From the Director’s Desk -

Republican Platform Targets Social Security

Once again, we find ourselves fighting to protect Social Security; rather than working to enhance the benefit so many of our nation’s retirees depend on for their survival. Donald Trump, and the Republican National Convention, just ratified the most conservative, right-wing party platform in history. Despite repeated assurances from Trump that he will “never cut Social Security,” the official Republican Platform uses coded language to covertly attack Social Security.

“Of the many reforms being proposed, all options should be considered to preserve Social Security. As Republicans, we oppose tax increases and believe in the power of markets to create wealth and to help secure the future of our Social Security system.”

These Republican talking points are code for privatizing Social Security and gambling away your money on Wall-Street. And “preserving” Social Security through benefit cuts and raising the retirement age.

In the past, Donald Trump has called Social Security a “Ponzi scheme” and recommended raising the retirement age to 70. This is perfectly in line with Wall Street’s demonization of the program and repeated attempts to get their greedy hands on Americans’ hard earned guaranteed retirement benefits.

While Trump publicly proclaims support for Social Security, one of his top advisors is privately telling Paul Ryan and others, “I think after the administration’s been in place, then we will start to take a look at all of the programs, including entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare.”

This is in stark contrast to the Democratic Party’s platform – which for the first time includes expanding Social Security benefits – as well as Secretary Hillary Clinton’s calls for expansion.

Make no mistake; Social Security is in their sights! A Trump presidency will shatter the quality of life and economic security of older Americans.

Jim Centner. SOAR Director

When putting a newsletter together, sometimes it’s nice to include helpful tips and information. This issue of the Connection is using snippets from a “Report On Healthy Aging” - by Dr. Nicole Anderson concerning “Memory and Aging: What’s normal, What’s not, and What you can do about it.”

Dr. Nicole Anderson is a Baycrest Psychologist and Senior Scientist in the Rotman Research Institute, and is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology at the University of Toronto.
The McNeil Report

“Sugar, why don’t you sit down at the table and we’ll start supper.” Said Dorothy to her Husband of 50 years. “Sure thing,” said her husband settling himself down.

“Now darling, would you like the soup first or the salad?” Questioned Dorothy. “Umm I guess I’ll take the soup.” He responded.

After a whole meal of one endearing term after another, their guest Bob couldn’t contain his curiosity any longer. Bob snuck into the kitchen and asked, “Dorothy do you always talk to your husband like that?” “Bob, I’ll be honest with you,” Dorothy replied. “It’s been five years now, I just can’t remember his name, and I am just too embarrassed to ask him!”

- District and Chapter articles and photos should be emailed to the SOAR office at the address at the left. The deadline to submit articles and photos for the SOAR in Action magazine is September 8.

Myth:
Using external aids will make my memory weaker.

Truth:
Using external aids make our memories stronger

"Will this matter a year from now?"
I was reading the book "DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF...and it's all small stuff" and this chapter stood out to me. Seriously, whether it is a disagreement, a mistake, a lost article or opportunity, something you should or shouldn't have done or said, or a political stand, in a year from now you will hardly remember or care! It will be forgotten. Don't spend precious time worrying about the small stuff.
SOAR recently held their annual Executive Board meeting in Pittsburgh, Pa. One portion of the meeting, and the part I enjoy most, is the reports from the Board members concerning the actions that have taken place in their respective Districts. Our members in Canada and the United States have been extremely active and involved in issues that impact our SOAR members, local union issues and society in general. You can be proud of our involvement from so many of our chapters. We as an organization cannot sit back and remain silent on issues that impact our active and retired members.

SOAR in Canada held a conference this year and it was great to hear about their activism. It was great to see so many of our SOAR activists and hear about all of their actions. Their reports made it clear the issues are the same for our members in both countries. Retirees and seniors are under attack and we must have a united front in order to be successful in defending and increasing our benefits.

SOAR also participated in the recent Rapid Response Conference in Washington DC, which provided an opportunity for SOAR to mentor some of the newer union activists. A great time was had and I would like to thank the participants for sharing their knowledge. This was our second invitation to the RR Conference and our numbers continue to grow. I want to thank the USW Directors for their assistance in helping us to participate. We all gain when we work together.

In closing, I want to thank all those who participated in their chapters actions and encourage participation from chapters that have not yet held some action this year.

Bill Pienta, SOAR President

From SOAR Bylaws Article 10. Meetings

1. The Chapter shall hold a general membership meeting at least once every month unless the Chapter Executive Board with approval of the membership had adopted another schedule. Regular meetings shall be held on the ________________ of each month unless holidays or other matters of vital importance to the Chapter would necessitate a change in the meeting date. Regular monthly meetings shall be called to order at ________________.

2. The meeting place will be at ________________________________.

3. The President of the Chapter shall have the right to call the Executive Board for emergency meetings on instant notice.

4. "Roberts Rules of Order" for parliamentary procedure shall govern the conduct of all meetings.

Myth:
Memory is a muscle ----you just have to exercise it.

Truth:
Being cognitively active helps memory in general, but memorizing a poem won’t help you remember what to buy from the store.
Report From The Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM)

When China entered the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, its government agreed that the United States and other member nations could designate the Asian manufacturing powerhouse as having a non-market economy (NME) for a period of 15 years. This was a good faith measure to ensure there would be no changes to existing U.S. laws that safeguard American companies and workers from unfair trade.

In December of this year, China’s 15 years of “probation” expire and the largest exporter of goods to America is seeking a change to “market economy status.” But as any steelworker can tell you, China’s economy is far from being directed by global market forces. China has a state-run economy where most of its manufacturing companies are subsidized by the government.

The majority of the world’s top steel production companies are located in China. These state-owned or subsidized companies blatantly mill an overcapacity of steel that is being sold in the United States at prices less than the cost of producing it in America. China is now manufacturing more than 50% of the world’s steel.

This is hardly an attempt to adjust to a global industry which operates on trends in the marketplace. Nearly 15,000 American steelworkers lost their jobs in the past year because of China’s trade cheating. During the past 15 years, tens of thousands of USW members have been put out of work in not only steel mills but industries like aluminum, glass, paper, rubber and iron because of China’s illegal “dumping.”

The only recourse American companies have is filing trade enforcement cases with the U.S. Department of Commerce. But if China is granted market economy status, America’s trade enforcement tools will be severely limited. That could create the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs and the closing of major U.S. manufacturing plants.

There is legislation on Capitol Hill that requires congressional approval prior to the Administration making any changes to China’s non-market economy status.

Please contact your representatives in congress and ask them to co-sign HR-4927 and S. 2906.

Jeff Bonior, AAM staff writer, Alliance for American Manufacturing

Can A Motion Made At A SOAR Meeting Be Rescinded?

Yes. Nothing is forever and last year’s good idea can turn into this year’s problem but there is a way out. You can use a motion to rescind or to amend something previously adopted with:

A motion with a two-thirds vote without previous notice: Or
Majority vote with previous notice: Or
Majority of the entire membership:

Myth:
My brain is full! There is no room for more information.

Truth:
The more we know, the easier it is to learn new things.
USW Endorses Hillary Clinton

(PITTSBURGH) – The United Steelworkers (USW), in conjunction with the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA) and the Glass Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union (GMP), issued the following statement today endorsing Hillary Clinton for President of the United States:

“Given her vast experience both with foreign and domestic policy, Hillary Clinton is a supremely qualified candidate, one of the most qualified candidates ever to seek the presidency,” said USW International President Leo W. Gerard. “These unique qualifications give her the vision and commitment necessary to continue to lead this country forward.

SOAR Endorses Hillary Clinton For President Of The United States

At the last SOAR Executive Board meeting in Pittsburgh, the SOAR Executive Board unanimously endorsed Secretary Clinton for the office of the President in November’s election.

Retirees Strongly Endorse Hillary Clinton for President

Washington, DC – Citing her commitment to expand Social Security, strengthen Medicare and rein in prescription drug prices, the members of the executive board of the Alliance for Retired Americans voted to endorse Hillary Clinton for United States President on June 29, 2016.

From SOAR CHAPTER - STANDARD BYLAWS

Article 8. Committees

1. Each Chapter shall have a Pension and Insurance Committee, and a Legislative and Political Action Committee with at least the following responsibilities:
   (a) The Pension and Insurance Committee
      (i) It shall generally be comprised of not less than three (3) members appointed by the President and approved by the membership. The members of the committee shall select a Chairman of this committee. A majority of members of this committee present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum.
      (ii) The committee shall meet at least monthly and at the request of the Executive Board, the President, or the membership to deal with any matters relating to the pension and insurance programs and problems of the members.
   (b) The Legislative and Political Action Committee
      (i) The Committee shall consist of the three (3) members appointed by the President and approved by the membership.
      (ii) The Committee shall recommend for endorsement to the membership, candidates for city, county, state or national office.
      (iii) Under no circumstances shall the Committee endorse a candidate for public office without the approval of the membership.
      (iv) A candidate for public office shall be permitted to address the membership at a regular meeting, if it has been requested in writing, requested by the Legislative and Political Action Committee, or approved by the membership at a regular monthly meeting. (cont’d page 6)
2. Other Committees (cont’d from page 5)

Each Chapter may have such other Committees as it deems necessary such as a Health and Welfare Committee, and a Civil Rights Committee appointed by the President and approved by the membership.

Medicare And Social Security Celebrate 51 and 81 Year Anniversaries

by Robert Roach, Jr.

The summer of 2016 brings with it two important anniversaries: Medicare will be 51 years old on July 30, and Social Security will be 81 years old on August 14.

This year’s anniversaries fall in the midst of the campaign season, making it the perfect time to remember some of the key issues seniors face as we fight to protect and expand these crucial programs.

The House Republican agenda calls for cutting benefits by turning Medicare into a voucher program and raising the age of eligibility to 67. Vouchers would mean seniors receiving a limited stipend to purchase insurance in the private marketplace – a far cry from the guaranteed health benefits that Medicare has provided for more than half a century. These cuts would shift costs to beneficiaries, while doing nothing to reduce the cost of health care. That same agenda would also slash Medicaid funding, jeopardizing nursing home care.

Along with the proposed Medicare cuts, many in Congress are calling for Social Security benefit cuts for retirees and disabled Americans. Yet with growing income inequality, shrinking savings, and small or nonexistent pensions, Social Security is more important than ever.

The Obama Administration recently announced a nationwide sweep, led by the Medicare Fraud Strike Force, in 36 federal districts. It resulted in criminal and civil charges against 301 individuals for their alleged participation in health care fraud schemes involving approximately $900 million in false billings. Let’s elect Hillary Clinton in November so that she can continue President Obama’s work in recovering stolen Medicare funds rather than making cuts.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW. For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.

Myth:
If I have a relative with Alzheimer’s I am sure to get it.

Truth:
A family history of Alzheimer’s does increase your risk of getting the disease, but you still have a good chance or remaining cognitively healthy.
Yes, This Is One Of Our Most Important Elections

I don’t know about you, but I am very concerned about the upcoming Presidential and Congressional election. As a retiree, I reflect on previous Presidential candidates from both parties and come to a very disturbing conclusion about Donald Trump. Over the years any candidate with a past like his would have never been considered as a serious candidate for president.

For retirees and working people the consequences are even more serious. Trump has stated that workers make too much money. He’s opposed to a minimum wage increase. He fights workers attempting to form a union. His business’ have failed and he used bankruptcy laws in a manner that have cost investors millions. His Trump University is engaged in a lawsuit alleging fraud. He says he is opposed to bad trade deals that have cost American jobs but outsources his products, denying American jobs.

Can he be believed? I don’t think so. As the old saying goes “actions speak loader than words”. Recently the Washington Post fact checking found that 78 percent of 158 statements he made were false. Tony Schwartz, who is the ghostwriter of the “Art of the Deal,” stated that Trump convinced himself that he had written this book and stated that “If he could lie about that on day one-when it so easily refuted—he is likely to lie about anything.”

Beware; the 2016 Republican Platform that outlines the party’s official policy opens the door for possible Social Security benefit cuts and privatization of Medicare and Medicaid. And for workers there is a provision that could be viewed as preventing the National Labor Relations Board and other Government Regulatory Agencies from having enforcement powers.

You may not like everything about Hillary Clinton, but the alternative is just too disturbing.

Bill Gibbons, PACE Representative

Can I Vote On A Motion Or A Bylaw Change If I Can’t Attend Our Monthly Meeting?

Voting by proxy (having someone vote for you when you can’t attend the meeting) is prohibited by our SOAR Bylaws and cannot be done at any time under any circumstance.

SOAR International Conference Scheduled

The SOAR International Conference is scheduled for April 2017 in Las Vegas 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.

Myth:
It’s all downhill with age.

Truth:
Some cognitive abilities are affected by aging, but not all of them.
3. (a) The Secretary-Treasurer shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the Chapter Executive Board including but not limited to, providing periodic reports to the Executive Board of International SOAR on the financial and operational status of the Chapter.

(b) The Secretary-Treasurer shall receive all monies due to the Chapter from the International SOAR, which shall provide a receipt.

(c) The Secretary-Treasurer shall make a detailed financial report at least once a month at a Chapter meeting, covering the receipts and expenditures of all funds of the Chapter.

(d) The Secretary-Treasurer shall examine all bills presented for payment and all claims and determine that they are satisfactorily established.

(e) The Secretary-Treasurer shall record the proceedings of the Chapter in a book kept for that purpose, read all papers, and perform such other duties as required by the International SOAR and as the Chapter may assign.

(f) The Secretary-Treasurer shall receive all communications and issue all notices and correspondence pertaining to the function of the Chapter and present same to the Executive Board of the Chapter for action.

(g) The Secretary-Treasurer must be present and record minutes of all regular meetings or special meetings called for the entire membership by the President of the Chapter and render copy of same to the President within reasonable time after such meeting.

What Is Meant By Protocol?

In some cases, understanding a technical term is easier if we go back to look at how the term is used in plain English. In the real world, a protocol often refers to a code of conduct, or a form of etiquette. We all must follow certain rules to ensure that we communicate effectively, and without coming into conflict. We also must understand what is expected of us when we interact with our representatives to make sure that, for example, we do not offend due to unfamiliarity with established customs. Protocols could be considered the “unwritten rules of society.”

E-mail has contributed to the problem. The e-mail addresses of even the highest-ranking officials are readily accessible, and so many individuals feel free to communicate directly with someone at the top of an organization rather than with the appropriate accountable officer. Let’s all strive to learn and use the accepted or established code of procedure or behavior in any organization, or situation.

What Is Meant By “Chain Of Command?”

“Chain of Command” is a system in any organization by which complaints or ideas should be expressed or instructions should be passed from one person to another. Those with military experience learn the idea of “chain of command” early on. A good example would be a Naval ship on the high seas. If a sailor has an idea or complaint, it would be better to bring it to the attention of the officer just above him in rank rather than take it directly to the Captain whose responsibility is for the safety of the ship and everyone on board.