

USW@Work

A Regular Publication of the United Steelworkers

Volume 13/2

A Powerful Voice for Workers

DISTRICT 13 A Small SOAR Chapter with a Big Impact!

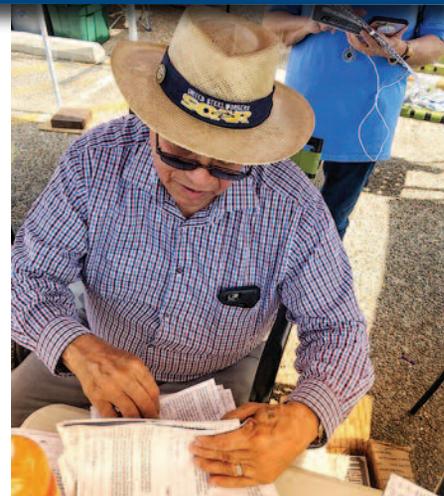
“We have our best impact when we network with and support others,” says Richard Rock, Vice President of SOAR Chapter 13-1 in Corpus Christi, Texas.

With little resources, the leaders of this small SOAR Chapter: Andy Rosas (President), George Rosas (Treasurer), know how to make a big impact. Richard recently took time to talk with us about his SOAR Chapter’s efforts to support like-minded groups, while asking them to participate in SOAR’s joint postcard campaign with USW Rapid Response to urge members of Congress to not put Social Security, Medicare or pensions in jeopardy. In return, Chapter 13-1 has provided modest financial support to these groups, and shown them solidarity by tabling events that they’ve organized. The Texas Alliance for

Retired Americans has been supporting and helping to provide volunteers to staff these tables.

The first event their chapter took part in was organized by the Coastal Bend Wellness Center, where they were able to get 134 postcards signed. Another 51 postcards were signed in just two hours by residents at the Sea Gulf Villa (a senior citizen housing facility) when 13-1 got permission to set up a booth on the premises.

Their chapter also participated in the 22nd Annual Cesar E. Chavez March for Justice on March 24. On April 26, they tabled an event organized by the Rockport-Fulton

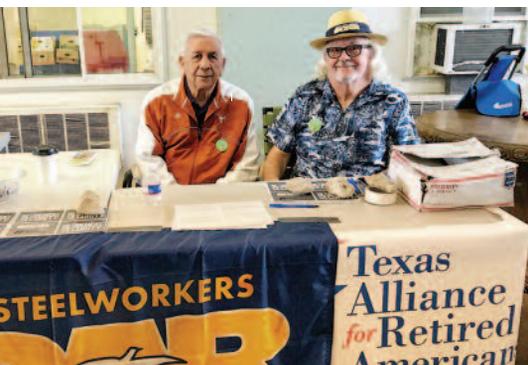


Andy Rosas, President, SOAR Chapter 13-1, Corpus Christi, Texas.

Chamber of Commerce resulting in another 114 cards signed.

As this publication goes to print, this small SOAR chapter has submitted well over 625 cards towards this campaign, with more on the way.

“People are very receptive to our presence and have positive things to say about our efforts,” says Rock. “I feel that this effort is worthwhile and would encourage others to do the same.”



SOAR Chapter 13-1 George Rosas, Treasurer and Richard Rock, Vice President at the Sea Gulf Villa, a senior citizen housing facility.



Left to right: Linda Chavez-Thompson, former Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO; Nancy Vera, AFT President, Corpus Christi; Richard Rock, SOAR Chapter 13-1 Vice President; Becky Moellar, past president of the Texas AFL-CIO, at the 22nd Annual Cesar E. Chavez March for Justice.

TIME TO GET READY



BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

As I am writing this article, Congress is preparing to vote on an amendment to balance the budget. If passed, it would cause several problems for those of us on Social Security and Medicare. We have dodged one bullet by avoiding Social Security and Medicare cuts in this budget and I believe we will dodge another one in the balanced budget vote. But, these attempts prove one

thing; that being that we cannot let down our guard on issues that directly impact our standard of living.

We can protect these benefits by making sure that people are informed and engaged on the issues that impact our lives. SOAR must be in attendance at labor council meetings and other meetings whose groups share our interests. And, the information gathered at these meetings must be shared with our members at our chapter meetings. SOAR chapters need to make sure that all members and their families are registered to vote this year. Registration forms should be provided to our members at meetings and if they are unsure of their status, they can fill out a form. If they

are registered, ask them to get a family member or friend who is not registered to fill out the form. Remember, there is strength in numbers.

Many of our members have the ability to travel to a warmer climate during winter and some may not be here come election time. Know how to obtain an absentee ballot and how to get it filled out and returned for those who will not be around come November.

Please join our SOAR Facebook page and ask your members to join. It is a valuable tool to get up to date information on actions or information to share with our members.

If you have any questions about anything I have addressed here, please contact your SOAR Executive Board member or SOAR District coordinator and ask for assistance. They will be more than happy to assist you. Whether or not you agree with the actions and mobilization of the Parkland students, one thing is clear and undisputed; if you mobilize and get the word out to the masses things will happen. We need to make sure our members understand who stands with us on our issues on Election Day and make things happen.

SOAR in ACTION

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Steelworkers Rally for CONOR LAMB



From left to right: Governor of Pennsylvania Tom Wolf, PA-18 Congressman Conor Lamb and USW International President Leo W. Gerard.

Seize Opportunity to Secure Our Earned Benefits



JULIE STEIN
SOAR Director

The inception of the Social Security and Medicare systems would not have been possible without the years of hard work and resolve exhibited by activists in the labor, child welfare, and anti-poverty movements. Even to this day, this same coalition works to halt efforts to cut benefits or privatize these programs.

As we've moved into 2018, more and more discussions coming out of Washington are about potential cuts to our earned benefits. As a way to build power, SOAR teamed up with Rapid Response to launch a "Retirement Security" postcard campaign to urge members of Congress to oppose any cuts to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and pension guarantees.

In addition to this postcard campaign, our union seized upon the March 13 special election in Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District, where we saw an opportunity to elect a representative who would support our efforts to protect Social Security and Medicare.

This special election, triggered by scandal, necessitated the embarrassing resignation of Congressman Tim Murphy, who had represented this district since 2003. Due to partisan gerrymandering, Murphy was able to win reelection to the union-dense district, in spite of his support for job-killing free-trade agreements and cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

In this southwestern Pennsylvania district where the President won by 20 points in 2016, our union understood that any candidate, who wanted to win the support of workers, must focus their campaign on kitchen table issues. In response to our union's candidate questionnaire, Conor Lamb made it clear that he supported efforts to strengthen unions and protect Social Security and Medicare.

After endorsing Lamb, our union rapidly assembled a campaign that would reach our members and families in each of the district's 593 precincts spanning four counties.

Lamb's opponent had supported anti-union efforts like so-called "Right to Work" legislation and cuts to unemployment compensation. In conversations with fellow members at their doors and in worksites across the district, our

activists highlighted our opponent's anti-union record, while bringing attention to Mr. Lamb's commitments to protecting the rights of working families and retirees.

After more than a month of organizing and mobilizing Steelworkers to get out and vote, our union helped elect Conor Lamb—a former Marine Captain and federal prosecutor—in the March 13 special election in Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District. After all of the votes were counted, our work contributed to the erosion of a 20 point deficit, and helped Lamb secure a narrow victory.

Regardless of whether you belong to a union or not, this victory is one everyone should celebrate. Campaigns like this are essential to protecting vital programs like Social Security and Medicare. Without these programs, countless Americans would be homeless and unable to access affordable, quality health care. Social Security has been credited for nearly eradicating homelessness amongst the elderly and disabled populations, and Medicare provides for almost-universal health coverage for persons 65 years of age and older (www.ssa.gov).

The second half of 2018 will present many more opportunities to elect candidates who will defend Social Security and Medicare, and work to strengthen unions. Because this was a special election to fill a seat that was vacated prematurely, Lamb will have to run for reelection in November. In addition to Lamb's campaign, voters across the country will be casting ballots to decide the victor in every one of the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, along with more than thirty U.S. Senators and Governors seats each.

We simply cannot afford to be passive observers in our democratic process. If we want to secure our earned retiree benefits, and build a better future for our children and grandchildren, we must seize opportunity: **Get out and vote in our state primary elections and in the general election on Tuesday, November 6.**

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!



Inspired New Democrats Hold Largest-Ever Convention

By Doug Macpherson
SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

B.C. SOAR Coordinator Fred Girling and I were privileged to be part of the largest-ever federal New Democratic Party Convention, which attracted over 1,700 registered delegates to Ottawa on February 16-18.

As representatives of our respective NDP riding associations, Fred and I were impressed by the number of younger delegates who engaged in spirited debate over party policy-making decisions.

We can only hope these young New Democrats never lose their idealism and that they remain engaged and committed to the party. They are, after all, our future.

We also were proud that the USW supported several Steelworkers NextGen delegates to participate. We had all the bases covered— SOAR members on the way out, the NextGen coming in behind us!

Many delegates anticipated federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh’s keynote address would be the convention’s highlight. They were not disappointed.

In his first such address since being elected leader, under the glare of the national media spotlight, Jagmeet delivered a tour-de-force speech that inspired delegates to multiple standing ovations.

The speech revealed a leader with tremendous humility, passion and charm. A leader who understands the

serious issues and challenges facing Canadians, who articulates the social democratic vision our country needs more than ever.

Political action is never off the radar for SOAR members, as we strive to defend and strengthen those things we hold dear, like universal, public health care and our social safety net. And we realize that only the New Democrats are truly fighting alongside us to build a fairer, more equitable and just society.



Jagmeet-Singh



British Columbia SOAR Coordinator Fred Girling and SOAR Canadian National Coordinator Doug Macpherson attend New Democratic Party Convention, held February 16-18, in Ottawa.

It's Tax Time and the Crooks Want Your Money!

It's income tax season and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is warning Canadians to be wary of scammers.

In one particular scam, the perpetrators send a text message advising the recipient that CRA is sending a tax refund via an Interac e-transfer. The recipient is advised to click on a link in order “to deposit



your income tax return.” The recipient is then asked for personal information such as social insurance and passport numbers and credit card and bank account information.

The CRA emphasizes that it never requests personal information from taxpayers via email or text messages and that these electronic messages should be deleted immediately.

“Canadians are reminded that the CRA will only send payments by direct deposit or by cheque— as you have directed, never by email money transfer,” the agency advises.

Anyone who suspects to have been victimized by fraud can call the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, toll-free, at 1-888-495-8501.

McINTYRE POWDER *in the United States*

By Janice Martell, a Steelworker's Daughter

It has been less than one year since my father, Jim Hobbs, died of Parkinson's from what I believe was an occupational disease related to McIntyre Powder (aluminum dust) exposure. He was an underground hard rock miner in nickel and uranium mines in Sudbury and Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada between 1959 and 1990.

He was one of eleven children and there was no family history of Parkinson's. Ten years after he was diagnosed, I learned an awful truth about what he and tens of thousands of other mine and factory workers went through every work shift just to earn a living to support their families—they were required by their employers to inhale a neurotoxin in the form of a finely ground mixture of aluminum and aluminum oxide known as McIntyre Powder.

Named after McIntyre Porcupine Mine where the aluminum dust was developed and later patented, marketed, and distributed to industrial licensees, McIntyre Powder was the mining industry's answer to reducing compensation costs associated with high rates of silicosis in miners. Silicosis is caused by scarring of the lungs from the inhalation of crystalline silica—found in quartz ore bodies and industrial processes involving silica materials, such as pottery factories, brick industries, foundries, and refractories. Instead of focusing their efforts and money on reducing the silica hazard through improved ventilation and dust control, mining executives and industry doctors promoted the use of McIntyre Powder on the unproven theory that it would prevent silicosis.

Research later confirmed that it did not—and no one knows what harm it did to workers' health.

In 2014, I began researching the history of the McIntyre Powder aluminum prophylaxis program, which officially ran from 1943 to 1980 in Canada, the United States, Western Australia, Mexico, Belgian Congo, and a short trial at a tin mine in England. In 2015, I established the McIntyre Powder Project to document health issues in exposed workers. In 2016, the United Steelworkers District 6 organized and sponsored McIntyre Powder Intake Clinics for affected workers, in collaboration with my Project, workers' compensation advocates and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers.



James Hobbs and Janice Martell

Over 450 workers have documented their health issues through the McIntyre Powder Project. Two-thirds have respiratory conditions or symptoms, and one-third have neurological disorders or symptoms such as memory loss, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and ALS.

Despite these gains in knowledge and documentation in Canada, a huge mystery remains about the use of McIntyre Powder in the United States, including how many workers were affected. Archival records from the McIntyre Research Foundation—the group of mining executives and industry doctors who functionally controlled McIntyre Powder usage—indicate that by 1946, 5,000 U.S.A. workers had been given McIntyre Powder “treatments.” Over 50 industries across 13 U.S. states are identified as licensees of McIntyre Powder in an undated (circa 1940s) document.

U.S.A. factory workers who were exposed to McIntyre Powder took “treatments” by inhaling the aluminum dust through a hose attached to a ball mill. In smaller factories, workers took the treatments two at a time with a small table-top ball mill (*see photo at left.*) Larger industries developed larger ball mill chambers



Buffalo Sunday Courier, Feb 17, 1946

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McINTYRE POWDER
in the United States

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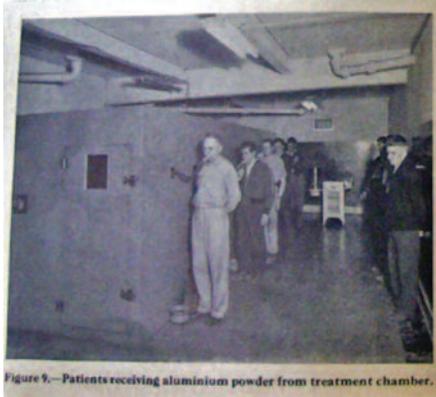


Figure 9.—Patients receiving aluminium powder from treatment chamber.

A.W. Jacobs, Aluminum Therapy and Silicosis Prevention Engineering Aspects, The Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (1947).

that could process more workers (*see photo above.*) Images of these factory workers lined up to inhale a substance with unknown human health effects are disturbing, and they highlight the need for further investigation into the use of McIntyre Powder in the United States and worldwide.

Editor's Note: The original article about the McIntyre Powder Project was published in the 2015 Fall Edition of SOAR in Action which can be accessed on SOAR's webpage at the following link: <https://www.usw.org/news/publications/soar>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

or if you are an affected worker or surviving family member:

Website: www.mcintyrepowderproject.com

Facebook: McIntyre Powder Project

E-mail: minersinfo@yahoo.ca

Phone: 1-800-461-7120



STOP Pension Theft

By Doug Macpherson, SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

Federal New Democratic MP Scott Duvall—a SOAR Chapter 6-10 member—is building support across Canada for new legislation to protect workers and pensioners in cases of corporate bankruptcies.

Scott, who represents the Hamilton Mountain riding in Ontario, has introduced a private member's bill in Parliament calling for major reform of the outdated Companies Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) and the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (BIA).

Bill C-384 would ensure that workers' pension plans are fully funded and that pensioners are secured creditors to be paid before other creditors in corporate bankruptcy cases.

Scott has been holding town halls across the country, hosted by his federal New Democratic colleagues, to make Canadians aware of the failings of the CCAA and BIA, which allows workers and retirees to suffer heartbreaking losses of pensions and benefits.

The NDP town halls have been very successful, with Canadians becoming increasingly aware of the issue due to high-profile cases such as the recent Sears Canada bankruptcy.

The Sears bankruptcy has hurt thousands of workers and pensioners, enraging Canadians who realized this was another blatant case of corporate abuses, mismanagement and greed.

Just a few years ago, the pension fund for Sears Canada workers enjoyed a \$220-million dollar surplus. By last year, however, the pension fund had deteriorated to a shortfall of \$110 million.

During the same period, Sears Canada paid a whopping total of \$1.4 billion in special dividends and share buybacks to its executives and shareholders.

A recent analysis of 34 major corporations in Canada revealed the same shocking practices.

Between 2007 and 2016, workers' pension funds dropped from a combined surplus of \$560 million to a \$13-billion shortfall, while shareholders were paid a staggering \$410 billion in special dividends and share buybacks.

Steelworkers have long been aware of the hidden impacts that judges decisions under CCAA can have on their pensions and benefits. Thousands of our members and pensioners across the country have been affected by corporate bankruptcy maneuvering, in some workplaces multiple times.

Canadians rely on their pensions to retire with dignity. More and more, they are realizing it is finally time to stop the corporate theft of pensions.

Canadians are supporting Scott Duvall's Bill C-384. They are calling on the federal Liberal government to fix Canada's bankruptcy laws to finally put workers and pensioners ahead of corporate executives and wealthy investors.



Pictured left to right: NDP MPP Paul Miller; NDP MP Scott Duvall and SOAR Canadian National Coordinator Doug Macpherson.

www.ndp.ca/pensions



Special Thanks to Jack

Long time union and SOAR activist, Jack Golden, has stepped down from the SOAR Executive Board.

A union member since 1954, Jack's career began as a member of the International Union of Electrical Workers—IUE Local 716, and was employed at General Electric Company, in Oxford, Alabama. Prior to serving as the Local Union President, he served as the local's grievance chair.

In 1963, he went to work as a union organizer for the National AFL-CIO in the Industrial Union Department, in Houston, Texas.

In 1965, Jack joined the staff of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), servicing members in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas; which at that time was District 37. During the next fifteen years, he served in numerous capacities, including Sub-District Director for the state of Texas.

In 1980, Jack was appointed to the position of Assistant to the Director, and was the assistant to then District Director Edgar Ball. Four years later, when Ball became the International Secretary, Jack was then appointed Director of District 37. He served in that capacity until 1996, when

restructuring of the union took place and the number of districts were consolidated down to twelve; subsequently, becoming the first director of District 12. During his time served as director, he was re-elected to this position four times without opposition.

Jack is pleased to have been a member of the USWA Int'l Executive Board when in 1984, then International President Lynn Williams brought up the idea about forming a program that would allow members to remain actively involved with the union after their retirement. When the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) was established in 1985, Jack became a charter member of the organization.

Jack retired in 1999 and has been an active member of SOAR ever since. In 2008, he was elected to the SOAR Executive Board, representing District 13 and he worked tirelessly to build the organization throughout the district. He served in that position until his resignation, just a few months ago.

Jack has always had an interest in politics. One of his proudest moments

as a member of the Democratic Party was in 1980, when he was elected to attend that year's Democratic National Convention as a "Ted Kennedy" delegate.

During all these years, Jack has been married to the same lovely lady, his high school sweetheart, Faye, for 64 years. He stated, "My wife raised our two daughters while I was out doing the work of the union. If it had not been for her love and support, I would not have been able to dedicate my life to the union or follow my passion of making things better for working people."

Jack encourages all retirees to become active members of SOAR. He also intends to remain active with the organization. Just recently, District 13 Director Ruben Garza appointed him to be the district's SOAR coordinator for the state of Texas. Way to go, Jack!

On behalf of the entire SOAR organization, we wish Jack and his family well and thank him immensely for his many years of dedicated service to SOAR, past and future!



Jack Golden

District 1 SOAR

RALLY FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS

By Bruce Bostick

SOAR Executive Board Member, District 1

"The Koch Brothers announced that they will spend \$900 million to push their agenda attacking working people in this upcoming election. That is obscene!"

"But without YOU," Rev. Susan Smith (Poor People's Campaign and Crazy Faith Ministers) told the thousands of union supporters at the Columbus, Ohio Rally for Working People's Rights at the Ohio statehouse, that "there would be NO buses, there would be NO restaurants, there'd be NO schools, NO hotels, NO electricity. Without YOU, there would be NO nation!"

Part of a series of union-led rallies, an estimated 3,500 unionists and supporters braved a constant downpour of rain to rally at the Ohio statehouse on Saturday, February 24, standing up for worker's rights, just two days prior to when the Supreme Court would hear the anti-union Janus vs. AFCSME case.

The Ohio rally was one of at least 24 union-led demonstrations against the push by corporate/Republican efforts to wipe out worker's collective bargaining rights. The Janus case, the danger of which moved the labor movement to reach out to allies, called for a National Day of Action. Some other cities holding similar demonstrations include New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Philadelphia and Duncanville, Pa., Memphis,

Miami, San Deigo, Albuquerque, Atlanta, Buffalo, Louisville, Las Vegas, Madison, Wisconsin, Orlando, St. Louis, St. Paul, Minn., Detroit, Elizabeth, N.J., Houston, Boyertown and Erie, Pa., and Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The Janus case coming before the Supreme Court would wipe out "fair share" payments required of public workers, to pay for union services, required currently. Presently, all

public workers are not required to pay dues, but unions collect "fair share" payments to off-set the federal requirement that the union represent workers who do not pay dues. Officials with organized labor have stated that a negative ruling would cripple our nation's labor movement.

"Like other teachers, I teach to make a difference," stated Gina Daniels, Pataskala, Ohio history teacher. "I don't do it for the glamour of chalk dust under my nails, the thrill of lunch duty. Teacher Unions fight for smaller classroom sizes, a good education for all kids, to limit the toxic effect of mandatory testing on students and to support all students, their families and our communities. Obstacles seem insurmountable now, but together with our Union, teachers are making great changes to help our students and the whole educational system."

While teachers, public workers, were the bulk of the attendees, workers from other sectors mobilized to help, as well.

"When the corporations came after us, public workers were there for us," said Jimmie Reed, Sr., President of SOAR Chapter 1-979 in Cleveland. "We organized busloads because it takes unity to defeat these attacks. Together, unity, we will beat off all these attacks on all our unions!"

Ohio's unions beat back a legislative assault similar to the Janus case assault in 2011, organizing a massive campaign with allies that repealed the attacks on union/worker rights. That successful union struggle is a specter hanging over heads of, frightening, pro-corporate politicians in this state.

"We are building our struggle, and you can see the Republicans, corporate folks, getting scared every time you bring up having another 'Issue 2 fight,'" said Glen Skeen, Vice President, CWA Local 4320. "We were there for the public workers in their fight and they were there for us in our contract fight. When we stand together we can't be beaten!"

"Ohio's retirees are coming together, building coalitions, fighting against attempts to destroy retiree security and getting ready for this year's important election," stated Norm Wernet, President of the Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA).

Editor's Note: On February 26, the Supreme Court heard oral argument in Janus v AFSCME. A decision is expected sometime this spring.



Steelworker History Runs Deep at Bowen High School

By Scott Marshall
SOAR Executive Board Member, District 7

At the District 7 SOAR Chapter 31-9's January meeting, it was whole heartedly voted "yea" to contribute money to the Bowen High School Alumni Association; helping them to purchase several special banners to celebrate the school's Steelworker history.

Bowen High School, a hundred years old in 2010, is located in the South Chicago neighborhood. The school was built near one of the original steel mills in Chicago in 1910. By 1901, that mill was owned by US Steel and later became known as South Works. The school's symbol is a "Boilermaker." Steelworkers were known as boilermakers in the early days of steel making.

The neighborhoods around Bowen High were long the home of many South Works steelworkers and other workers from nearby mills. As we discussed the motion, several speakers mentioned that they were Bowen graduates. So, we asked all SOAR members who were Bowen graduates to come up for a picture. We were delightfully surprised at the number who had worked at South Works. Still, others not in the picture had mothers, fathers, grandparents and other relatives who had gone to Bowen High.

Thank you Bowen High "Boilermakers." You can be very proud of the role you played in Steelworker history.



facebook.com/groups/uswsoar

District 11 Gets a New SOAR Chapter

SOAR members in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, were honored to have their SOAR Chapter 11-6 officially chartered by the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees.

The new chapter will be home to retirees from USW Local 11-164; a local that represents Steelworkers employed at the Buzzi Unicem USA plant, whose members make the cement that goes into ready-mixed concrete.

District 11 SOAR Executive Board Member Bonnie Carey; USW District 11 Staff Ron Wilkey and Local 11-164 President Kurt Hileman, were instrumental in laying the foundation for this new chapter. Serving as the chapter's first president will be Delbert "Grizz" Phillips.

"Our union members are like family. And, because we had a lot of members nearing retirement, we wanted to form a chapter so that they could remain active after they retired. Our retirees enjoy spending time together, and are very proud of their new SOAR chapter," says Kurt Hileman, the Local's president.

The chapter plans on holding bi-monthly meetings and they will support the work of Local 11-164; while fighting against efforts to compromise vital programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Members attending the April meeting of SOAR Chapter 11-6, in Cape Girardeau, MO, proudly pose for a photo-op with their new charter.



Pictured left to right: Tim Schleinger, Chapter 11-6 Treasurer; Delbert "Grizz" Phillips, Chapter 11-6 President and Kurt Hileman, Local 11-164 President.





On March 10, USW Local 12698 held a “reorganizing” meeting for SOAR Chapter 10-7. Over 30 retired members, from Congoleum and Honeywell Corporations, attended the event held in Trainer, Pennsylvania.

Their agenda: To get the chapter up and running again. District 10 SOAR Executive Board Member, Dave McLimans, gave an outstanding introduction about the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees and outlined how to run an effective chapter. In addition, Dave conveyed a message from District 10 Director Robert “Bobby Mac” McAuliffe, stating that he is a strong supporter of SOAR and encourages all local unions to establish chapters so that members can stay active and involved with the Union upon retirement.

District 10 USW Rapid Response Coordinator, George Piasecki, encouraged the local and retirees to work hand-in-hand as they continue “to fight the good fight.” George also highlighted the influential relationship between SOAR and Rapid Response. He explained why they’re teaming up

for a postcard action in an effort to protect, strengthen, and expand Retirement Security. Everyone in attendance signed the postcards.

Local 12698 President, Ed Long, spoke on the importance of utilizing the experience and knowledge that retirees have to help better the Union. He stated that, “We need to continue working together, in solidarity.”

The Local gave special thanks to the chef, Tyrone Friend, for preparing a special dinner for the retirees. Also, a thank you to the officers of the Local Union Executive Board, Next Generation Committee and Women of Steel; who volunteered to serve the meal.

The next step is to elect the SOAR chapter officers. *Editor’s note: This article was submitted by Local 12698 to report on the success of their “reorganizing” meeting. On behalf of SOAR, we especially want to thank the local for their leadership and determination to get the chapter back up and running again.*

..... Christmas Cheer in May!

Each year, USW Local 979 sponsors a holiday dinner for their retirees and their spouses.

As president of SOAR Chapter 1-979, my wife and I are also invited to attend and have a wonderful time congratulating the retirees and making new friends. This also affords me an opportunity to tell the new retirees about our SOAR chapter meetings and to invite them to join us. I always find it to be an uplifting and exciting experience to re-connect and interact with so many of my former co-workers and friends.

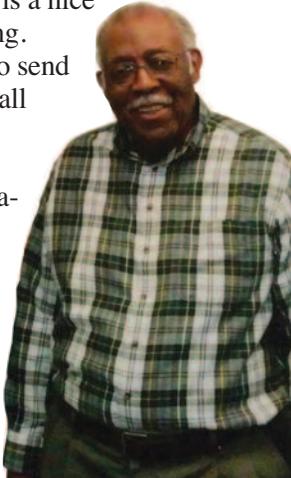
When I retired from LTV in 1995, we had similar gatherings but, at that time, each person was required to pay \$35 for each invited guest. This is such a wonderful undertaking that Local 979 does, at no cost, on behalf of our retirees. Additionally, I can attest that Local 979 supports our SOAR chapter 100 percent. The local gives us a nice place to hold

our monthly meeting and certainly, the Medicare reimbursement check we receive each year is a nice Christmas gift and such a wonderful blessing.

On behalf of Chapter 979, I just wanted to send a big thank you to USW and Local 979 for all of your support throughout the year. **THANK YOU!!!**

Unfortunately, I missed the winter publication deadline; so, I hope that this greeting brings you a little Christmas cheer in May.

Jimmie L. Reed, Sr.
President, SOAR Chapter 1-979
Cleveland, Ohio



John Patrick Appointed to SOAR Executive Board

In April, United Steelworkers International President Leo W. Gerard appointed John Patrick as the District 13 SOAR Executive Board Member; to fulfill the remaining term of Jack Golden, who recently resigned from the position.

John Patrick is the retired President of the Texas AFL-CIO, a state labor federation that represented more than 237,000 union affiliates in Texas. They advocated for all working families in Texas. John worked in the labor movement from 1972 until 2017. Prior to serving as the State Labor Federation President, he served for



more than five years as Secretary-Treasurer of the Texas AFL-CIO.

John's career began as a member of the International Association of Machinists at Cameron Iron Works in Houston, Texas. He became a member of the United Steelworkers in 1977, when he went to work at Reynolds Aluminum. He served as their Local Union President from 1984 until 1996.

At that time, he became a Staff Representative for the USW and subsequently served in numerous capacities, including five and a half years as the District 13 Assistant to the Director. As a USW leader, he had been part of a union that expanded its membership base and continued its high level of worker advocacy, even as the steel

industry contracted. John has assisted in a variety of successful and innovative arbitration and bargaining efforts, a role he has emphasized throughout his labor career.

John is a 1994 graduate of Antioch University, where he obtained a B.A. in Labor Studies, via the George Meany Center. John has served on the Democratic National Committee (DNC) since 2004.

John and his wife Linda reside in Friendswoods, Texas and have two sons, Cooper and Brent.

On behalf of SOAR, we welcome John 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.

D11 SOAR Supports Worthy Charities

SOAR Chapter 11-4, which represents retirees from USW Local 105, held their December Chili Dinner in Bettendorf, Iowa. The chapter supplied the chili and accepted donations for the desserts; they raised a total of \$400. The proceeds were split between two worthy charitable organizations:

Half went to **Bridging the Gap QCA**, a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a venue where homeless or at-risk Veterans and their families can access services, in the Quad City area. They are dedicated to assisting homeless veterans, to bring them in contact with agencies and organizations that can provide them support. The other half went to **Family Resources**, which is a social service advocacy, family restoration and education program, which helps children and families in need due to domestic and sexual abuse.

"Our chapter takes great pride in serving our community all year round. We are thankful for the sacrifice and selflessness of all of the veterans that have served our country. Events such as these are just a small part of the charity work we do. Our members possess a great deal of passion, kindness, and dedication to help raise funds for our veterans and families in need in the Quad City area." says Jerry Porter, Veteran and Chapter 11-4 Vice President.



SOAR Chapter 11-4 members deliver check to Bridging the Gap QCA. Pictured left to right: SOAR member "Scruffy" Rohlf, Veteran and SOAR member; Sandy Gonzalez, Chapter 11-4 Recording Secretary; Mike Malmstrom, Bridging the Gap Veterans Advocate; Jerry Porter, Veteran and Chapter 11-4 Vice President; and Bob Gonzalez, SOAR Chapter 11-4 member.



Pictured left to right: SOAR Chapter 11-4 Vice President, Jerry Porter; Advocate for Family Resources and D11 SOAR Executive Board member, Bonnie Carey.

As this magazine is reaching homes across the nation, a delegation of SOAR activists is on their way to Washington, D.C. They'll be joining hundreds of active USW members for the 2018 Rapid Response and Legislative Conference.

A core part of the agenda includes a discussion of retirement security – a topic equally relevant to young workers, those nearing retirement, and of course, current retirees.

The time in Washington includes a critical day where we'll mobilize on Capitol Hill to visit every Senate and House office. We'll be delivering the thousands of postcards that have been collected through the recent SOAR and Rapid Response joint action.

SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES WILL RECEIVE A STRONG MESSAGE:

- ▶ Retirement security is increasingly difficult for Americans to achieve, even after a lifetime of work.
- ▶ Sluggish wage growth, diminishing or threatened pensions and their guarantees, insufficient 401ks, and rising cost of living fuel the crisis.
- ▶ For these reasons, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and pension guarantees remain as critical today as when they began.
- ▶ Privatizing, raising eligibility ages, benefit reductions, increased out-of-pocket fees, and pension defaults are cuts we cannot afford. These programs are vital to seniors and provide a key safety net for many others.
- ▶ We want Congress to oppose cuts to our earned benefits. Instead, it's time to protect, strengthen and expand these critical programs.

Thank you to every active and retired member who helped out this effort!

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Secure retirements. Good jobs. Workers' rights. Safe and healthy workplaces. Stronger communities. Protection from illegal and unfair trade. A safety net for when life throws us curveballs. These are the things that build a fair economy where everyone can benefit—not just the wealthiest few. This is what grows the middle class and creates a better nation.

For over two decades, USW members and retirees have been working for these goals through Rapid Response, our union's legislative education and action program. It's not only for us. It's for our kids, our grandkids, and all those coming after us. We have a legacy to leave.

Whether you are a member of a SOAR chapter or an individual USW retiree, we need your help. If you're not yet engaged in Rapid Response, please reach out to the coordinator from your district and get plugged in. There are easy activities that you can do on your own or with a group to make a real difference. We're all in this together!

DISTRICT 1	Randie Pearson	419-779-0446
DISTRICT 2	Sue Browne	269-838-5956
DISTRICT 4	Mark McDonald	716-553-0239
DISTRICT 7	Jerome Davison	219-617-5338
DISTRICT 8	Ronnie Watson	540-354-6173
DISTRICT 9	Shane Mitchell	205-631-0137
DISTRICT 10	George Piasecki	610-368-9970
DISTRICT 11	Bob Ryan	651-295-4155
DISTRICT 12	Catherine Houston	510-457-5175
DISTRICT 13	Andy Frye	918-232-8128



Image from the 2016 Lobby Day



First Major Step Taken to Achieve Fair Trade

On March 8, 2018 the President signed a proclamation instituting a 25 percent tariff on steel products imported into the United States. He also levied a 10 percent tariff of all aluminum imported from foreign countries.

The President had promised to restore steel and aluminum company jobs in the United States. In less than two months after the implementation of the tariffs, his intentions have come to fruition creating approximately 3,500 new manufacturing jobs across America.

On the exact same day the President signed the tariff documents, U.S. Steel announced it would restart one of its two blast furnaces at its Granite City Works facility near St. Louis and bring back approximately 500 laid-off steelworkers. The plant had been idled since December 2015, when nearly 1,500 mill workers were laid off.

Republic Steel in Lorain, Ohio has indicated it will restart its closed mill this summer hiring nearly 1,000 workers including those who were laid off at the beginning of 2016 as well as additional new hires. Republic is ready to restart its idled electric arc furnace, casters and rolling mills on short notice.

Century Aluminum in Hawesville, Ky. will bring its smelter up to full capacity and hire an additional 300 workers while investing more than \$100 million into the plant. Century Aluminum is a United Steelworker represented plant and is the last smelter in the U.S. that makes the purest grade of aluminum essential for America's defense, aerospace and electrical industries. Its aluminum is critical in the assembly of the military's innovative F-35 fighter jet.

Other steel and aluminum companies across America are increasing production and opening new facilities. Nucor Corp., Commercial Metals Co, Bit River Steel, Zekelman Industries and Alcoa will expand and hire additional American workers. So too, will smaller steel and aluminum companies in Florida and Missouri.

Another imperative result of the Section 232 tariffs is that American steel and aluminum companies will be investing in their existing operations, creating more efficient and safer workplaces.

Steel and aluminum prices have risen because of the higher domestic demand provided by the tariffs on foreign-made products. Higher prices on the global market means the United States can compete globally with countries like China that manufacture with the aid of monetary government subsidies.

During his campaign, the President made many promises, many of which remain unfulfilled. But when it comes to his

hardline talk on the American steel industry, he has taken an important first step.

Many "downstream" users of steel have complained that they will be forced to raise prices and reduce their workforce. It is a profit-making connection for these companies to raise prices considering they will have to pay more if they choose to procure poorly-made, foreign steel.

Did these companies pass on the savings to consumers during all the years they were buying steel and aluminum at unfair, non-market prices? Of course not. They now have a ready excuse to raise prices, even though the increase to their bottom line is minimal. A six-pack of beer will cost one penny more because of the tariffs and a \$40,000 automobile may cost \$200 more to manufacture. It will be interesting to see how these businesses take advantage of the tariffs to increase costs of their products.

These companies have had the pleasure of raking in massive benefits for their shareholders while giving few concessions to their workers. Let's hope America's workforce, not the shareholders, will receive the benefit of the administration's action that helps level the playing field.

Most important for SOAR members is that a healthy steel industry means more USW members contributing to the pension and health insurance funds. Those who have worked 30 years or more as a USW member deserve to retire with full pension benefits and health insurance. After all, they contributed to these funds throughout their careers and it is only right that they get to enjoy the same benefits.

Many union members have had to suffer because of lay-offs and the massive steel mill closings during the early 1980s. The President's executive orders can only help to reverse this injustice with future generations of steelworkers contributing to solvent pension and health plans that they will need upon retirement.

A lot of work remains for the White House to truly level the playing field for American steel and aluminum companies. But the U.S. has finally taken the first major step to achieve fair trade which will benefit all USW members.





Washington Wrap

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

Controversy Continues in D.C. – Latest Hit, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau



When the Easter Congressional recess ended, members faced a surplus of issues. The president continually added controversy at a pace never before experienced. Several Cabinet members have no experience in governance and actually counteract against the departments, agencies or bureaus that they lead.

A prime example is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau:

In response to the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the subsequent Great Recession, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) was

created in 2011, by way of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. This law was passed making sure that banks, lenders and other financial companies treat you, the consumer, fairly.

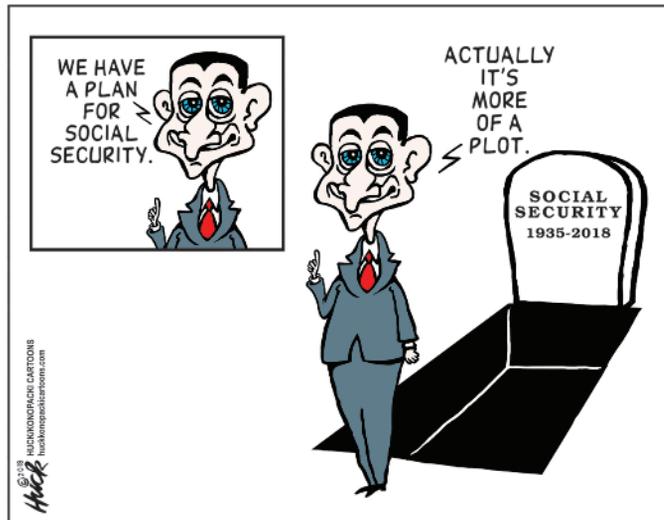
The CFPB offers basic and impartial information to consumers and businesses. It warns consumers about scams, including fake prize operatives. It has collected billions of dollars in fines paid by unscrupulous individuals and businesses (remember the turmoil caused by Bank of America and Well Fargo Banks); much of which was repaid to the consumers affected. Currently, the bureau's website (www.consumerfinance.gov) displays a running total of \$11.9 billion in relief to consumers from its enforcement actions and over 29 million consumers who have received relief because of these actions.

There's more!

White House Budget Director Mick Mulvaney, and now since November

of last year, the acting director of the CFPB (an unlawful appointment which is being challenged), wants to change the mission of the Bureau. The evidence is in the report he issued to Congress. Not one word in his semi-annual report favors the consumer. (Visit the bureau's website and look for "semi-annual" report.) The CFPB is working for you. Mulvaney will make the CFPB a lap dog, the opposite of CFPB's lawful purpose.

Contact your Congressional members. Let them know that you are watching and are very disappointed about Mulvaney's actions. And above all, make sure that your voice is heard—VOTE!



Analysts Compare Paul Ryan's Retirement Finances to the Average American's

House Speaker Paul Ryan's (R-WI) announcement that he will retire at the end of his term makes him eligible for a pension in two years, when he turns 50. Based on the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) payments formula from the Congressional Research Service, Ryan would receive an annual pension payment of \$84,930 if he remains on the job until next January.

Only 23 percent of all workers have a pension now, making Social Security all the more important to keep retirees out of poverty. The typical earned Social Security benefit received by a retired worker in the United States was a modest \$15,983 in 2015, yet Speaker Ryan fought for years to lower that amount.

"Paul Ryan will be all set with his golden parachute, but he still does not understand what the average working

American goes through to meet their family's financial obligations and retire with dignity," said Robert Roach, Jr., President of the Alliance.



"For years Speaker Ryan has worked to make retirement less secure for millions of Americans by inflicting deep cuts to Social Security and Medicare on us, both by privatizing and slashing them."

"That is why we will hold the President to his commitment that he will not cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid," President Roach added. "We can help the President do that by voting for candidates who have worked at real jobs and who truly understand working people in November."



Pay Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. by Exercising your Right to Vote

By Robert Roach, Jr.

I recently attended the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life, which was held on the 50th anniversary of his assassination.

The week's events in Memphis drew about 10,000 political, civil, and cultural leaders and included a rousing celebration of his "I've Been To the Mountaintop" speech at the Mason Temple Church of God in Christ. He delivered the speech the night before he was assassinated.

I was proud to represent the Alliance in paying tribute to Dr. King. I joined the civil rights leader's family and descendants as well as several of the sanitation workers who were there in Memphis when tragedy struck five decades ago. It was a moving, beautiful tribute to a legend.

Two Alliance Executive Board members joined me, and their words are worth repeating.

Lee Saunders, President of AFSCME, said at the rally, "Dr. King's work—our work—isn't done...(we) must still educate, organize and mobilize...(not) just to honor our history, but to seize our future."

Robert Martinez, Jr., International President of IAMAW, declared, "It is up to all of us to continue the sacred march toward justice, equality and dignity for all."



Martin Luther King, Jr. was in Memphis in 1968 for organized labor and to address the low pay of sanitation workers. He brought millions of people the right to vote, and we must exercise that right.

For now, I look forward to a day when civil rights and economic and social justice are a given, and we no longer have to use the anniversary of a violent act to come together.

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.

Paul Ryan Retirement Brings a Sigh of Relief to Millions of Seniors



House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) announced on April 11, that he will not run for re-election. Democrats rejoiced after he announced his decision, saying his departure is a sure sign that a Democratic wave is going to deliver them the House in November.

In 2012, Ryan unveiled a federal budget blueprint that would have ended Medicare as we know it and slashed Medicaid dramatically. He long sought to privatize Medicare and turn it into a voucher program, which would have dramatically shifted costs to enrollees. The Kaiser Family Foundation calculated that under Ryan's plan, out-of-pocket medical expenses for the typical 65-year-old in 2022 would come to half his or her Social Security income — double the level

under traditional Medicare.

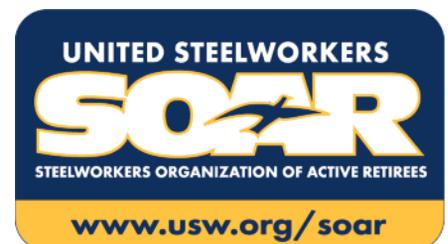
Earlier in his career, Ryan was an advocate for partially privatizing Social Security by allowing younger retirees to steer a portion of their payroll taxes into retirement accounts. That idea collapsed in 2005 as the Alliance worked hard to stop it.

Reporter and columnist Michael Hiltzik wrote in the Los Angeles Times of Ryan, "Of all his powers, the ability to cloud Washington journalists' minds was the most remarkable."

"Ryan came after our retirement security time after time," said Robert Roach, Jr., President of the Alliance. "Fortunately for older Americans and anyone who wants to retire one day, we were able to stop his most dangerous plans from becoming law. Now

we must make sure we protect retirees from whomever GOP House members elect as their next leader."

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) is widely viewed as a likely successor to Ryan, either as Speaker if Republicans maintain control of the House in November, or as Minority Leader if Democrats capture the majority. House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) said that he would not challenge Rep. McCarthy if McCarthy runs to lead the caucus.



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