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THE POWER OF
UNITY

A Publication of the United Steelworkers
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Collage commemorating the 75th anniversary of the United Steelworkers. Page 8
Portrait photos by Steve Dietz.

WE NEED TO REMEMBER WHAT WE’VE LEARNED THE HARD WAY OVER 75 YEARS in bargaining. Billionaires don’t go to bat for working people.

International President Leo W. Gerard  
Constitutional Convention, April 2017

POWER OF UNITY
Delegates to the USW’s 2017 Constitutional Convention pledged to stand together in a renewed struggle for economic and social justice.

INVESTIGATIONS LAUNCHED
The new administration in Washington has launched investigations into whether foreign steel and aluminum products are compromising U.S. national security.

BACK PAY SETTLEMENT
After a seven-year fight for justice, the USW reached a $7.3 million back pay settlement with Compass Minerals Louisiana Inc., formerly known as Carey Salt.

ADJUNCT FACULTY
The National Labor Relations Board directed Duquesne University in Pittsburgh to bargain with the Adjunct Faculty Association of the USW.
**Workers Memorial Day**

Each year on April 28, we mourn the USW members and co-workers we’ve lost in workplace incidents. We hold candlelight vigils. We take part in wreath-laying ceremonies. We ring bells. We sing songs, and we shed tears for our fallen brothers and sisters.

We mourn for the dead, as Mother Jones said, and we renew our promise to fight like hell for the living.

This year, though, that promise to fight took on an even greater meaning as the work we do is threatened perhaps like it never has before. Our leaders in the White House and Congress are proposing cuts to regulations and to the funding for OSHA and MSHA and other essential safety programs that have saved the lives and protected the livelihoods of USW members, and all workers, for decades.

As Steelworkers, it’s our duty to stand up to these cuts and say, “No.” We cannot turn back the clock on health and safety.

Each time we mark Workers Memorial Day, I hope it’s the last time we have to read a list of fallen co-workers. I long for the day when we don’t have a single fatality to mourn, when we don’t have a single family whose loved one didn’t make it home from work.

As union members, we must never forget that keeping each other safe and healthy on the job must be our top priority. Now we need to fight to make sure our leaders in Washington make it their priority, too.

*Calvin Croftcheck, USW Safety Coordinator for U.S. Steel Smock, Pa.*

**Saying Goodbye**

As I approach my last few days of work as Director of the Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) before my retirement, I can’t help but to reflect on all the good people I’ve met and worked with over the years. To say it’s been an interesting journey would be a huge understatement.

The best part of the job has always been our members. I have had the opportunity to work with and meet some of the most amazing people. Their dedication and commitment to our union and to social justice energized me to do the very best work I could do, not only for our members and retirees but for all working families.

But all good things must come to an end. I thank the leadership of our great union for letting me have the opportunity to serve. I thank the SOAR Executive Board for all their hard work and support. All that we accomplished over the last 16 years, we did as a team.

I thank our members for their activism and most importantly, I thank my wife Carol for being there and supporting me over the years. I know it hasn’t been easy!

*Jim Centner, retired SOAR director
Venice, Florida*

**Trump Misleads Workers**

I am concerned about the livelihood of the United Steelworkers and all unions. Unions fought hard to bring livable wages and safe environments to our workplaces.

What concerns me is consistent misinformation from Donald Trump. He promised that the steel used to complete the Keystone Pipeline would be made in the USA. Then the White House announced that the materials did not have to be made in the USA.

I hope and pray that union members throughout the country contact their senators and congressional representatives to voice their concerns.

We must keep unions strong and continue to fight for our labor force. Most of all, we must not be intimidated by any politician, and we must rely on the facts – not fiction.

*Sandra Barna
Sevierville, Tenn.*

**Non-union Support**

I have always considered myself an affiliate supporting your crucial work. I work with steel and aluminum in a light industrial paint finish shop.

The shop is very small (only nine employees), and divided in its politics. It is non-union and in all likelihood always will be. But that doesn’t mean I don’t believe in what you are doing!

*Joel Ediger
Beaverton, Ore.*

**Stunned by Election**

I find it unbelievable that the new president will do anything to help with union jobs and benefits. I’m also stunned that some of my union brothers and sisters were duped by his message. All you had to do was look at his record, how he shafted his contractors and how he treats the labor he hires.

*Mike Lauver, Local 286
Lincoln, Neb.*
USW members are known for helping their neighbors in times of need. The first responders who belong to Local 8166-39 take that commitment to community even further, dedicating their careers to caring for others during the worst times of their lives.

“Everybody pulls together when there’s a crisis,” said paramedic Jane George, one of about 80 medics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who work for Ambulance Service Management Corp. (ASMC) in Indiana, Pa., about 60 miles northeast of Pittsburgh.

“It’s gratifying to be able to help somebody.”

George, who serves as secretary for the USW unit of medics and EMTs at ASMC, has worked for the company for 16 years. While she and her co-workers “are not here for the money,” the competitive wages and benefits that USW contracts provide have allowed the ambulance company to keep turnover to a minimum and maintain a crew of experienced, dedicated first responders, George said.

The USW unit includes 18 full-time and 5 part-time paramedics, along with several dozen EMTs, both full-time and part-time. On a typical day, a crew of two members, one EMT and one paramedic, serves each station. The teams work in 24-hour shifts that start and end at 7 a.m. each day.

Because of those long hours, the ambulance station on West Pike Street in Indiana houses full living quarters, including bedrooms, a kitchen, a living room and a dining area.

“There is always somebody here,” said 5-year employee Andrew Bell.

Unit President Doug Lydick has been involved with the USW local since he started working for ASMC 10 years ago. In addition to their grueling schedules and the stress of witnessing tragic circumstances on a daily basis, he and his colleagues, like many health care workers, often confront violence and other unsafe conditions when they respond to emergencies.

“We see ridiculous and heartbreaking things every day,” George said. “We are sometimes heartsick over what we have to see.”

George described one recent call in which a patient’s arm had been severed in a farm accident, and a colleague was tasked with retrieving and packaging the appendage for transport to the hospital.
“There’s nothing routine about this job,” said Nick Heming, who has worked for ASMC for 13 years. Because of those issues and the unique lifestyle of ambulance workers, the ASMC unit of Local 8166 approaches contract bargaining and other union business differently than their brothers and sisters at other workplaces in the area, many of which are in industrial settings.

“The stress we face is different,” George said. It can be hard for members to find time for holidays, birthdays and other occasions with their families, and also difficult for members to conduct union meetings and other business on a regular schedule.

“Everything’s a little harder with the schedules that we keep,” Lydick said.

Still, the presence of the USW at the ambulance company has made life easier for the workers and their families, members say.

Former Unit President Paula Edwards retired in November after 28 years of service. Edwards was the last remaining worker who was part of the push to organize the EMTs and paramedics into the USW in 1990.

Edwards said the union has made a difference in almost every aspect of the lives of the EMTs and medics, but most notably in the area of wages and benefits.

Pay with benefits
Edwards said that when she started working for the ambulance company in the late 1980s, she earned near the minimum wage. By the time she retired, her wages were more than $22 per hour, with benefits including affordable, high-quality health care.

“That has everything to do with the union,” Edwards said. As the workers’ salaries increased, so did the level of training and expertise involved in becoming an EMT and a paramedic.

Becoming a paramedic requires first completing the six months of training required to be an EMT, and then more than 1,000 hours of additional training, both in the classroom and on the job.

The responders must also continue annual and biannual training and education programs to maintain their certifications.

Citizens’ Ambulance Service, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is owned and operated by ASMC, runs the six ASMC stations that serve about 100,000 people in Indiana County and parts of three other contiguous, mostly rural counties outside of Pittsburgh.

When Citizens was founded in the mid-1960s, ambulance service in the Indiana region was little more than drivers with station wagons or converted hearses with a singular goal of getting patients to the hospital as quickly as they could.

Over the years, the company led the way in introducing new forms of patient care. In 1973, a Citizens’ crew became the first to revive a cardiac arrest patient outside of a hospital.

Since then, advances in technology, training, medication and patient care have made Citizens into a national model for other similar organizations. Today, ASMC ambulances function as de-facto emergency rooms.

“With something like a cardiac arrest, we do exactly what an emergency room physician would do,” George said.

On a moment’s notice
Each medic and EMT on duty carries a radio and a beeper to monitor emergency calls so they can be ready to go on a moment’s notice. The company prides itself on a response time far below the 10-minute window mandated by the state health department.
In addition to responding to emergency calls, which average about a dozen per day, members spend their time making sure the ambulances are stocked with enough supplies and that they are prepared for the next call, whenever it might come.

Because their shifts last 24 hours, the members also spend time maintaining the station’s living quarters, cooking, cleaning and – if they can – relaxing while they wait to be dispatched to the next emergency.

“If I get a chance to take a nap, I’ll take a nap, but that is not always possible,” George said, recalling a recent shift in which her work duties continued from 7 a.m. to about 6:15 a.m. the following day.

“Sometimes, we’re just waiting for something to happen,” George said. “Sometimes, it’s so busy that they’re dispatching us to another call before we’re even done at the hospital.”

In her early days at the company, Edwards said, two crews often staffed each station. As funding declined, those numbers dwindled.

“It all comes down to money,” Edwards said.

**Crews on standby**

In addition to serving the Indiana region, which covers about 1,100 square miles, the ASMC crews also are on standby in case they have to come to the aid of another ambulance service in the surrounding area.

“We have enormous square mileage for the number of stations we have,” George said.

Responders have even had to use quads or other alternative forms of transportation on occasion to reach patients in remote, wooded locations.

As other sources of funding, including insurance reimbursements, have been shrinking in recent years, the ambulance service has relied more and more on subscriptions from members of the community to stay afloat.

For a region that has struggled economically in recent years, that can be especially challenging. “In an area like this, a lot of families are hurting,” Heming said. “That makes it difficult.”

In addition, the region, like much of the country, has suffered from the recent opioid epidemic and has one of the highest per-capita rates of overdoses and drug-related deaths in the state.

“No longer do people ask if we had any overdoses today,” George said. “Now they ask how many.”

**Challenging schedules**

Many of the first responders who work for ASMC also grew up in the region, which means that quite often when they receive a call, there’s a chance that the patient they’re about to see is someone they know.

“So many of our families and friends are in the area,” George said.

Another issue for the company and the union, she said, is finding or developing qualified EMTs and paramedics who want to take on the challenging around-the-clock schedule that the vocation requires. To help address that issue, the company entered into a partnership in 2013 with nearby Indiana University of Pennsylvania to offer joint training in EMT and paramedic procedures at the West Pike Station. The program allows Citizens to develop well-trained first responders while offering college credit to the participants.

USW members are hopeful that arrangement will continue to provide the local with dedicated workers and to continue to build on the local’s productive relationship with the company.

Members say that relationship has allowed the union and the company to continue to improve on patient care over the years.

“ASMC needs us, and we need them,” George said. “We need Citizens because we need good jobs. They need us because they need good people.”
Facing a world divided by wealth and politics, delegates to the USW’s 2017 Constitutional Convention honored the union’s 75 years of fighting for workers and pledged to stand together in a renewed struggle for economic and social justice.

Some 3,000 delegates and guests rose to their feet on the convention’s opening day to recognize those who founded the union at the first constitutional convention in 1942 and those who helped it grow into the diverse alliance it is today in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

“Our founders risked everything to win the rights that all of us enjoy today. They did it against unbelievable odds. They stood down national guardsmen hell bent on breaking their strikes. They even stood their ground against cops that shot them dead on picket lines,” International President Leo W. Gerard said in his opening remarks.

“And yet, in spite of all that, they prevailed. Their power of unity, the power of our activism, the power of standing strong, shoulder to shoulder – militant if necessary.”

**Stronger together**

The convention drew delegates from all corners of the United States and Canada, as well as guests from around the world. Women of Steel, the USW’s Next Generation program for young activists, and the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) were all represented.

“It’s great to see everyone come together and be so united. It’s been great to hear the stories from everyone on the floor supporting resolutions. It’s definitely inspirational,” said Cory Ayers, of New Philadelphia, Ohio, who represented Local 2737 in District 1.

The convention’s theme, The Power of Unity, was woven through four days of proceedings at the MGM Grand conference center in Las Vegas. It was incorporated into larger-than-life size photographs of USW members at work that were displayed at the convention hall and in hard-hitting videos shown on 17 large screens above the stage.

“It’s true, we’re always stronger when we stand together,” said delegate Tiffany McKee, a process control technician for ContiTech in Saint Mary’s, Ohio.

**Renewing commitment**

A resolution entitled “The Power of Unity” was one of the first to be presented to convention delegates for a vote. It renewed the USW’s long-standing commitment to fight for social and economic justice and directed the union to fight for full employment, health care and retirement security for all.

The resolution called for an economy in which the rights of all workers and the environment are protected, trade is fair and balanced, and trade agreements do not undermine sovereign governments or ignore the impact of globalization on workers.

The convention experience was a
first for international guest Soo Siryon Zor, a member of the Agricultural Agro-Processing and Industrial Workers Union of Liberia.

“It’s amazing how strong and united the Steelworkers are,” she said. “That gives me a lot of hope as well as ideas I can use back home to continue the efforts to improve the working conditions of my members.”

The convention opened with hard-hitting speeches by Gerard and the Rev. Dr. William Barber II, founder of North Carolina’s “Moral Mondays” movement, which Barber launched in 2013 in response to right-wing attacks on civil rights and voting rights.

“We must have a revival of values,” said Barber, who called for a connection between leaders of the USW and those of other like-minded groups to resist the right-wing politics of hate and fear.

“If they’re all together, we can come together,” Barber said. “No more separating our movements. We need steadfast togetherness.”

Together going forward, Gerard said the union faces great challenges in fighting to maintain jobs, middle-class wages and benefits against corporate greed.

Relentless 40-year fight

The USW has been fully engaged for 40 years in a relentless fight against unfair trade in the United States and Canada by countries that cheat the system, Gerard said. In the United States that has included participating in 81 trade cases aimed at saving jobs and industries.

“No Bay Street or Wall Street financier, no trade representative, no politician – no Republican or Democrat, Conservative or Liberal – not a damn one of them has the right to steal our jobs in the name of so-called free trade,” Gerard said to sustained applause.

Gerard praised USW oil workers who took on an unfair labor practice strike in the United States to improve safety on the job in a rich industry that has for decades been tone deaf to the union’s demands for safe working conditions.

He acknowledged locked-out USW members in steel who resisted deep concessions sought by Allegheny Technologies, and those members who stood strong in long hard bargaining for contracts at U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal.

In the United States, Gerard said the new president, Republican billionaire developer Donald Trump, “took a page out of our playbook” during last year’s presidential campaign and delivered speeches attacking unfair trade that sounded like ones USW leadership has been delivering for decades.

Yet there’s a danger that what “looked and sounded like a victory may really turn out to be a Trojan horse,” Gerard said, referring to the “most radical, right-wing Republican Congress we’ve seen our lifetimes – bent on wiping out every bit of social and economic progress we’ve made in the last 50 years.”
Under attack at every level

Gerard also warned of extremists on the state level who want to wipe out public sector bargaining, outlaw union dues check-offs and pass national anti-union legislation designed to reduce dues-paying members.

“Before you know it, they’ll be gutting OSHA, the Chemical Safety Board and other workplace protections that we badly need,” Gerard said.

In no time, Gerard said, right-wing politicians will be clamoring for national anti-union legislation and a balanced budget they will use to wipe out what few progressive policies that might be left.

“And if you think Trump will stop all of this, you might want to think again,” Gerard said. “We need to remember what we’ve learned the hard way over 75 years of bargaining… Billionaires don’t go to bat for working people. Only we can look out for ourselves, our families and our communities.”

The USW, Gerard said, must above all else not let political divisions tear the union or its members apart. We must fight back with the power of unity and activism, more now than ever before.

If we stand shoulder to shoulder, the union that has given its members the “good life,” will thrive for another 75 years, Gerard said in closing.

“Let’s never forget,” he said. “This fight is not just about us. It’s the fight for our kids and our grandkids. It’s the fight for the kind of future we want.”

Developing global solidarity

International solidarity was a focus of the convention’s second day. Delegates heard from the leaders of IndustriALL, a worldwide federation of unions, and Workers Uniting, an alliance of three million active and retired workers founded in 2011 by the USW and Unite the Union in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Under the banner of Workers Uniting, USW members in the United States and Canada work with Unite members in steel and aluminum, chemicals, oil, energy, paper, packaging and glass.

“We have members in many of the same companies, and we deal sometimes with the same CEOs,” said Tony Burke, an assistant general secretary of Unite the Union and a board member of Workers Uniting.

“We are a global union for men and women,” Burke added. “We are a global union for young people, for retired people, for people of color, for those with disabilities and for LGBT workers.”

Delegates also heard from Valter Sanches, the general secretary of the IndustriALL Global Union, a federation of labor unions worldwide that represents 50 million members, and Napoleón Gómez, president and general secretary of Los Mineros, the National Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers Union of Mexico.

Good, safe jobs

That same day, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka urged delegates to fight harder than ever to uphold the basic
principles of good jobs, safe workplaces, fair trade, quality health care and equality for all.

American workers, Trumka said, were hungry in 2016 for change that would shift power from greedy corporations and billionaires and return it to working people.

“Whoever they planned to vote for, every single person that I spoke to wanted the same thing,” Trumka said. “They wanted a better life for themselves and their children.”

To support that goal, Trumka issued what he called a “bold” proposal – “that everybody deserves a job, and everybody deserves the power to make that job a good job, whether you’re black or white, gay or straight, immigrant or native-born, union or not yet union.”

Keeping that promise means making it easier, not harder, for workers to join unions and bargain collectively, Trumka said. “When we stand together and we fight together, we win together.”

Resolved to fight the good fight

On the third day, delegates worked hard to consider and vote on resolutions that will govern the union until the next convention three years from now. Delegates also heard from leaders of Canada’s New Democratic Party, a party long aligned with the USW.

Unions like the USW expanded the middle class in both the United States and Canada, said Andrea Horwath, leader of the New Democratic Party in the province of Ontario.

“The middle class was an achievable reality for millions of workers in Canada and the U.S.,” she said. “I know it feels like that reality is slipping away. But I also know that we can bring it back – through the power of unity.”

Former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden promised delegates that he would work as a private citizen with union members to address economic inequality and rebuild the middle class.

“The labor movement has been under siege, and it has got to stop for the good of the nation,” Biden said in a videotaped address. “I’m prepared to work with you. I’m not going away.”

The most solemn moment occurred on the fourth and final day of the convention when the names of those who were killed on the job at USW-represented workplaces over the last three years scrolled on the screens above the stage.

After delegates worked through the last of the resolutions, Gerard thanked them for their participation at the convention and urged them to be active in their union and in the community by running for elected offices at all levels in the United States and Canada.

Just attending union meetings is not enough, he said.

“Going to meetings, getting involved, then mobilizing and mentoring your co-workers makes you a really good trade unionist,” Gerard said. “When we mentor each other, no one can beat the power of unity.”
A diverse group of guest speakers, from labor and religious leaders to political figures and social justice activists, helped to energize and offer direction to the 3,000 USW delegates, guests and allies at the 2017 International Constitutional Convention. Each speaker touched on the convention’s theme, “The Power of Unity.”

Rev. William Barber II
Closing the convention’s first day was the charismatic leader of the North Carolina Moral Mondays movement and president of the state’s NAACP.
Barber had delegates standing and shouting as he delivered a passionate call to activism. A protestant pastor and longtime USW ally, Barber called on union members to join forces with other groups and to fight for all working families on moral grounds.
“We must have a revival of values,” said Barber, who launched Moral Mondays in 2013 as a response to attacks on civil rights, voting rights and other causes he views as moral imperatives. “These issues are not about Democrat versus Republican. This is about right vs. wrong. These are moral issues, not political issues.”
Barber called for a connection between USW leaders and those of other like-minded groups to build a national “moral resistance” to the right-wing politics of hate and fear. “If they’re all together, we can come together,” he said. “No more separating our movements. We need steadfast togetherness.”

Secretary Tom Perez
The former U.S. Labor secretary and new chairman of the Democratic National Committee addressed the convention on its opening day, bringing the delegation to its feet by calling for workers, both union and non-union, to rally around a shared set of values.
“Those values are all about making sure we all succeed across this country,” Perez said. “You inspire me. The world craves what that sign means – The Power of Unity.”

Richard Trumka
Activism and organizing among union members is the key to rewriting the rules to the economy and providing a better life for working people.
That was the message the AFL-CIO president delivered to the USW international convention, arguing that unions must fight harder than ever to uphold their basic principles of good jobs, safe workplaces, fair trade, quality health care and equality for all.
Despite hard-right politicians gaining power in the United States and elsewhere, more people are mobilizing on issues such as income inequality, unionization, trade and higher wages.
“Collective action is on the rise,” he said. “The momentum in this country is swinging our way.”
Trumka said that the labor movement would cooperate with Donald Trump when it could find common ground and oppose him when his plans violate union members’ core values.
“We’ll judge his White House on actions,” Trumka said. “We’re watching and we’re keeping score.”
One issue on which unions and Trump might cooperate, Trumka said, is on an infrastructure bill to repair crumbling roads, bridges and other public assets. On issues like trade, unions like the USW must make sure he walks the walk.
“Nobody knows trade like the USW,” Trumka said. “Remember, Donald Trump didn’t kill the TPP. Working people killed the TPP.”
Andrea Horwath

The leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Ontario, Canada, called on workers across North America to fight for stronger unions to defend and grow the middle class.

“The hard work of unions like the USW expanded the middle class across both of our countries,” Horwath said. “Thanks to the Steelworkers, people could earn a good living. Thanks to the Steelworkers, people could own their own home. Thanks to the Steelworkers, parents could send their kids to university.”

Horwath said she is proud of the USW’s unwavering support for the NDP – support that will be crucial in electing a social democratic government in Ontario in 2018.

“The idea that by working together we can help not just ourselves, but everyone, is something the New Democratic Party shares with Steelworkers.” Horwath said.

“Government should be about giving people a chance at a good life by fighting for good jobs - jobs that allow you to raise a family, have access to public health care and education, and eventually retire in dignity and comfort.”
The USW’s International Constitutional Convention highlighted the union’s efforts to build solidarity and strengthen the power of unity for workers across the globe.

More than 100 guests from unions from North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia joined their USW sisters and brothers and made it clear that the USW is not alone in its struggle for economic and social justice.

“When one of our unions is attacked, then both of our unions will respond,” Tony Burke, assistant general secretary of Unite the Union in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, said on the convention’s second day. “We will fight back, and we will not walk away.”

Unite the Union, the largest union in the UK, and the USW are founding partners in Workers Uniting, an alliance of three million active and retired workers that was established in 2011. Together, the two unions are members of IndustriALL, a worldwide federation of unions representing more than 50 million workers in more than 140 countries.

The fight for fair trade is a key issue on the agendas of unions around the world. Of immediate concern is stopping China from being accepted as a market economy by the United States and Europe. That elevated status would protect China from dumping and anti-subsidy trade cases.

Sustainable industrial policy
Delegates also heard from Valter Sanches, IndustriALL

At the 2017 Convention of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), longtime director Jim Centner told the delegates that he would retire within weeks, and Julie Stein, an activist and organizer in the USW Political Department, would take on his responsibilities.

After congratulating Centner, the group got down to business passing resolutions, listening to speeches by District Directors and International Officers and electing Denise Edwords, the District 10 SOAR coordinator, to replace Charlie Averill as the group’s secretary-treasurer.

International Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson sent best wishes to Centner in his retirement saying, “He has been a wonderful guiding hand for SOAR for 16 years.”

Johnson congratulated Stein, telling the delegates, “She is very professional and amazingly proficient. She is someone each of you can appreciate as a friend and someone who will stand side by side with you and stand in the trenches for you.”

Centner, 62, a native of Fredonia, N.Y., worked for the International for 29 years. He served as a health and safety technician, then assistant director of membership development before taking over at SOAR from Director of Local Union Services Bob Rootes, who served as SOAR director for a year.

Before moving to the International, Centner worked at AL Tech Specialty Steel, where he was vice president and safety chairman for his local.

Stressful time in steel
Centner recalls taking over at SOAR when dozens of steel companies were filing for bankruptcy, which meant workers and retirees lost health and life insurance and most of their pension benefits.

He said he spent his first several years running around the country delivering bad news to retirees and explaining that VEBAs would not restore their entire pensions. It was depressing, Centner recalled.
general secretary and a leader of the Brazilian metalworkers’ national confederation, CNM/CUT.

Along with the fight for fair trade, IndustriALL is fighting for a sustainable industrial policy in some of the poorest countries of the world, including Bangladesh, where 5 million workers in the textile industry toil long hours for poverty wages, often in disgraceful conditions.

After hundreds of textile workers were fired last December following a wildcat strike over raising the minimum wage, IndustriALL affiliates pressured employers and the Bangladesh government.

The pressure worked. Workers got their jobs back, and union leaders who had been jailed were released.

Another longtime USW ally, Néapoleón Gómez, reminded delegates that workers across North America are all on the same side of the fight against unfair trade and corporate greed.

“They said free trade was going to make all workers in North America happy. That was a lie, brothers and sisters,” said Gómez, president and general secretary of Los Mineros, the National Mine, Metal, Steel, and Allied Workers Union of Mexico.

“NAFTA was a disaster for workers in Mexico, just as it was for workers in the United States and Canada,” Gómez said.

“We want the same thing as you – decent jobs, health care, pensions, respect and dignity,” Gómez said. “There are no walls that can divide us. We are all in this together. This is our power, the power of unity.”

When the situation in steel improved, Centner said his goal became actively involving more retired members in the union’s political and legislative campaigns.

“I changed the focus of the SOAR magazine to current events rather than social activities like picnics and parties,” he said.

“I do think I was successful,” he said, explaining, “The number of chapters grew, and they were much more active in the legislative agenda than in the past. SOAR members attended rallies, like for Obamacare, and town hall meetings. They phone banked and door knocked for candidates.”

Centner’s advice to his successor was to get out of the office and meet the SOAR members “because you will be asking them to do a lot, and it is easier to get them to participate if they know who is doing the asking.”

Continue good work

Directors from around the country stopped by the SOAR conference and urged the delegates to continue working for workers’ rights in their retirement.

“They are coming hard against us to destroy organized labor,” said District 4 Director John Shinn. “So we need active members and SOAR members to talk to all of their friends and neighbors about the importance of unions.”

International President Leo W. Gerard challenged SOAR members to get involved with younger USW members and pass along to them the union’s history.

“We need to find a way to get you more involved,” Gerard said. “I want you to inspire young people. Sit down with the Next Gen members and tell them what it was like when we didn’t have any health care benefits.”

You Can Do It

USW ENCOURAGES MEMBERS TO RUN FOR OFFICE

Political activism has long been a way for Steelworkers to fight back against the efforts of employers and right-wing politicians to erode workers’ hard-earned rights.

Delegates to the 2017 Constitutional Convention took that legendary activism a step forward by passing a resolution that encourages USW members to run for public office.

“We need to have a union voice and union influence at every level of government,” International President Leo W. Gerard told convention delegates. “Run for the school board, city council, state rep ... We will help you.”

The goal is to establish a nationwide program this year to educate and train members to successfully run for local office in the communities where they live and work.

“What we want to do is have a really big push for members to run at their local, municipal and county level,” said Political Director Tim Waters. “The program we are putting together will help our members decide if this is what they want to do, and, if so, teach them how to win.”

Candidate school

The program is in the planning stages and doesn’t yet have a formal name. Until a better idea surfaces, Waters is calling it “candidate school.”

“Our politically active members know how to knock on doors, make phone calls and do the kind of stuff that you do in a campaign, what I call the front end,” Waters said.

“They need to learn the back end, what it takes to be a candidate. What are the rules? Who can run? What must you do to get on the ballot, and what kind of things do you have to do to reach out to voters and tell them what you stand for?”

Local races can be really important. In some states such as Ohio and Kentucky, for example, conservative politicians are looking at ways to pass anti-union legislation on the county level.

“So literally, county councils and county commissioners may at the end of the day decide whether or not their counties are right-to-work,” Waters said. “If union members are involved, they’re going to consider what’s best for workers and their families.”

Some USW members already hold office. They will be asked to participate in the training and give hopeful candidates concrete examples of how they can bring labor priorities to public office.

“We consider this a marathon, not a sprint,” Waters said. “We don’t want this to be here today and gone tomorrow. We want this to be a sustained program, a great resource for members who care.”

If interested, call the USW Political Department at 412-562-1671.
USW members overwhelmingly supported a wide range of resolutions charting the future course of the union and setting the stage for renewed unity and activism among Steelworkers across North America.

Dozens of delegates at the USW’s International Constitutional Convention lined up to speak passionately about each initiative, sharing stories of their personal and collective struggles and how the power of the USW’s unity has guided them through those difficult times.

One of the most spirited debates took place when delegates considered Resolution 24, “Charting a Path for our Future: Economic and Environmental Sustainability.” That measure supported a balanced approach to addressing climate change and opposed turning back the clock on environmental laws.

Several delegates said they thought the resolution went too far; others believed it did not go far enough.

Ryan O’Callaghan of Local 1, who works at Philadelphia Energy Solutions, a refinery the USW helped save when it was slated to close, said he could not support the resolution because its philosophy could cost members of his local their jobs.

Speaking for the majority who supported the resolution, Mike Williams of Local 7012 in District 6 said, “We need to work together and move toward being cleaner and greener, but we need to make sure that on the way we don’t destroy the jobs we have.”

**Health care human right**

Resolution 19, “Affordable Health-care: a Basic Human Right,” committed the USW to fighting for quality, affordable health care for all.

Members lined up across the convention hall to speak in support of the resolution, including Carlos Castillo of Local 915 in District 12. Castillo, who was elected president of his local in the spring of 2016, learned in the fall that he had cancer.

He paid a $5,000 deductible when treatment began and another $5,000 when treatment continued into January of 2017. That is a lot, he acknowledged, but he said he was grateful when he considered the situation of those who have no insurance.

USW members also shared personal anecdotes of the power of global solidarity when they spoke in favor of Resolution 5, “Global Unity and Activism,” in which members promised to build on the union’s efforts to forge global alliances and solidarity.

Delegates spoke about how those alliances have lifted up USW members and workers around the world fighting for fairness and justice over the past three years.

Bob Giusti, of Local 1357 at Allegheny Technologies in Massachusetts, said solidarity with other global unions, including the worldwide coalition IndustriALL, was key to ending the company’s seven-month lockout last year.

**Organizing new members**

USW members also overwhelmingly supported Resolution 12, “Organizing for Strength,” which declared that organizing new members would become a top priority for the union.

Bruce Smith, president of the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers International Union (GMP), which recently approved a merger with the USW, spoke of the importance of organizing.

“We know very well that everybody in this hall has a responsibility to grow the labor movement,” Smith said.

Some of the most poignant moments of the proceedings came when delegates debated Resolutions 15 and 16, championing the union’s health and safety work and Emergency Response Team (ERT).

Gary Reay of Local 9014 in District 11 said the USW’s Health, Safety and Environment Department (HSE) was vital in investigating a crushing death at his plant.

HSE staff members advised him to take photographs of the scene immediately, he said. Later, these photos proved crucial because someone removed the dead worker’s lock device before OSHA arrived. As a result of the union’s photos, the company was unable to blame the victim.

“There ought to be a law where someone is held accountable for the loss of a life like that,” Reay said.

The delegation passed about two dozen other resolutions committing the union to political activism, fighting for fair trade, bolstering civil rights, strengthening the union’s collective bargaining program, promoting training and career development, and building on the success of programs such as Women of Steel, Strategic Campaigns, Rapid Response, Education and Membership Development, SOAR and Next Generation.
USW international convention delegates presented awards to the union’s top activists in the Rapid Response program and top fundraisers for the USW Political Action Committee (PAC).

Also, for the first time, the convention celebrated members’ volunteer efforts with the USW Cares Jefferson Awards for Public Service.

Rapid Response
The union’s nonpartisan grassroots education, communication and action program recognized high-performing local unions and a high-achieving district on the convention’s last day.

“We are grateful to every member who stepped up to educate another sister or brother, to empower others to take action, and to engage in this important work,” Rapid Response Director Kim Miller said in announcing the 2017 awards.

The Rapid Response award for the top-performing district went to District 10, which covers Pennsylvania. Bob McAuliffe is the District 10 director and George Piasceki is the Rapid Response coordinator.

The “Spirit of the Fight Awards” went to the top-achieving local in each U.S. district.

“The locals receiving this award have demonstrated commitment to the program, innovation in their approaches, and exceptional results when called up to act,” Miller said.

Political Action Committee
The USW convention delegation honored the top-performing Political Action Committee (PAC) fundraisers, both by district and by local, on the closing day of the convention.

The USW’s PAC, which fuels the union’s member-driven political program, gets its funds entirely from the voluntary contributions of members.

PAC helps build a stronger union because it allows the USW to keep members well informed on workers’ issues and to fight for political candidates who support collective bargaining and the right to organize, said Political Director Tim Waters.

“Since 2010, state legislators have made it harder for us to do political work,” Waters said, adding that the union is prepared to help any local that does not have a functioning PAC to set one up.

Visit www.usw.org/act/activism/pac to learn more.

Jefferson Awards
The union established the USW Cares program two years ago to honor the community work of USW members, to inspire others to get involved and to shed light on causes that need support.

The Jefferson Awards, given both locally and nationally since 1972, are considered the “Nobel Prize” of community service. The USW is the first union to partner with the Jefferson Awards.

“The work of our activists and leaders doesn’t end at the union hall. That work extends into our communities where we live and work,” said International Vice President Carol Landry in introducing the USW’s honorees. “Steelworkers are tough, but Steelworkers have big hearts.”

Delegates stood in unison to celebrate 2016 USW and national award winner Priscilla Puente of Local 13-227 in Pasadena, Texas. She was honored for helping to establish a scholarship fund for domestic abuse victims to obtain training and education that could help them find good jobs.

2017’s top USW winner, Nancy McCurrach of Local 1944 in Western Canada, was honored for recruiting volunteers for a “Refugee Welcome Wagon” to assist 600 Syrian refugees, including 200 children.

In the past two years, more than 250 USW members have been nominated for Jefferson Awards. An independent panel of judges selects award winners from each USW district and from SOAR. The top USW winner represents the union at the foundation’s national awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

PAC Award winners:
Districts:
1. District 7 (Mike Millsap, director)
2. District 12 (Bob LaVenture, director)
3. District 8 (Billy Thompson, director)

Locals:
1. Local 715L, Woodburn, Ind.
2. Local 307L, Topeka, Kan.
3. Local 1014, Gary, Ind.

USW Cares Jefferson Awards:
District 1
Local 979
President Dan Boone
R.R. Coordinator James Evanoff

District 2
Local 1299
President Jim Allen

District 4
Local 12012
President John Buonopane
R.R. Coordinator David Dellisola

District 7
Local 12775
President Vernon Beck
R.R. Coordinator Ryan Baker

District 8
Local 831L
President Danny Barber
R.R. Coordinator Ryan Baker

District 9
Local 759L
President Mark Casto
R.R. Coordinator John Peebles

District 10
Local 10-00086
President Mike Gauger
R.R. Co-Coordinators
George Walsh and Dan Peterson

District 11
Local 11228
President Christian Ward
R.R. Coordinator Mark Powers

District 12
Local 9424
President Richard Madrid

District 13
Local 752L
President David Boone
R.R. Coordinator Greg Knowles

Visit www.usw.org/act/activism/pac for more information.

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A seven-year fight for justice for members of Local 14425 ended with the USW reaching a $7.33 million back pay settlement with Compass Minerals Louisiana, Inc., formerly known as Carey Salt Co.

The agreement, reached in March, settled a dispute that began seven years earlier with an unfair labor practice (ULP) strike at the Compass salt mine in Cote Blanche, La.

“This situation was a result of the actions of Carey Salt’s former management,” International President Leo W. Gerard said. “We’re proud of the way we’ve been able to work with the company’s current management team, as well as the NLRB, to reach a fair and equitable settlement.”

About 90 USW members who were on strike during the 2010 dispute will receive the bulk of the settlement funds. Other employees will also receive back pay.

Local 14425 eventually reached new contract agreements with Carey Salt in 2013 and 2016, but those agreements did not resolve the outstanding NLRB issues. All open issues were then resolved with the March back pay settlement, which was approved by NLRB Region 1 Director John J. Walsh.

“We extend our sincere thanks to the leadership and staff of NLRB Region 15 and Region 1 for their tireless efforts to enforce the National Labor Relations Act and protect these important rights for all working people,” District 13 Director Ruben Garza said.

The work stoppage began on April 7, 2010, to protest serious unfair labor practices by the company at the bargaining table, including management’s unlawful claim of impasse, its unlawful unilateral implementation of new terms and conditions of employment, and the unlawful refusal to bargain with the union.

When the strike ended on June 15, 2010, the company refused to call back a majority of the union work force and informed the union that most of the striking workers had been permanently replaced. In response, the USW filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Favorable rulings

Over the years, an NLRB administrative law judge, the NLRB, and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the union and the striking workers.

The strike and its aftermath were far from the only difficulties the company has faced in recent years. In 2012, the Mine Safety and Health Administration temporarily shut down the Cote Blanche mine after quarterly inspections resulted in 21 citations for safety issues.

Since then, the company replaced its management team, which led to an improved relationship with the local union.

In 2014, the company’s rescue team claimed four awards from the 44th Annual Southern Mine Rescue Competition, including the Dwight C. Bonin Memorial Award for finishing first in the Southern Salt Division.

Salt mining began at Cote Blanche in 1961. The mine today employs more than 180 people and annually produces more than three million tons of rock salt, or nearly 15 percent of what the nation uses on its highways every winter.

Cote Blanche rock salt is produced from deposits 1,500 feet underground, the equivalent of four football fields, end-to-end, and straight down.

Barges deliver the rock salt from the mine to a network of depots along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers that supply 18 states from Georgia to Minnesota. The salt is also sold to manufacturers that make plastics, detergents, disinfectants and other products.
Century Aluminum of West Virginia agreed to end years of litigation and fund health care benefits for USW retirees of its closed aluminum smelter in Ravenswood, W.Va.

The settlement, announced in February, is subject to court approval. It calls for Century to put $23 million into a trust fund that will help eligible retirees with past and future medical costs.

“This settlement is a testament to the solidarity and hard work of USW retirees who never gave up trying to win back benefits earned over a lifetime of hard work,” International Vice President Tom Conway said.

“We were determined to force the board (of directors) to see us as living, breathing human beings with beating hearts just like theirs,” said volunteer organizer Karen Gorrell, widow of a Century retiree.

An estimated 758 retirees, spouses or surviving spouses will benefit from the USW/Century Aluminum Retirees Health and Welfare Trust, which is also known as a voluntary employees’ beneficiary association or VEBA.

“This will give hope to other people out there,” Randy Moore, a sub-district director in West Virginia for District 8, told a press conference held on Feb. 14.

Retirees from the plant began receiving medical insurance benefits in 1959 from Kaiser Aluminum. Those benefits continued through different owners until Century began to eliminate them in 2010.

Century idled the Ravenswood smelter in February 2009 amid the recession and falling worldwide aluminum prices. In January 2010, the company unilaterally ended healthcare coverage for Medicare-eligible retirees. Younger retirees were dropped in 2011.

The USW and representative retirees filed a lawsuit seeking benefit reinstatement immediately after Century moved to cut retiree benefits.

The smelting complex was declared permanently closed in 2015. The property has since been sold to a developer with plans to tear down the facility and redevelop the 1,800-acre site.
Rushing criticism aside, runaway Rexnord Corp. is stripping machinery from its ball bearing factory in Indianapolis in preparation for fleeing across the border to a new plant in Monterrey, Mexico. Rexnord executives are not letting the threat of tariffs from President Donald Trump or his plan to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) stop their chase for lower wages, higher profits and stock bonuses.

Nor did they listen when Trump criticized Rexnord on Twitter: “Rexnord of Indiana is moving to Mexico and rather viciously firing all of its 300 workers,” he tweeted. “This is happening all over our country. No more!”

Rexnord ignored pleas from the USW, its members and local and state politicians to stay in Indianapolis. Management also rejected an offer from Local 1999 for contract concessions, saying it was not enough.

Adding insult to injury, Rexnord celebrated its 125th anniversary in February with an email from company President Todd Adams that praised employees for their hard work and noted how important they are to the company’s success. “It’s a slap in the face. A kick in the gut,” local union representative Gary Canter said of the company email.

The drama began last October when Rexnord announced it had tentatively decided to move the Indianapolis operation to Monterrey to save money. It later declared the decision final and said some of the work would go to McAllen, Texas.

The average wage for approximately 350 Indianapolis employees is a little over $25 an hour before overtime, compared with an average of $5.13 for facilities in Mexico and Texas where the work will move.

As they disconnect and pack machines for the move, members of Local 1999 appear to have lost earlier hope that Trump will save their jobs in the same way he persuaded Carrier, their corporate neighbor, to scale back plans to relocate furnace production from Indianapolis to Mexico.

“It’s a slap in the face. A kick in the gut,” machinist John Felter admitted to a reporter, Robert King of the Indianapolis Star, as he waited for the day his $25-an-hour job will end. “It’s tough, and my story is not unique.”

It doesn’t help that workers from Mexico, described by Rexnord as Team Monterrey, are shadowing USW members on the job, trying to learn skills that USW members spent years perfecting. “The big picture is that American jobs are leaving this country to exploit cheap labor,” said Felter, a local union officer. “When you start taking away the middle class, what do you have left?”

When Rexnord made its announcement last October, it said layoffs would begin in February. A WARN notice said the closure should be completed by June.

In talks with Local 1999, the company cited a $15.5 million net cost savings in the first year of the move and an additional $300,000 to $400,000 in savings after that.

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“I’m scared to death,” machinist John Felter admitted to a reporter, Robert King of the Indianapolis Star, as he waited for the day his $25-an-hour job will end. “It’s tough, and my story is not unique.”

Rexnord President and CEO Todd Adams said.

In late February, Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb met privately with workers and union representatives and told them the state cannot save their jobs, but would help them find new ones.

By March, Local 1999 President Chuck Jones said the move was underway but suggested it would take longer than anticipated. Apparently there were problems finding enough trucks to move machinery and fitting all of the equipment from Indianapolis into the new location, Jones said.

“What kind of a screwball operation
“When you start taking away the middle class, what do you have left?”

is this?” Jones asked. “You build a plant and plan for a year or so in order to find out you don’t have room for everything.”

Les Leopold, a co-founder of the New York-based Labor Institute, suggests that an unsaid motivation for Rexnord’s move stems from Wall Street’s “favorite pastime – stripping a company of its wealth through stock buybacks.”

From the New Deal in the 1930s until 1982, stock buybacks were virtually outlawed as they were considered a dangerous form of stock manipulation, a leading cause of the 1929 Wall Street Crash. They were legalized during the Reagan administration and the practice took off.

In 2015, Rexnord agreed to buy back $200 million of its own stock. Stock buybacks enrich investors by bidding up the share price and spreading total earnings over fewer shares.

“The move to Mexico isn’t just about profits,” Leopold wrote in an article published by The National Memo. “It’s about financing the stock buybacks.”
A
fter a series of tragic ac-
cidents, the Goodyear tire
factory in Danville, Va.,
is becoming a safer, more
secure environment for 1,400 USW-
represented workers.

The union played a key role in ne-
gotiations between Goodyear and Vir-
ginia’s safety regulators following a
 rash of industrial accidents that killed
four people over a one-year span from
August 2015 to August 2016.

“The USW membership, local
union health and safety committees
and local union leadership will be
integrally involved in improving all
aspects of health and safety at the
Danville facility,” said Jim Frederick,
who was involved in post-accident
negotiations as assistant director of
the USW’s Health, Safety and Envi-
ronment Department.

“It is vital that we revitalize
our longstanding worker and union
involvement with Goodyear to make
the needed and necessary improve-
ments to health and safety for our
members in Danville and all USW-
represented facilities,” Frederick said.

Jeanie Strader, 56, a windup
operator and roll changer, died on
Aug. 31, 2015, the first of four work-
ers killed during the one-year period.
VOSH cited violations of lockout/
tag out rules requiring dangerous
machines be guarded and machine
energy sources be isolated.

Kevin Ward Edmonds, 54, was
second. A 27-year veteran of Good-
year, he died on March 31, 2016,
pinned between a wall and a pal-
let containing rubber. On April 12,
Charles “Greg” Cooper, a main-
tenance mechanic and U.S. Navy
veteran, was found in a pit of boiling
water and oil. The pit opening was
unguarded and the floor around the
pit was slick, investigators found.
Electrician William Scheier, 47,
was adjusting a machine that appar-
ently had not been properly turned
off when it activated and struck him.
He was the fourth victim and died on
Aug. 12, 2016.

Settlement includes fines

Ultimately, after investigations,
Goodyear agreed to $1.75 million to-
tal in penalties, including a $1 million
fine to the state of Virginia and up to
$750,000 to fix hazards going forward
and to conduct workplace training.

In addition, the agreement laid out an
orderly process for the elimination of
numerous workplace hazards.

Local 831L President Danny
Barber said the USW is pleased that
the long process has resulted in a
positive agreement that will benefit
all current and future workers at
the 56-acre facility, which employs
about 2,200 people to manufacture
aviation and specialty tires.

“While nothing will replace our
sister and brothers who were fatally
injured, the elements of the settle-
ment between VOSH and Goodyear
will greatly improve safety at the
Danville plant,” he said.

Multiple investigations

Over 18 months, VOSH conduct-
ed four fatal accident investigations,
two non-fatal accident investigations,
three employee complaint investiga-
tions and comprehensive “wall to
wall” safety and health inspections.

The USW and Goodyear also
conducted separate investigations
and cooperated with the government
safety agency reviews.

Greg Kerr, the plant manager in
Danville, assured the community and
company employees that nothing is
more important to him and the com-
pany than worker safety.

“Goodyear is committed to work-
ing in partnership with the Common-
wealth of Virginia and the United
Steelworkers to continually identify
hazards and improve the safety of
our Danville plant,” he said.
The World Trade Organization (WTO) is supposed to referee trade disputes between nations, but more often than not it treats the United States, its biggest member, like a punching bag.

The WTO has repeatedly stiffed the United States and hard-working members of the USW, which has been fighting for fair trade and protection for American manufacturers and workers since before the disastrous North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) a quarter century ago.

“It really is a broken system,” International Vice President Tom Conway told radio talk show host Leslie Marshall. “And it’s been broken so long that people sort of think that’s the way it should work.”

Finally, in March came potential good news for laid-off manufacturing workers. President Donald Trump’s administration unveiled a trade agenda that aims to punish countries that violate international trade laws, even if that means ignoring unfavorable WTO decisions.

The United States will “resist efforts by other countries – or international bodies like the WTO – to weaken the right and benefits of, or increase the obligations under, the various trade agreements to which the United States is a party,” according to the agenda sent to Congress by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

The USW has pledged to work with the Trump administration where it can, and standing up to the WTO is one of those issues where common ground exists.

“We think they have picked up on an issue that we’ve been talking about for 20 years and are trying to do something about it,” Conway said. “And we are going to stand with them on that. We think this system has done tremendous harm to us.”

The president’s action is supported by a new report commissioned by the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) and written by American trade law experts Terence P. Stewart and Elizabeth J. Drake.
“This is a fight worth having, as there are significant risks to American workers and U.S. companies if the WTO continues to chip away at our rights,” AAM President Scott Paul said.

By overstepping its mandate and disproportionately targeting U.S. trade enforcement laws, the WTO is threatening America’s ability to protect manufacturers and workers from unfair trade, according to the report entitled, “How the WTO Undermines U.S. Trade Remedy Enforcement.”

Since it was established in 1995, the WTO has repeatedly ruled against the United States in trade enforcement, or how trade laws are used to remedy illegal dumping and subsidization – common tactics used by China and others used to steal market share and rob industrial workers of their jobs.

“The world trading system depends on countries’ ability to take rapid, effective, and meaningful action against unfair dumping and subsidization that is harming their manufacturers, farmers, ranchers and workers,” Stewart and Drake wrote. “That ability is currently being undermined by the WTO dispute settlement system, contrary to the system’s original design.”

More losses than wins

WTO appellate panels have heard 42 trade remedy cases involving the United States since 1995 and ruled against the United States in all but four of those cases. In other words, in 38 instances where the United States imposed sanctions against foreign countries for violating U.S. trade laws, WTO panels ordered those rulings reversed. That’s nearly five times the number of such decisions issued against any other member country.

In addition, the report points out that the WTO’s focus on trade sanctions is out of line. Forty-five percent of WTO final or interim decisions have challenged trade remedies, even though these measures, such as tariffs, affect a minuscule portion of world trade.

Stewart and Drake noted that WTO decisions have “prompted legal scholars to criticize dispute panels, and especially the Appellate Body, for going beyond their mandate and creating new rights and obligations beyond those contained in the WTO agreements.” They also pointed out that the U.S. Trade Representative and other WTO members have repeatedly expressed concern about WTO overreaching.

“In many ways, the United States has given up its sovereignty to these panels, these global panels, who can decide whether your laws are in compliance with the way they view the WTO,” Conway said.

“The sense of having given up your market, having given up your jobs and your ability to make your own laws, and stand by them and have them enforced and not have this global system operate against you is fundamentally what’s been going on,” he added.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) called for a reset of the U.S. trade relationship with China, starting with the WTO, where three quarters of the members are developing countries and countries in transition to market economies.

For years, China has dumped massive amounts of steel, aluminum and other products into the global marketplace, and has funded industrial overcapacity through state-owned enterprises. Thousands of American steelworkers have lost their jobs as a result.

“As this report shows, in decision after decision, the WTO has ruled against the U.S. and weakened our laws designed to fight back against subsidies and illegal dumping,” said Brown, who accused the WTO of undermining “the tools our businesses need to defend themselves and other workers.”

The report’s authors raised the prospect of forming a coalition with other WTO members to mount a coordinated campaign to reform the WTO Appellate Body. The report also highlighted a longstanding proposal that WTO members establish an independent commission to review standards.

Market economy status

The WTO’s dispute processes gained some additional attention late last December when China challenged the United States’ continued practice of treating China as a non-market economy.

China maintains it should have automatically gained “market economy status” on Dec. 15, the 15th anniversary of its acceptance into the WTO.

Granting China market economy status would have severe consequences for workers in other countries that compete with them by making it much harder to prosecute dumping cases against state-subsidized Chinese industries.

China has failed to meet any of the U.S. criteria for market status as it continues to break promises to take meaningful steps to open its markets, address state-funded industrial overcapacity, and stop manipulating its currency.

“We’ve got a persistent China trade policy because Beijing has ignored its WTO obligations,” Paul said. “For 15 years, our workers and makers have asked China to play by the rules, and for 15 years Beijing hasn’t budged.”
The USW is supporting a trade case that accuses four countries – Brazil, Kazakhstan, Norway and Australia – of dumping and subsidizing silicon metals used in semiconductors and solar cells.

The trade case began with petitions filed in March by Global Specialty Metals (GSM) with the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) and the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC). It could take a year for the case to be completed. The trade petitions were the first to be filed under the new Trump administration. They have the support of the USW, which represents workers at GSM plants in Alloy, W.Va., and Niagara Falls, N.Y., and the industrial unit of the Communications Workers of America, which represented workers at a now closed facility in Selma, Ala.

International President Leo W. Gerard said the petition gives the Trump administration an opportunity to reverse negative job trends and restore “fairness and competitiveness” in the industry.

“It’s high time that we put a stop to the unrelenting pressure on U.S. jobs and industry caused by unfair trading practices on the part of foreign countries’ companies, who dump products at illegally manipulated low prices,” Gerard said.

“For years now, we have lamented and objected to foreign companies being allowed to abuse the system. These violations have led to devastating losses, particularly for U.S. workers and their communities.”


In a complaint filed with the U.S. Court of International Trade, the USW asked the court to overturn the ITC’s Feb. 22 decision on the basis that it is “unsupported by substantial evidence and otherwise not in accordance with the law….”

“The fight for these jobs is far from over,” said International Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson, a former rubber worker who leads the union’s Rubber and Plastics Industry Conference.

The ITC vote was seen as a victory for Chinese tire makers, whose exports of bus and truck tires skyrocketed from 6.3 million tires in 2013 to 8.9 million tires in 2015.

“The ITC commissioners made a huge mistake,” International President Leo W. Gerard said after the negative vote. “The injury that the workers making truck and bus tires have experienced is tragic. Massive subsidies and dumping must be challenged.”

USW, CWA support trade case against silicon metal exporters

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ITC denies relief to USW members making truck, bus tires


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Jobs at risk

The USW represents some 6,000 workers at five facilities in the United States that account for more than two-thirds of domestic capacity for bus and truck tires. The tire facilities are operated by Bridgestone-Firestone in La Vergne and Warren County, Tenn.; Sumitomo in Buffalo, N.Y., and Goodyear Tire in Danville, Va., and Topeka, Kan.

“Our members in the tire sector have stood their ground and fought like hell to stop China’s dumping and subsidies,” Johnson said immediately after the ITC vote. “Today, workers making truck and bus tires have been left holding the short end of the stick.”

To protect American jobs, the USW vigorously fights bad trade deals when no one else will and has filed more cases against trade law violators than any other union in the sectors where USW members work, including the steel, aluminum, paper and tire industries.

In this case, the USW filed petitions on its own with the ITC and the Department of Commerce (DOC) in January 2016, seeking antidumping and countervailing duty relief protection from Chinese bus and truck tire imports under Sections 701 and 731 of the Trade Act.

The 3-2 ITC vote in February against relief ignored an earlier decision by the DOC that identified both illegal subsidies and dumping of Chinese-made truck and bus tires. Dumping occurs when a foreign company sells a product in the United States at less than its fair value.

The Department of Commerce identified subsidies of approximately 60 percent and dumping of almost 23 percent. “Yet the ITC failed to support relief for the injured workers,” Gerard said. “That simply ignored the facts and the harm that Chinese unfairly traded exports have caused workers.”

Serious problems found

U.S. antidumping and countervailing (antisubsidy) laws are an internationally accepted mechanism to seek relief from market distortions caused by dumping and unfair government subsidization of imports into the United States.

Gerard said the size of the dumping and antisubsidy margins found by the DOC during its investigation indicated the serious nature of the problem.

“But our law separates the facts from the determination of whether injury has occurred,” he said. “For too long, that has jeopardized the jobs of workers across the country that make high quality products.

“Our members can compete against companies, but not countries. That’s exactly what happens when it comes to competing against China.”

The ITC made a preliminary determination of material injury in March 2016, which moved the USW petitions forward to a full review and assessment of injury.

The three Republicans who cast ballots against relief in the final vote included Meredith Broadbent, F. Scott Kieff and Vice Chairman David Johanson, who voted the opposite way in the preliminary vote.

Democrats Rhonda Schmittdiein and Irving Williamson voted for relief. Commissioner Dean A. Pinkert recused himself from the vote and shortly afterwards left the ITC for a law firm.

International Vice President Tom Conway noted that China continues to ramp up production capacity throughout the tire sector, seeking to sell tires in the United States at any price.

“It is time for the government to step in so that workers do not have to continue to shoulder the burden of failed trade agreements and policies,” Conway said. “Workers are demanding that our government stand up for their interests.”

James Clark, president of the IUE-CWA, said over 100 of his members lost their jobs when the GSM plant in Selma closed in 2016 due to unfair competition from foreign suppliers.

“Unfortunately, the story of these manufacturing workers in Selma has become all too common. When faced with these unfair trade practices from abroad, we have to fight back,” Clark said.

“American manufacturing is being undercut by unfair trade practices from foreign corporations, and American manufacturing workers are paying the price,” Clark said. “We hope that this case will be reviewed quickly, and that justice will be served.”

GSM, a unit of United Kingdom-based Ferroglobe PLC., is one of the world’s larger producers of silicon metal, silicon-based specialty alloys and silicon fume, a concrete additive. Its customers include major chemical, aluminum and steel manufacturers, producers of photovoltaic solar cells and computer chips, the auto industry, ductile iron foundries, concrete and building material producers.

In its petitions, GSM outlined multiple examples of unfair and illegal trade practices that have tilted the playing field against GSM’s American facilities and its workers. In addition to the Selma closing, GSM said it has shut down furnaces at other facilities.

The company alleges imports from Brazil, Norway and Australia are being sold at artificially low prices, with alleged dumping margins ranging as high as 134.9 percent for Brazil, 45.7 percent for Norway and 52.8 percent for Australia. The petition further alleges that producers in Brazil, Kazakhstan and Australia received government subsidies that have given them an unfair advantage.
The United States is investigating whether duties should be imposed on imported Chinese aluminum foil to offset illegal government subsidies and predatory pricing.

The probe was launched in late March after the Aluminum Association, an industry trade group, filed petitions with the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) and the International Trade Commission (ITC) calling for investigations into government subsidies and dumping, or selling below the cost of production.

The USW said it “stands in strong support” of the domestic industry in the case, which accuses some 230 Chinese companies of selling almost $400 million worth of foil to the United States at artificially low prices last year.

“China has ravaged the entire aluminum sector with its unfair trade,” the USW said in a statement. “Its rising over-capacity has depressed world prices, making it increasingly difficult for companies that abide by market economics to survive.”

The ITC on April 21 found there is reasonable indication that the U.S. industry is harmed by imports of aluminum foil from China. That means the DOC will continue its investigations with preliminary determinations due on subsidies by June 2 and dumping by Aug. 16. A final ruling is expected in 2018.

It is the first time that the Aluminum Association has filed trade cases on behalf of its members in the nearly 85-year
The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) voted unanimously to extend existing antidumping and countervailing duty orders on aluminum extrusions from China.

Acting in March on a five-year sunset review, the ITC members agreed that revocation of previous orders would likely lead to additional material injury for domestic producers and workers.

International President Leo W. Gerard said the ITC’s vote helps to ensure fair market pricing in the aluminum extrusion market as the threat of material injury continues from Chinese imports.

“If the orders were lifted, China would immediately resume its unfair trade attack,” Gerard said, noting that the domestic industry has been recovering from the ravages of China’s unfair trade.

While the orders were in place, domestic production grew by more than 50 percent to over 1.3 million short tons in 2015. At the same time, the number of production workers in the United States increased from 9,793 in 2009 to more than 15,000 in 2015.

“Clearly, the orders are effective in restoring fair pricing and show that, when we compete on a level playing field, America’s aluminum extruders thrive,” Gerard said. “This would not occur, however, without the orders and the relief they provide from China’s cheating.”

Gerard said the USW remains committed to fighting, product-by-product, against foreign unfair trade as our competitors continue to send dumped and subsidized products into our market.

“Once again, producers and workers had to defend themselves against Chinese predatory practices,” Gerard said. “Bringing these cases is costly, but necessary to stave off lost jobs and the human suffering caused by unfair trade.”

Domestic industry injured

The association alleges Chinese producers have injured the domestic industry by selling their aluminum foil at unfairly low prices that significantly undercut domestic market prices.

“Chinese producers have massive capacity to produce aluminum foil and have been exporting large and increasing volumes of unfairly low-priced and subsidized merchandise to the United States that have devastated conditions in the U.S. market,” the association said.

The industry group alleges antidumping margins range from 38 percent to more than 134 percent of the value of the imported aluminum foil. Chinese producers also benefit from 27 separate government subsidy programs, it said.

According to the Aluminum Association, 12 years ago U.S. production accounted for about 84 percent of all domestic aluminum foil demand, and that has dropped to 69 percent currently.

At the same time, Chinese imports grew from essentially zero percent of the U.S. aluminum foil market in 2004 to about 22 percent today. In 2016, Chinese products accounted for about 71 percent of total U.S. aluminum foil imports.

Products covered by the petitions include kitchen foil, flexible and semi-rigid cookware, product packaging and heat exchangers used in automotive and heating and ventilation applications.

The aluminum foil cases are part of a broader initiative to combat increasing amounts of low-priced aluminum imports that have been flooding into the United States, primarily from China.

Last year, before President Obama left office, his administration filed a complaint against Chinese aluminum subsidies at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The complaint accused China of artificially expanding its global market share with cheap state-directed loans and subsidized energy.

Non-market status under review

The U.S. Department of Commerce said it would review China’s status as a non-market economy as part of its probe into unfairly priced aluminum foil exports.

While the United States has long viewed China to be a non-market economy subject to high anti-dumping duties, Beijing has challenged that policy before the WTO.

The USW opposes granting market economy status to China.

“The preferential status China is seeking would allow them to dump more unfairly priced products into the market, while claiming to abide by market economics,” said International President Leo W. Gerard.

“Nobody who understands China’s economic policies, and deals with the reality of those policies in the marketplace, can honestly argue that China is a market economy.”
The Trump administration has launched separate investigations into whether foreign steel and aluminum products are compromising U.S. national security, moves that could lead to hefty tariffs on imports.

International President Leo W. Gerard was in the White House with executives from major steel companies on April 20 when President Donald Trump signed a memorandum ordering the steel investigation under Section 232 of the 1965 Trade Expansion Act. A similar probe into aluminum was launched a week later.

“Steel is the backbone of our country, our infrastructure and our military,” Gerard said. “The president’s action will reveal to policymakers in Washington what every American already knows: We must have a strong steel sector to be a strong country.”

President Trump called the signing historic. He said his administration would “fight for American workers and American-made steel, and that’s beginning immediately.”

The U.S. steel industry has for decades been undercut by international trading partners who have stolen market share, production capacity and jobs through unfair and illegal acts. Last year, some 30 million metric tons of steel were imported for use in buildings, bridges, water and sewer plants, and oil and natural gas production.

**Action in aluminum**

A week after taking action on steel, the Trump
administration announced a Section 232 investigation on aluminum as well. U.S. aluminum production and employment has declined dramatically in recent years as a result of China’s unfair practices.

“It’s about time that action like this was initiated,” Gerard said. “China’s overcapacity is swamping world markets, driving down prices and making some operations unprofitable.”

Unlike other trade challenges, Section 232 does not require the United States to prove that American industry has been harmed by foreign competition in order to take action. It allows U.S. officials to take action against imports proactively to protect national security.

“The USW and domestic producers have filed over 200 trade enforcement cases to protect our production, jobs and our country,” Gerard said. “But one of the major flaws in our current trade enforcement system is that we have to lose market share and jobs first in order to restore fair trade.”

China’s continuing overproduction of steel, aluminum and other products is a particularly intractable problem that has defied solution, despite global efforts to force China to rein in its overcapacity, Gerard said.

The success of the investigations, he said, will depend on the scope of the inquiries and the recognition of how important steel and aluminum are to U.S. security interests.

“These studies, once completed, will give the president the justification to act to protect our national security, and to stop the predatory and protectionist imports from flooding our shores and decimating our productive capacity,” Gerard said.

Vital to economy

America’s security depends not only on the quality of its weapons, but the critical infrastructure, logistical support and ability to respond in times of crisis.

“From our weapons systems to the rails and bridges that bring them to our ports, to the pipelines that deliver water and energy to our people, to the materials used in electrical transmission - these products are vital to our nation’s security,” Gerard added. “There is no way that we can rely on other countries that cheat for our supplies.”

Under the law, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross must send a report to the president within 270 days of each study’s initiation. The president will then have 90 days to determine what, if any, action to take. He has 15 days to implement that action.

If this approach does not properly address China’s overcapacity and predatory trade practices, Gerard said more radical action will be necessary.

“The strength of our country requires robust steel and aluminum sectors from the mines to the mills,” Gerard said. “The ability to move goods to our men and women in uniform and throughout our country, as well as having a strong infrastructure, demands that these sectors remain healthy and viable.”

Other sectors harmed

And the problems in steel are not unique. Members of the USW, the largest industrial union in North America, have seen increasing threats to their jobs from unfair trade, much of it coming from China, in a wide variety of industries including aluminum, paper, glass, rubber, solar and more.

“The decline in aluminum has taken us from 14 operating smelters in the United States to five in just a few short years, endangering our national security,” Conway said.

Foreign dumping and illegal subsidies, circumvention of trade duties by rogue traders, and continuing growth and overcapacity in the sector worldwide, driven primarily by China, remain persistent problems.

“China has no incentive to eliminate its excess capacity,” Conway said.

“Repeated promises have only been met with repeated increases in production capacity.”

The USW and its allies must ensure that China does not gain market economy status in the United States or in the European Union, Conway said.

While the U.S. has long deemed China to be a non-market economy that is therefore subject to high antidumping duties, Beijing has challenged that policy with a sweeping World Trade Organization (WTO) case.

“The facts on the ground demonstrate that China is NOT a market economy. The U.S. underlying statutory test makes clear, point by point, that China does not pass muster,” Conway said.
The USW accused B&H Photo, a Manhattan electronics superstore and online retailer, of violating federal labor laws after it announced plans to move its warehouse operations during first contract talks for 375 newly organized workers.

The union filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Region 29 in New York on Jan. 13, a day after B&H announced it would close two warehouses in Brooklyn and move the operations to Florence, N.J.

B&H blamed lease expirations for the move, which is expected to take place in stages during the second half of the year. The store and corporate offices, which together employ 1,500, will remain in New York.

District 4 Director John Shinn, an outspoken supporter of the organizing drive, questioned B&H management’s claim that it could not find a suitable alternative location in the New York City. “Moving to South New Jersey will make it difficult, and certainly a challenge, for employees currently relying on public transportation to accept employment offers at the new site,” Shinn said. “This is clearly an illegal tactic designed to avoid the company’s obligation to bargain in good faith.”

B&H’s Manhattan store is a well-known shopping destination for tourists and photographers, amateur and professional. The company also has a huge online and wholesale business. Its government contracts were said to be $46 million alone last year.

Most of the current workers live in Brooklyn and believe the move to New Jersey is based on a desire by the company to avoid contract negotiations. There are no direct bus or train routes from New York to Florence.

“It’s two hours away driving,” Ruben Sanchez, who has worked at a B&H warehouse in the Brooklyn Navy Yard for about nine years, said. “It’s so far, most people won’t go. Most employees don’t have a car. They don’t have a way to transport themselves.”

Running away from Brooklyn is essentially running away from the union. If it turns out that USW members aren’t a majority of the workforce at the new warehouse, B&H could refuse to recognize the union.

B&H employees, largely Hispanic immigrants, chose the USW in overwhelming numbers despite manage-
ment’s threats during the campaign to fire employees who voted for the union.

“As a union, we know that as long as we stay united, our solidarity will prevail against the challenges before us,” Shinn said. “In addition to our legal filings, we will reach out to elected officials and community leaders to ensure B&H warehouse workers receive a fair opportunity to be heard on the job and at the bargaining table.”

On Feb. 9, two weeks after the NLRB filing, USW-represented workers rallied in front of the company’s Ninth Avenue camera store to protest the decision to move operations by year’s end.

“Show them your faces,” worker Raul Pedraza urged during the protest. “Show them the 375 families they are going to abandon.”

Refuses to negotiate

During the rally, Shinn told reporters B&H refused to negotiate over the relocation. In a statement, the company said the relocation was driven by real-estate issues and the need for a larger facility.

“We thought they were negotiating in good faith,” Shinn told reporters during the rally. “They never said they were thinking about moving.”

The organizing campaign got started when some of the workers were upset about long hours and discriminatory treatment and got together to discuss what to do. They received assistance and training in organizing from a Laundry Workers Center, which teaches workers how to identify leaders, recruit coworkers and plan a campaign.

As part of their training, B&H workers participated in rallies and other actions supporting fast-food employees and the Black Lives Matter movement, which gave them confidence to take on their own employer.

The warehouse workers stayed united in spite of one-on-one meetings with anti-union consultants and threats of firings. After winning their election by a vote of 200 to 88, they also organized a warehouse underneath the main retail store, where orders are filled.

After the election win, in February 2016, the federal government filed a lawsuit accusing B&H of violating federal anti-discrimination requirements at the Navy Yard site.

The lawsuit accused B&H of systematically discriminating against Hispanic employees and female, black and Asian jobseekers. As a federal contractor, B&H is forbidden from discriminating in employment and is required to take affirmative action for employment equality.

“B&H fell far short of this responsibility and created deplorable working conditions for employees at its Brooklyn warehouse,” Patricia A. Shiu, director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, said at the time. B&H denied the allegations.
International President Leo W. Gerard urged Duquesne University to bargain with its part-time adjunct faculty after the National Labor Relations Board ruled that the Catholic school must recognize their collective bargaining rights.

“Duquesne needs to stop its legal maneuvering, acknowledge the results of the election and negotiate with its adjunct faculty for a fair contract,” Gerard said.

On April 10, the NLRB in Washington, D.C., rejected the university argument that it should be exempt from NLRB jurisdiction as a religious institution. Certification of representation was issued to the Adjunct Faculty Association of the USW on April 19.

The approximately 125-member adjunct faculty unit in Duquesne’s McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts in Pittsburgh won the election in 2012 with 85 percent voting in favor of the union.

In the years since the vote, however, the university has sought to thwart unionization by claiming a religious exemption. Duquesne has for years recognized and bargained with other unions that represent non-faculty employees.

Hopeful for the union

Adjunct professor Adam Davis, a history teacher, was thrilled when he and his colleagues voted to unionize in 2012. He remains hopeful today that the union will succeed.

“I am proud to call myself a member of the USW and still want a union as much as I did five years ago, and hope that Duquesne will follow Catholic social teaching and agree to negotiate with us in good faith,” he said.

Duquesne University President Ken Gormley, a former law school dean, said the university will appeal the NLRB’s April 19 determination.

The appeal process began two days later, on April 21, when Stanley J. Brown, a university attorney, refused a request to bargain made by USW Senior Associate General Counsel Dan Kovalik.

“The USW is disappointed that Duquesne continues to cling to its hypocritical position that its Catholic identity prevents it from doing what the Catholic Church has made clear for centuries – that employers should allow their employees to form unions to protect their interests,” Kovalik said.

“We hope that, with continued community support and pressure, Duquesne will wake up to the wrongfulness of its actions and finally recognize the union as the representative of its adjunct faculty.”

At the beginning of the campaign, Duquesne had signed an election stipulation agreeing to abide by the outcome of an NLRB election, but the university abruptly changed its legal counsel and its position.

Duquesne then began to argue that as a Catholic institution it is not governed by NLRB rules. The board’s Pittsburgh-based Region 6 denied Duquesne’s request to withdraw the election stipulation and ordered the election be held.

After the 2012 election, Region 6 ordered the university to recognize the adjuncts’ union. When the NLRB’s regional director rejected Duquesne’s argument for a religious exemption, the university appealed to the NLRB’s national office.

The university’s continued resistance to federal labor laws threatens to divide the urban campus and detract from the positive impact Duquesne has long had on the community, Gerard said.

“The university’s endless posturing and legal challenges to avoid bargaining in good faith are a disservice to its professional part-time instructors and students alike,” Gerard said.

The USW had previously argued that Duquesne does not meet the board’s exemption criteria as most of the adjunct faculty members do not provide religious education. That issue was addressed in the board’s April decision when it specified that faculty members who teach theology be exempt from the order because their classes are specifically presented as having religious content.
Mine Rescue Competitions

The USW Health, Safety and Environment Department is seeking information from local unions that participate in annual mine rescue competitions.

Each year, mine rescue teams from across the United States and Canada compete in regional competitions designed to sharpen emergency response skills and test the knowledge of team members who could be called to respond to a mine disaster.

Competing teams are required to solve life-like scenarios while being timed and judged by mine emergency response experts. It’s a hands-on way to prepare volunteer team members for high-pressure situations that can occur at mine sites.

Let the Health, Safety and Environment Department know if your local is competing in a mine safety contest this year. Results, descriptions, photos and local union information can be emailed to the department at safety@usw.org.

Mondelez Boycott Announced

The AFL-CIO executive council has approved a new National Good Jobs campaign to expose and challenge the corporate outsourcing of jobs by American companies.

The labor federation and its 55 member unions agreed to rally around the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) as an initial project.

The BCTGM represents more than 2,000 workers who make Nabisco products for Mondelez, the campaign’s first target. The national contract between Mondelez and BCTGM expired on Feb. 29, 2016.

The BCTGM is asking the public to avoid Mondelez/Nabisco brand products made in Mexico. Check for the words “Made in Mexico” on the ingredient label, or look for a two-letter plant identification code near the best by date.

Do not buy products with the plant codes MM or MS, which stand for Monterrey and Salinas, Mexico. You may buy packages with these codes: AE (Chicago), AH (Portland, Ore.), AP (Fairlawn, N.J.), AX (Atlanta), AZ (Richmond, Va.) and XL (Naperville, Ill.)

WestRock Pact Approved

Members of Local 11-1651 in Clinton, Iowa, ratified a new contract with WestRock, the paper and packaging company.

Wages will rise 13 percent over the life of the five-year agreement. The pact also improves vacation pay and includes grandparents as immediate family in the company’s funeral and memorial service bereavement policy.

Mine Disaster Remembered

About 100 USW members, along with members of Unite the Union from the United Kingdom, joined thousands of marchers in Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico, on April 20 to remember two Mexican steelworkers who were killed by police during a strike 11 years ago.

In 2006, members of the National Union of Mine, Metal and Steelworkers, known as Los Mineros, struck to protest an attempt by President Vicente Fox to remove the union’s elected leader, Napoleón Gómez Urrutia. The government responded by sending in the military. Two workers were killed.

Gómez, who leads the union from exile in Canada because of threats from the Mexican government, thanked the global labor movement for its solidarity and demanded justice for the murdered union members.

“We need a revolution in Mexico,” he said. “Not a revolution of violence but a democratic revolution against a government and greedy corporations that are repressing and killing workers.”
Have You Moved?
Notify your local union financial secretary, or clip out this form with your old address label and send your new address to:

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

Name ______________________________________
New Address __________________________________
City ______________________________________
State _________________________   Zip _________

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 2017
In Memory of Those Who Died at USW Work Sites
April 13, 2016 to April 24, 2017

5/4/2016 Thomas Chin, 50 Hain Celestial
5/5/2016 Alberto Grospe, 52 Russel Metals
5/11/2016 Miguel Barron, 37 Altair\Strickland
5/20/2016 Bobby Hughes, 55 Calumet
6/3/2016 Tim Fulks, 31 Rotek
6/15/2016 Charles Kremke, 70 USS Gary Works
6/16/2016 Jim Bussie, 64 PTC Alliance
6/29/2016 Brian Allen, 43 Kapstone Charleston Kraft
8/10/2016 Jesse Horsley, 56 U.S. Pipe Griffin Pipe
8/10/2016 Chad Wiklun, 29 Agrium Vanscoy Potash
8/12/2016 William Scheier, 47 Goodyear Tire & Rubber
9/11/2016 Ian Lawson, 23 Western Forest Products
9/12/2016 Louis Gonzales, 22 Marathon Galveston Bay
9/30/2016 Jonathan Arrizola, 30 USS Gary Works
11/5/2016 Kevin Campbell, 69 ArcelorMittal (Burns Harbor)
11/23/2016 Robert Dameron, 44 Georgia Pacific Paper
11/29/2016 Chad Holloway, 48 Maruichi American
12/15/2016 Nick Garcia, 56 LyondellBasell Houston
1/30/2017 Ivor Lundin, 52 Tolko Industries Kelowna
2/8/2017 Sedrick Stallworth, 42 Packaging Corp. of America
2/8/2017 William Rolls, Jr., 32 Packaging Corp. of America
2/8/2017 Jody Gooch, 40 Packaging Corp. of America
2/10/2017 Gennadi Brianski, 52 Canpar Transport
2/23/2017 Pierre Audet, 59 IAM Gold Westwood Mine
3/5/2017 Tim Dagon, 42 US Steel Granite City
3/14/2017 James Lay, Jr. 61 Key Staffing
3/20/2017 Willie Batteast, 69 ArcelorMittal Steel
3/22/2017 Ken Brown, 57 Hussmann Refrigeration
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4/18/2017 M. Christian Mercier, 56 Technologies Avancées De Fibres AFT Inc.
4/20/2017 Jake Galeazzi, 20 Western Forest Products
4/20/2017 Roland Gaudet, 59 Western Forest Products
4/20/2017 Clement Reti, 61 Western Forest Products
4/20/2017 William Froelich, 52 LaClede Gas
4/20/2017 Alex Boschert, 27 LaClede Gas

*Not included are those who died from occupational diseases and those who died from natural causes while at work or in transit to and from work. Source: USW Health, Safety and Environment Department.