd Vice-President; Janice Gairey, Secretary; Louise Hinton, 1st Vice-President; Bill Chedore, President; Lucienne Bahaud, Treasurer; Irma Mohammed, Member-at-Large, Minorities; Lena Sutton, Member-at-Large, Women.**

earlier this year. Lena was reconferred as Member-at-Large for Women's issues.

Congratulations to all members of the CURC executive who can be assured of SOAR's active support in all their endeavors.

## SOAR Member Honoured by B.C. Federation of Retired Union Members



SOAR member and social justice activist Bill Silvester has been named an honorary life member of BCFORUM (the British Columbia Federation of Retired Union Members) for his decades of service to the federation.

Bill served on the BCFORUM board for decades, including as First Vice-President since 2004. While stepping down as First Vice-President, Bill will continue to bring his passion for social justice to the volunteer board of directors.

BCFORUM President Diane Wood and Steve Hunt, USW District 3 Director, paid tribute to Bill's work, particularly in outreach and organizing to strengthen BCFORUM's ability to advocate for older and retired workers.

**USW District 3 Director Steve Hunt, left, presents Bill Silvester with a USW watch upon his active retirement from BCFORUM.**



# Making Labour History Real

## *Once an activist, always an activist.*

By Doug Macpherson  
SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

### August 2018 marked the 35th anniversary of British Columbia's "Operation Solidarity," a major event in Canadian labour history.

Operation Solidarity was the closest British Columbia came to a province-wide general strike. It started when the Social Credit government of the day under the leadership of Premier Bill Bennett passed 26 regressive, anti-union bills.

The new legislation included indefinitely extending wage controls, the right of government to fire public-service employees—teachers, hospital workers, etc.—without cause, abolishing Labour Standards Boards, the right of landlords to evict tenants without cause, and many more egregious acts.

The British Columbia Federation of Labour, under the leadership of President Art Kube (member of SOAR Chapter 3-14), immediately began protests which grew into a huge coalition of private and public-sector



Art Kube



B.C. Labour Heritage Centre photo

Young activist Kay Noonan leads the Steelworkers' delegation into the stadium during the historic Operation Solidarity rally in Vancouver in 1983.

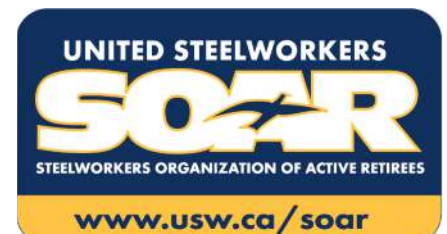
unions, social action groups and citizens. The movement adopted the name Operation Solidarity.

Meetings and demonstrations were almost a daily affair and the coalition vowed to keep the pressure on the government until the egregious bills were withdrawn. The high point occurred when over 40,000 union and citizen protestors marched into Vancouver's largest stadium, led by the Firefighters' band, to hear Operation Solidarity leaders speak.

The movement's strength prompted the government to enter into negotiations with coalition leaders. With the help of veteran mediator Vince Ready — a former USW staff representative — an agreement of sorts was reached. It took a private meeting between IWA President Jack Munro (a former SOAR board member) and the Premier to finalize the agreement and bring an end to Operation Solidarity, with most of the government's bills withdrawn.

Like all compromises, the agreement was not unanimously praised and was seen by some as a failure. It was not a popular result and certainly not what many labour leaders had hoped for. The general public though largely blamed the government, rather than the unions, for all of the chaos and turmoil.

Which brings us back to the subtitle of this article. The attached photo, gratefully provided by the B.C. Labour Heritage Centre, shows Steelworkers entering the stadium during that fateful rally in 1983. Leading the delegation is a young Steelworkers sister, Kay Noonan, who today, is Vice-President of SOAR Chapter 3-14 in Vancouver. "Once an activist, always an activist."



# Special Thanks to Mike

Longtime union and SOAR activist, Michael Pyne, has stepped down from the SOAR Executive Board.

Mike began his union career on September 7, 1972, when he hired in at Motor Wheel Corporation in his hometown of Lansing, Mich. He became a member of Allied Industrial Workers (AIW) Local 182. Mike held various offices in the local including Steward, Chief Steward, Vice Chair of the Motor Wheel Branch of the amalgamated local, as well as Vice President and President of his local.



Mike Pyne

Mike has always been interested in politics, starting in September of 1974, again in 1976, 1978, 1980, 1982, and 1984, he was asked to work casually for the International Union during the political season. In 1984, he accepted a job with the Michigan AFL-CIO in the political education department, coordinating the political program for the State Federation. In 1986 he changed positions within the Michigan AFL-CIO where he then assisted dislocated workers in finding new employment by offering training in different areas of work.

In December of 1988, Mike was offered and accepted the position of organizer with his International Union the AIW which merged with the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) in 1993. He worked as an organizer and in 1998 he accepted a servicing assignment in North East Wisconsin; a position he held when the UPIU merged with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union (OCAW) to create PACE. In 2005, PACE merged with the USWA creating the USW. After that merger, Mike continued his servicing responsibilities and took on the additional role of political coordinator for USW District 2, a position he held until he retired, in February 2013.

Mike has served as a Board member of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans since 2007. He was elected president of that organization in May 2013 and he served in that capacity until May 2017; he now continues to serve the Alliance as President Emeritus.

Mike was elected to District 2 SOAR Executive Board Member in August 2014 and served in that position until his recent resignation. He encourages all retirees to become active members of SOAR. He also intends to remain active with the organization, and especially political activities.

Mike and his wife Pat have two adult children and four grandchildren. They reside in Appleton, Wis., and winter in Arizona.

*On behalf of the entire SOAR organization, we wish Mike and his family well and thank him immensely for his years of dedicated service to SOAR.*

*“To my friends of SOAR, please let me thank those who volunteer and assist our SOAR sisters and brothers. Their work is vital to our organization and most appreciated by the true political activists of the USW. Those senior activists who continue to assist our members by helping to deliver information at our member’s doors during our daily and Saturday volunteer work are the very salt of the earth. I, myself, am one of those people and they mean the world to our great union. Keep up the terrific work and cherish the few. Best of luck to all of you fine people!”*

Mike Pyne

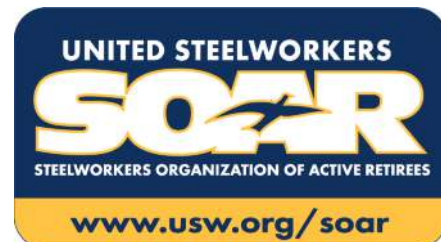


## Bonnie Carey Recognized at Salute to Labor Picnic

On Labor Day, District 11 SOAR Executive Board member Bonnie Carey was honored by the Democratic Party of Rock Island County for her over 20 years of volunteerism for the political work she did in conjunction with USW Local 105 and SOAR Chapter 11-4, at the 51st annual Salute to Labor Picnic, held at the Rock Island County Fairgrounds, located in East Moline, Ill.

*Congrats, Bonnie!*

Bonnie, left, is pictured with Illinois Governor Democratic candidate JB Pritzker, along with Jerry Porter and Sandy Gonzalez. Bonnie, Jerry and Sandy are members of SOAR Chapter 11-4, which is based out of Bettendorf, Iowa. Chapter members reside in the Quad-Cities area which bridge Iowa and Illinois.





# Jane Becker **SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON**

By Doug May  
Granite City SOAR Chapter

Everyone in attendance at the Ninth Annual Granite City, Illinois SOAR Chapter 7-34-2 Jane Becker Scholarship Awards Luncheon is firm in our shared belief in the importance of educating the next generation.

Five very talented SOAR chapter member's grandchildren were awarded a \$2,000 scholarship as they were the winners of an important but challenging essay topic, "The Impact of Unlimited and Undisclosed Money in our Political Process" – Citizens United. The five awardees were among several high school seniors who submitted essays that were reviewed by a panel of judges from the community who are friends of the SOAR chapter. The essay topic changes every year, but is always a subject that affects our members and Americans at large.

Brendan Kelly, Democratic candidate for the Illinois 12th Congressional District which includes the Granite City, Illinois area where the luncheon took place, was the special guest for the luncheon. Kelly said, "We need to get the corrupting influence of money out of our democracy. This is one of the most important races in the country. We have a flood of Citizens United money influencing our political system—in both parties. We are witnessing so many policies that serve the few who are doing well as the consolidation of wealth results in a race to the bottom. This is our opportunity to change that. We need people's help. Correct opinions are great, but we need people to show up and vote."

Maintaining the chapter's ongoing tradition, additional awards were presented during the luncheon. The SOAR chapter last year renamed its Labor Leader of the Year award to honor Ed Sadlowski, a union leader who rose up from the rank-and-file, brought lasting democratic changes to the union and was almost elected president against the union leadership's opposition.

## The SOAR award winners this year were:

### Friend of SOAR

*C.J. Baricevic, Belleville attorney and former Congressional candidate*

### Edward Sadlowski Labor Leader of the Year

*Dan Simmon, USW Local 1899 President*

### 2018 Activist of the Year

*Doug May, SOAR Chapter 7-34-2*

### 2018 Volunteers of the Year

*Rick & Vicki Schaus and Jim & Lindy Hellrung  
SOAR Chapter 7-34-2 members*



Pictured left to right, are the 2018 Jane Becker Scholarship Award winners: Nicholas French, Ian Thompson, Abigail Wuebbeling, Katelyn Schneidewind and Morgane Ash.

SOAR chapter members participate in many notable outreach projects in the area, assisting the less fortunate while engaging members and supporting elected officials that share our common interest in public policy that protect programs for seniors, business decisions that affect bargaining as we engage in our support for active USW members and engaging in multiple levels of community outreach. But the annual scholarship awards, arguably, is the crowning achievement for this chapter.

Congratulations and good luck to the scholarship winners who announced they will pursue degrees in fields ranging from aerospace engineering, nursing, finance and law degrees.

We would like to express our appreciation for all of the essay judges, those officials who were in attendance and to all the SOAR members who consistently volunteer for our ongoing efforts to make the world a better place.



# Jay McMurran Appointed to SOAR Executive Board

**Effective August 1, United Steelworkers International President Leo W. Gerard appointed Gerard “Jay” McMurran as the District 2 SOAR Executive Board Member; to fulfill the remaining term of Michael Pyne, who resigned from the position in June.**

As an employee of McLouth Steel in Trenton, Mich., Jay McMurran became a member of USW Local 2659 in 1973. Later that year, he was elected Shop Steward and has continuously served the Steelworkers in various appointed and elected positions since that time. Those positions include: Steward, Department Safety and Health Committeeman, Community Services, Blood



Bank Chairperson, Inside Guard, Recording Secretary and Trustee.

Jay’s work at Local 2659 led to his appointment to Casual Staff in District 29. He served several stints on staff as an Organizer and Strategic Campaigns Coordinator. In the latter position, he led the District’s effort to support Steelworkers at Ravenswood Aluminum, Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, Goodyear and Bridgestone/Firestone. He was appointed to permanent staff in 1997 as an Organizer and Rapid Response Coordinator. Following two bouts with cancer, he retired in March 2017.

Since retiring he has been elected 1st Vice President of the Michigan Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He says that he wants to use that position and his SOAR board membership to help mobilize District 2 retirees for the upcoming fight to preserve Social Security. Jay stated “I believe those important issues [Social Security and Medicare] can

serve as organizing tools to help build SOAR membership in Michigan and Wisconsin. He added, “This is a great opportunity to build our Union and increase retiree participation.”

Jay and his wife, Marian, have been married for 45 years and live in Rockwood, Mich., a community on the Huron River that serves as the halfway point between Detroit and Toledo, Ohio. The couple has three children, Nathan, Marisa and Sam; two granddaughters, Joanna and Isabella; and one great-grandson, Marshall. They enjoy canoeing, golf, the movies and good, old-fashioned Sunday family barbecues and are looking forward to touring Marian’s parents’ birthplace, Icaria, Greece early next year.

*On behalf of SOAR, we welcome Jay to the SOAR Executive Board and look forward to working with him as we continue our mission to protect and enhance the quality of life for retirees and working families.*

## USW District 4 Honors SOAR Activist

**In August, at the USW District 4 2018 Education Conference held in Atlantic City, District 4 SOAR Executive Board Member Albert Polk was recognized by the District for his activism on behalf of retirees and working families and his continued service to the Union.**

At each of the District’s educational conferences, one award per sub-district is presented to individuals who are identified as activists in District 4. Also, an award is presented to a retired member of the District who continues to fight for working families and participates in District activities during retirement.

Al Polk was chosen for his leadership and activism, as demonstrated by his strong support for the locked-out members of ATI and National Grid; because of his time spent on political actions, including door knocking, phone banking and leafletting, in states that required spending time on the road away from family; and for his involvement with SOAR, including his yearlong commitment to getting a SOAR chapter organized in Rhode Island; thusly, he was selected to receive the District 4 award for “Retired Activist in the District” at the 2018 conference.



**Pictured left to right: Bill Pienta, SOAR International President; John Shinn, District 4 Director; Al Polk, honoree and Del Vitale, Assistant to the District Director.**

*Congratulations, Al!*





## SOAR MEMBERS JOIN FIGHT for Fairness in Steel Industry

**SOAR members from across the United States stood side-by-side with thousands of their USW brothers and sisters on Aug. 30, as the union held a series of rallies and marches calling for fair contracts with steelmakers ArcelorMittal and U.S. Steel.**

“Today, we saw hard-working people standing up with one voice demanding fair treatment for themselves and their families,” USW International President Leo W. Gerard said of the events.

The union’s negotiations with ArcelorMittal and U.S. Steel cover a total of 31,000 active workers and also set health care and retirement

benefits for thousands more retired workers. The companies’ most recent proposals have sought to impose higher health care costs on both active and retired employees.

“These workers and their families have made significant sacrifices over the years to put these two companies in a position to be successful,” Gerard said. “They deserve to share in that success.”



*Editor’s Note: As this issue of SOAR in Action was going to press, the USW’s solidarity was beginning to pay off. The USW reached a tentative agreement Sept. 30 on a new four-year contract with iron ore mining company Cleveland Cliffs and moved closer to new agreements with both U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal. For the latest updates from the bargaining table for both companies, visit [www.usw.org/steel](http://www.usw.org/steel).*





# At 100, Bea Lumpkin Has No Plans to Slow Down

Relentless attacks on workers by corporations and right-wing politicians in recent years could leave even longtime activists feeling discouraged. But for SOAR member Bea Lumpkin, there are reasons for hope.

For Lumpkin, the key to turning the tide is simple: Organizing.

“None of us should ever give up,” Lumpkin said. “There’s always a way out if we unite enough people together.”

Lumpkin, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday, knows it can be done because she has seen it before, having lived through the Great Depression and the rise of fascism that preceded World War II.

Those difficult times ultimately gave rise to legislation that established Social Security and the minimum wage and eased restrictions on union organizing.

“FDR didn’t just give us the New Deal. He did it because workers kept the wind at his back and kept pushing him forward,” Lumpkin said. “We have to give immigrants a lot of credit for that – there were a lot of people in the immigrant community who were very early labor organizers. They are a source of hope.”

As a result of that massive organization of workers in the 1930s and 1940s, millions of people joined unions over just a few short years. Decades of prosperity for the American working class followed.

The same kind of activism today can turn the tide in a similar way on issues like economic inequality and immigrant rights, Lumpkin said.

“I feel good about the fact that so many young people, students, are working together with us on all of these issues,” she said.

Like them, Lumpkin got an early start to her life as an activist. She got her first factory job before she was 15 and became a union organizer at the age of 19.

“I was lucky to grow up in a very strong labor community,” the native New Yorker said.

In 1949, Lumpkin and her husband, Frank, a steelworker, moved to Chicago, and Frank got a job at Wisconsin Steel.

In 1980, when the plant closed and 4,000 workers lost their jobs, the Lumpkins helped to establish the “Save Our Jobs Committee,” which fought for years to restore lost benefits to the workers. The group eventually won \$17 million in lost pension money.

“That was an inspiration,” she said. “It was a historic fight, a community-wide fight.”

Nearly 40 years later, Lumpkin is still joining workers in the grassroots fight for fair treatment. She recently marched with about 1,000 activists at a “Fight for 15” event in Chicago. She regularly attends SOAR and Women of Steel events to advocate on issues such as women’s rights and the rights of senior citizens.

“I’m very proud of the fact that the Women of Steel have played an important role in the women’s movement,” she said. “I’m proud of the fact that SOAR has been a bridge between the labor movement and the retiree movement.”

In addition to being a member of those groups, Lumpkin is a member of the Alliance for Retired Americans and a founding member of the Coalition of

Labor Union Women (CLUW).

A former journalist, she’s also written several books, including her memoir “Joy in the Struggle” and “Always Bring a Crowd,” which was about her late husband.

Even after celebrating her 100th birthday this past August and receiving awards and accolades from friends throughout the labor movement, Lumpkin has no plans to slow down.

“The urgency of building and strengthening the labor movement has kept me going and given me a lot to live for,” Lumpkin said.

***Bea, may your birthday celebration continue for many years to come!***



On behalf of the USW, District 7 SOAR Executive Board Member Scott Marshall had the distinct pleasure to present Bea Lumpkin with a bouquet of roses and a letter (not shown) from Int’l President Leo W. Gerard to honor her 100th birthday at the celebration held for her on August 3.





## DISTRICT 2 SOAR

# Volunteer for Annual Waterfowl Festival

By Jay McMurrin

SOAR Executive Board Member, District 2

Nestled on the banks of the Detroit River and Lake Erie further to the south, Downriver Detroit is a hunter and angler's paradise.

Once the home of two fully-integrated steel mills and several large chemical plants, it is also an area rich in Steelworker history. So it should come as no surprise that SOAR members are active supporters of the region's outdoor sports activities.

On September 15 and 16, members of District 2 SOAR Chapters 29-1 and 29-4 staffed the gates and information booth of the 71st Annual Point Mouillee Waterfowl Festival in Brownstown, Mich. The event features such outdoor activities as a duck calling championship, duck retriever contest, layout shooting competition and a nationally recognized hip boot race. It draws attendees from across the United States and Canada. In addition to greeting guests and answering festival-goers questions, SOAR members sell raffle tickets to benefit restoration efforts in the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The project is the largest freshwater marsh restoration effort in North America. This year Steelworker retirees collected over \$3,000 in ticket sales. They have been volunteering at the Festival since 1988 and are looking forward to helping out in the future.

It should be noted that the Festival's longtime Executive Director, Richard Whitwam, is a member of SOAR Chapter 29-4 and former President of USW Local 2659 in Southgate. Brother Whitwam is also a noted waterfowl artist whose work is featured throughout the Detroit area.



From left to right: James Arthur, Chapter 29-4 Vice President; Anthony Neadow, Chapter 29-4 Member; Cleofus "Blue" Wilson, Chapter 29-4 Member; Anthony Pascarella, Chapter 29-4 President; Art Druyor, Chapter 29-4 Trustee and R.G. "Pat" Patterson, Chapter 29-4 Member.

Not pictured: Milio "Mimi" Rinna, Chapter 29-1 Recording Secretary; Gasper "Cap" Lumia, Chapter 29-1 Member and Jay McMurrin, SOAR Chapter 29-4 Acting Recording Secretary.



[facebook.com/groups/uswsoar](https://facebook.com/groups/uswsoar)



# MAKE that CALL!

*Calling your elected officials is simple AND effective.*

The next time you are asked to make a call, please join in the effort. Here are tips for making calls, especially for first-time callers:

► ***I'm not sure who to call.***

Our toll-free number makes it easy. When you dial the number provided on a Rapid Response ActionCall for the first time, you will be asked for your zip code. That number will route you to the correct U.S. Representative or Senator. If you are asked to call both Senators, call a second time to be automatically routed to your other Senator.

► ***Who picks up the phone?***

Most of the time, calls are answered by staff assistants or interns. For some offices, an automated message answers and gives you the option to leave a message.

► ***What do I say?***

We make it easy! Whenever Rapid Response asks for calls, we include suggested things to say. Most importantly:

- Tell the person your name and where you are from. It is important for the office to know you are a constituent.
- Share your position on the issue you are calling about. Make sure to reference the bill number, the name of the bill, and any other pertinent information (reference the Rapid Response information for these details).

► ***How long does it take?***

Most calls only take a minute. The staffer answering the phone often only wants to know who you are, where you are from and if you support or oppose an issue so it can be noted. That's it!

► ***I've never called my elected official. I'm nervous!***

Most people are surprised at how easy it is after making their first call. However, you can also call after business hours and leave a message on your Senator or Representative's voicemail.

► ***Want your call to make more of an impact?***

Ask to speak with the legislative aide who handles the topic area that you are calling about. Share how the issue relates to you and your members. Ask for a response from the office. Get others to join you in making a call. When groups of people are calling at the same time, an office is forced to take note!

► ***I wasn't able to get through. Now what?***

Sometimes when a major issue is being debated, high call volume can overwhelm an office. You can try calling the district offices instead. Please report to Rapid Response if this is happening. Find out the phone numbers by looking up your Representative or Senators at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

**Remember, our elected officials work for us. Corporations are well-represented in Washington. When we engage by making calls and other actions, we ensure that we are too.**

**“Please ask your members to stop calling. I will be supporting your position.”**

In Rapid Response, we often ask members and retirees to call their elected officials on key issues. We know we are being effective when we get a message like this in return!

Our experience from over 20 years of Rapid Response actions is that calls matter and our voices have power. They bring awareness to an issue and influence lawmakers. The more calls, the more impact.





# Our Pharmaceutical Dependence on China

“...80 percent of active ingredients in America’s pharmaceuticals and over-the-counter drugs are manufactured in China and India.”

**China has been a thorn in the side of American steelmakers since the communist nation joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001.**

Approximately 50,000 United Steelworker (USW) jobs were eliminated as China and its partners in crime-dumped inexpensive, poor-quality steel into the United States market while breaking the trade rules all along the way.

But there has been a resurgence in the steel industry during the past year. More than 7,000 steelworkers have been called back to work or have come into the industry as new hires. Most of these men and women are our USW brothers and sisters.

While this is especially good news for SOAR members who need a well-funded health program and pension fund, China may be hitting retirees in another scary way.

Most SOAR members are baby boomers that unfortunately develop a variety of health problems that require vital medications. Some ailments are from old age. Others develop from the rigors of working long hours in the workplace.

Just as we once assumed that our steel structures were erected with American-made steel, today we assume that our medications are made in America with close monitoring by the Food and Drug Administration.

But the shocking news is that 80 percent of active ingredients in America’s pharmaceuticals and over-the-counter drugs are manufactured in China and India, according to Rosemary Gibson and Janardan Prasad Singh, authors of a new book “China RX: Exposing the Risks of America’s

Dependence on China for Medicine.”

With production so far away, the FDA is understandably challenged in conducting frequent and thorough inspections of drug manufacturing facilities overseas. That makes the need to secure drug manufacturing in the United States more imperative.

In July of this year, the FDA announced a voluntary recall of a generic, commonly prescribed blood pressure medication known as Valsartan. It was contaminated by a carcinogenic toxin.

All the Valsartan flagged for recall was manufactured in China, which turns out to be the source of most of America’s drugs.

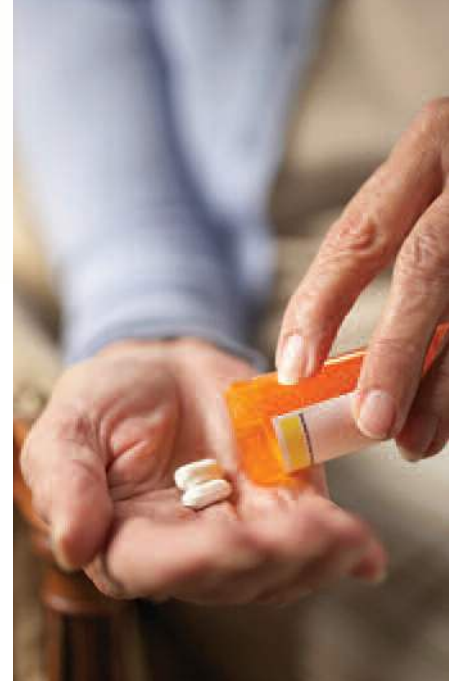
Many of the drugs that Americans depend upon, including antibiotics like penicillin, birth control pills, vitamin C and even cancer drugs are made in China with little regulation.

“The FDA says the drugs are safe. But the outsourcing of America’s medicine production is so complex it seems impossible to ensure that they are safe,” Gibson and Singh write.

In the last ten years, the FDA has announced recalls of Chinese-made medicines, some of which have even caused death.

If China didn’t disrupt your life when you were working in the mill, there is a chance it will cause irreparable damage when you are ill.

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



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**Editor’s Clarification** – *In the previous edition of SOAR in Action (Summer 2018), an article written by Jeff Bonior of the Alliance for American Manufacturing about the Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum imported into the United States neglected to reference the position of the USW in that Canada should be exempted from those tariffs.*

*The USW was relieved that the U.S. Administration took action under Section 232 to preserve the U.S. aluminum and steel industries that were laid low by an unrelenting flood of unfairly subsidized and illegally traded steel and aluminum, mostly from China. However, the USW said at the outset and continues to strongly assert that Canada must be exempted from those tariffs. The failure to exclude Canada ignores the fact that Canada’s steel and aluminum exports to the United States are fairly traded and that Canada has shown its willingness to cooperate with the United States to fight unfair trade.*

*The United States and Canada have a unique, synergistic relationship in terms of manufacturing and defense that must be honored with Canada’s exclusion from the Section 232 tariffs. We sincerely apologize for any consternation that may have been caused by the omission of this stipulation from the article about the tariffs.*



# Washington Wrap

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

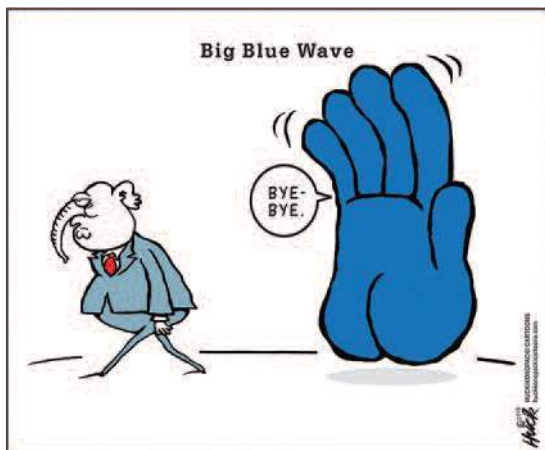


## Composure is Necessary to Lead This Country

Hardly a day passes without media reports about the most turbulent White House on record. From the high turnover rate of staff, or the Twitter attacks against members of his own cabinet and anyone who opposes him publicly. It is scary to think that a president that lacks composure is now in possession of the secret codes that could launch a nuclear attack, something hardly mentioned.

The private sector media is not alone in reporting the president's leadership, character, honesty or statesmanship. In the recent book, *FEAR*, author Bob Woodward discloses how senior White House officials joined together to steal draft orders from the Oval Office desk so he would not issue directives that would jeopardize critical intelligence operations.

Our Constitution and our judicial system bind our basic laws together. The president is not the final authority. We, as the Union, will stand firm on our beliefs and continue to push forward and fight for what is right. We, as voters, can limit the Congressional support he receives from the current majority leadership. November is a pivotal moment for the future of our nation. **Our strength is in the voting booth—VOTE!**



# SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

## Projected to Increase in 2019

Social Security's annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is an increase in the benefit amount people receive each month. By law, the monthly Social Security and SSI federal benefit rate increases when there is a rise in the cost of living. The government measures changes in the cost of living through the Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).

The CPI-W rises when prices increase, making your cost of living go up. This means prices for goods and services, on average, are a little more expensive. The COLA helps to offset these costs.

This publication of *SOAR in Action* goes to press on October 11 which is when the impending Social Security's COLA will be determined. By the time this issue reaches your mailbox, Social Security will have announced the COLA, if any, for 2019. Projections indicate it may increase 2.7 percent for the upcoming year and it will be the highest COLA since 2012, when it was 3.6 percent. The COLA for 2018 is 2 percent; for 2017 it was a mere .3 percent after no COLA in 2016.

Since Medicare Part B premiums are expected to be stagnant in 2019, this creates a significant factor in the 2019 COLA since it won't be impacted nearly as much by the hold-harmless clause. For a majority of seniors who are already paying this standard monthly rate, it means receiving the entirety of their benefit increase in 2019.

However, it's not all good news, even if it is the highest COLA in seven years. The downside is that the CPI-W continues to do a relatively poor job of taking into account the costs that matter most to seniors. This means there's a really good chance those who depend the most on Social Security will continue to see the purchasing power of their income decline over time.<sup>1</sup>

An analysis from The Senior Citizens League found that the purchasing power of Social Security dollars has declined by a whopping 34 percent since the year 2000.<sup>2</sup> The reason? The CPI-W is a measure that takes into account the spending habits of urban and clerical workers. These are mostly folks who are of working age and don't have the same spending habits as seniors.

Thusly, medical care and housing, which make up a substantive portion of expenditures for seniors, are given less weighting in the CPI-W in favor of education, apparel, and transportation expenses, which matter less to seniors.<sup>1</sup>



### Sources:

- <sup>1</sup><https://www.fool.com/retirement/2018/09/30/the-most-important-social-security-date-of-the-yea.aspx>
- <sup>2</sup><https://www.upi.com/Study-Social-Security-buying-power-down-34-since-2000/6091529597919/>  
[www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)





# Protect Your Right to Vote in the Midterm Elections

By Robert Roach, Jr.

The midterm elections are just around the corner, and it's more important than ever to know your rights when you go to the polls.

Attempts to disenfranchise older and minority voters are on the rise. It takes many forms including purging names from voter rolls, enacting voter ID laws, and closing polling locations. The administration's commission looking into voter fraud was even reported to be making up data.

The fact is that instances of voter fraud are few and far between. We can't let these continued attacks on our right to vote stop us from getting out to the polls.

Know your rights! Go to [vote.org](http://vote.org) to check your registration, find your state's voter identification requirements and locate your polling place.

Once you have confirmed you are registered, it's critical to know the candidates' records and positions on retiree issues.

The Alliance's annual Congressional Voting Record evaluates the past Congressional year on senior-relevant issues. All members of Congress receive a score for the past year and a lifetime score. Forty percent of senators and members of the House of Representatives received a

ZERO percent rating. Find your elected officials' pro-retiree scores at [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org) prior to voting.



The senior vote is crucial in all elections, but historically it plays an even more significant role in the outcome of midterm elections. Nationally, seniors are projected to represent 33.9 percent of the electorate this year.

We expect seniors to represent 37 percent or more of the vote in 63 House districts. Four states with tight Senate races in 2018—Florida, Montana, North Dakota and West Virginia — are among the top ten states with the highest proportion of elderly (65+) residents, according to the last decennial census.

Make sure your views are counted by registering and turning out to vote.

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

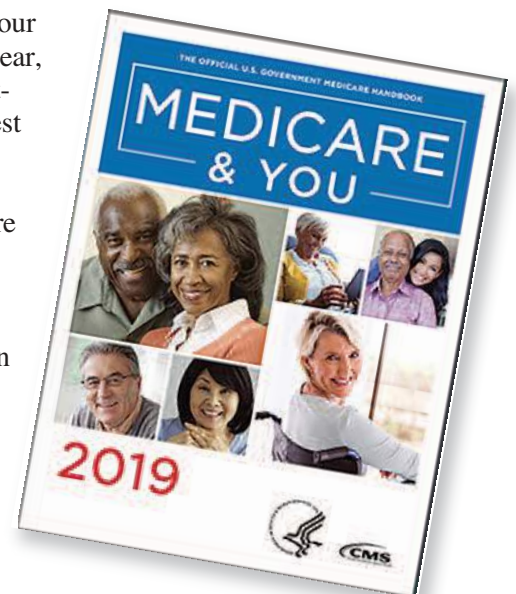
*For more information, visit [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org).*

## Don't Miss this IMPORTANT DEADLINE!

**Open Enrollment season runs through December 7.** Have you looked at your Medicare Part D and Advantage plans to ensure they still work for you? Each year, both Medicare Advantage and Part D plans make changes to their benefits, cost-sharing, provider networks and monthly premiums. That means the plan that best served you in 2018 may not be the best plan for you next year.

Given that out-of-pocket health care costs consume 25 percent of a Social Security check, it's especially important that beneficiaries take the time to ensure last year's plans still meet their needs.

**New!** Starting in 2019, if you're enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can join, switch, or drop a plan during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period, between January 1–March 31 each year. For more information on joining, dropping, and switching plans, visit [Medicare.gov](http://Medicare.gov) or call **1-800-MEDICARE**. Also, the link to the 2019 Medicare and You Handbook is: <https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/10050-Medicare-and-You.pdf>





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# Let's Travel



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