



MICHAEL H. BOLTON, DIRECTOR

UNITED STEELWORKERS USW UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS DISTRICT 2

NEWS

OCTOBER 2020 • VOLUME 10, ISSUE 11 PAGE 1

This is the Opportunity We've Been Waiting For - VOTE!

A Message from Michael Bolton



The 2020 General Election is just days away; and while I think we have a lot of good reasons to be optimistic about the outcome, I will not become over confident until the races are called. While I am excited about the potential for a Blue Wave sweeping through Congress, there is one race that could mean trouble for Democratic efforts to retake the Senate - incumbent Democrat Gary Peters against John James. James ran against Debbie Stabenow during the last cycle; and, as a result, has built up considerable name recognition. In addition, he is being funded by the Devos family, the Koch Brothers, and Mitch McConnell, which means he is spending big on television ads. While we could never match the money being spent by the corporate elite, we can motivate our members. Please talk to your family, friends and Steelworker brothers and sisters. Urge them to vote for Gary Peters for Michigan U.S. Senator.

Also, with everything that has taken place this year, I think we should all be very motivated to vote this election. However, there is another reason we should make sure our votes are counted - the Supreme Court. With the confirmation of the President's nominee, the Court will have a right wing majority of six to three. To counter the disadvantage, we need to build a solid majority in the House and Senate to write and pass legislation that will not be decided by an activist conservative court. We have a great opportunity this year; but to take advantage of it, we need all of us. Please make a plan to vote for Union-backed candidates either by mail or in person.

A couple of months ago, I urged District 2 Steelworkers to get excited about Joe Biden as our candidate for President of the United States. I felt then, as I feel now, that Biden is an excellent candidate and the type of person we need to reunite America and get the working class moving forward. Joe ran a great primary campaign; and, to date, has had an impressive run during the General. While I admire his success as a candidate, I am looking forward to a presidency that will be even more fruitful. Why?

There are a number of reasons for my enthusiasm. First, as a U.S. Senator, Joe has proven that he has the ability to work across the aisle to get the job done. In over 35 years in the upper Chamber of Congress, Biden sponsored 491 pieces of legislation. Of that number, 62 dealt with workers' rights and benefits. Amazingly, nearly three quarters of those bills (348) became law - quite an impressive average of over 10 bills

passed per year of service. Yes, Joe knows how to get the job done.

Joe also knows how to get our economy humming again. In 2009, the Obama-Biden team inherited an economy that was on it's knees. Unemployment was in double digits, the auto industry was on the verge of collapse and banks across the country were failing. President Obama put Biden in charge of overseeing how economic stimulus money was spent. Together, Obama and Biden put together a rescue package that saved carmakers and got money moving through the economy again.

Today, the former Vice President has used that experience to create a plan to get our pandemic crippled economy going for everyone. It is a good plan that even Wall Street has been impressed by. In fact, Goldman-Sachs, one of the nation's largest investment bankers, is hailing it as the right plan for our time. In a report to its clients, the bank stated, "Joe Biden is promising a bonanza of government spending that, coupled with extremely low interest rates, would likely speed up the economy."

The report continued, "A (Democratic) blue wave would sharply raise the possibility of a stimulus package of at least \$2 trillion shortly after the January 20th inauguration. Additionally, Goldman also praised Biden's plans for long-term spending on infrastructure, climate, health care and education.

The report wrapped up, concluding that "It (the Biden plan) would likely result in substantially easier U.S. fiscal policy, reduce the risk of renewed trade escalation and a firmer global growth outlook."

Goldman-Sachs is not the only financial institution to hail the Biden economic plan. Moody's Analytics, the credit rating giant, found that if the Biden economic proposals were enacted, it would create 7.4 million more jobs than Trump's would. The economy would return to full employment in the second half of 2022, two years sooner than the current President's plan.

Joe also knows health care. He worked tirelessly with President Obama to pass the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also referred to as Obamacare. Among other things, it allows parents to add children up to 26 years of age to their insurance policy, prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage due to pre-existing conditions, eliminates lifetime coverage limits, and ends co-pays for wellness and pregnancy exams. Perhaps the most important statistic, it led to over 23 million Americans gaining the security of having effective and affordable health insurance.

Vice President Biden plans to build on Obamacare's successes. To do that, Biden will create a public option in addition to traditional insurance plans. The option is a Medicare like program that subscribers can buy into. It will compete directly with

DISTRICT 2 CONTACT INFORMATION

USW District 2 Office
1244A Midway Road
Menasha, WI 54952
(920) 722-7630

Northern WI & MI Sub-District Office
1244A Midway Road
Menasha, WI 54952
(920) 722-7630

Southern WI Sub-District Office
1135 South 70th Street, Suite 502
West Allis, WI 53214
(414) 475-4560

Northern MI Sub-District Office
503 North Euclid Avenue
Suite #10 - Euclid Plaza
Bay City, MI 48706
(989) 667-0660

Southern MI Sub-District Office
20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300
Taylor, MI 48180
(734) 285-0367

USW District 2 Council Steering Committee

The District 2 Council By-Laws established a District 2 Council Steering Committee comprised of a rank and file structure. It was set up to assist in the following:

- Development of agenda for Council Conference.
- Planning of the District Council Conference Educational Conferences.
- District 2 strategic planning.
- Determining and assessing educational needs within the District.
- Generating and leading activism and other purposes consistent with the mission and directives of District 2 and the USW.

The elected members of the Steering Committee are listed below by manufacturing sector. If you need to contact a Steering Committee Member, please do so by using the email provided below.

Name	LUF#	Sector	Email Address
Ron Fancsal	1299	Steel and Related	rfancsal@yahoo.com
Don Carlson	58	Paper	doncarlson@gza.net
Robert Desmond	11792	Amalgamated	rdesmdes@aol.com
Jesse Edwards	2-232	Automotive Related	Jesse_edwards21919@yahoo.com
Kent Holzing	12975	Chemical & Energy Related	kentholzing@gmail.com
Jackie Anklam	9899	Health Care	jackieanklam_uswlocal8999@yahoo.com
Michael Orvoch	12854	Public	m.orvoch@uswlocal12934.com
Eric Henricks	1127	AI Large	eric.henricks@gallencos.com
Matthew Gibbons	3965	AI Large	msw5965@gmail.com
Jim Whitt	2-145	Allied Industrial	whittjm@yahoo.com



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**United Steelworkers District 2
AFL-CIO-CLC**

MICHAEL H. BOLTON, Director
1244A Midway Rd., Menasha, WI 54952
(920) 722-7630

Contributors to this issue include:

Lori Guletanski, Tarryn Duncan, Jay McMillan, Sue Browne,
Thomas Conway, USW President, Tom Parks, USW New Media,
Bruce Bostick, PeopleWorld, PPSA, History.com

Articles and photos are welcome and should be sent:

Jason Wilcox & Art Kroll, Co-Editors, *District 2 News*
1244A Midway Rd., Menasha, WI 54952
d2@usw.org • (920) 722-7630

November 18, 2020, is the deadline for submissions for the next issue.

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"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"

Did you know?

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
**YOUR UNION
YOUR VOICE**
#USWVOICES

OUR CORE ISSUES

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
SAFETY AND HEALTH
JOB SECURITY/TRADE
DOMESTIC ECONOMIC ISSUES
HEALTH CARE
RETIREMENT SECURITY

USW Rapid Response is engaging in an educational series around our core issues. For more information, go to: usw.to/CoreValues

You can see core issues 3 through 5 on pages 8, 9 and 10 of this newsletter.

A USW Virtual Education Conference

has been scheduled to take place on Tuesday, November 17, and Wednesday, November 18, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST.



For more on this education conference and instructions on how to register for it, go to page 4

The Union Plus Credit Card program.
With 3 card choices - designed to meet the needs of union members. All with competitive rates, U.S. based customer service and more. Plus, exclusive hardship grants for eligible cardholders*.

The Union Plus Credit Card Program is designed to meet the needs of hard-working union members and their families.

To apply by phone, call: 1-800-522-4000

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USW NEWS United Steelworkers District 2
AFL-CIO-CLC
MICHAEL H. BOLTON, Director, 1244A Midway Road, Menasha, WI 54952
(920) 722-7630

**HAVE YOU BEEN TO DISTRICT 2'S
PAGE ON FACEBOOK?**
www.facebook.com/USWDistrict2

A Message from Director Bolton - continued from page 1

private insurers and will help lower premiums for all insurance providers by negotiating prescription drug prices, lowering administrative costs and fighting insurance fraud by insurance companies, medical care providers and individuals.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was a Trojan Horse Trump sold as a magic potion for the working class. Unfortunately, it was nothing but a hoax. Why?

The tax cuts for workers were minimal and temporary. However, it also included huge permanent cuts for the wealthy and corporations, which added over \$2 trillion to the U.S. deficit and gave incentives to employers moving jobs overseas. According to the Economic Policy Institute, these incentives added to the loss of over 700,000 U.S. jobs during the Trump presidency.

If elected President, Biden would repeal those tax cuts for any individual earning over \$400,000 annually. The revenue would be used to fund massive investment in our roads, bridges, airports, railways and seaports. Infrastructure spending would lead to greater demand for workers, which means wages in all sectors of the economy will increase as employers compete to attract skilled workers. It will also lead to greater employment in industries supporting construction projects. Steel mills and paper mills will benefit, as will retailers, restaurants, auto dealers, and the service industry. Joe knows taxes and how to use them wisely.

Perhaps more important to us as Union activists, Joe knows that Unions play a vital role in creating and maintaining a strong American working class. He opposed the anti-Union actions Republicans have poured on our movement for the past ten years. Biden has pledged to work with us to help repeal right wing policies such as right to work and limits on subjects of bargaining. The most significant promise he has made to the Labor Movement - to fight with us to pass the PRO Act, a bill that will modernize the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. Since its passage. Republicans presidents, members of Congress, and corporations have hammered away at the Act to the point that employers use it as a tool to help beat back their workers' organizing efforts.

I want to add, we are not asking the President or Congress to make it easier to organize new members. We are asking them to make the process more fair one. The PRO Act accomplishes fairness by establishing a procedure to recognize a Union through card check. It also creates real penalties for employers who break the law and it creates a method that ensures workers engaged in collective bargaining have a fair chance of gaining a first contract.

We can keep passing covid-19 stimulus packages, but they will not work until we end the coronavirus pandemic. Seven months into the worst health crisis in over a century, and, even as covid numbers are spiking across the country, the Trump Administration still fails to have a plan for dealing with the illness. Joe Biden does!

As President, Biden sees his first task as working to restore the American people's trust in the CDC and other institutions charged with handling health care and other emergencies. In order to make himself look good, the President has waged a campaign to discredit Doctors Fauci and Redfield. Beating covid-19 is a team effort. It will take all of us, together, with those working to develop an effective response. That takes trust.

Next, we cannot expect to beat the pandemic if Americans cannot afford to be tested and treated after testing positive. Joe Biden will work with Congress, healthcare providers and the pharmaceuticals to eliminate cost barriers. U.S. workers are facing enough economic stress during this pandemic. We should not have to worry about going broke because we caught the virus.

Next, we have to protect those who are treating our sick. First responders (police officers, firemen, doctors, nurses and other health care workers) are still facing PPE shortages. Biden's plan includes producing equipment and gear first responders need to do their jobs safely, including these items being made right here in America.

Ending covid-19 requires action we all can take, like wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing, avoiding large gatherings; and, for those at risk, staying home as much as possible. This isn't rocket science. It's basic steps each of us can take to ensure the safety of ourselves and the ones we love. Wearing a mask should not be a Democrat or Republican thing. Both sides are dying. Joe's plan will bring us together to fight an American crisis.

I'd like to add something I say during every voting cycle, "This is the most important election of our lifetime." Don't let others decide your future. When you stay home, you are actually voting for the other guy.

Make a plan to vote on or before November 3rd. Please vote for Union-supported candidates.

We have been waiting for this opportunity for a long time.
Take advantage of it.

"GO BUILD OUR UNION!"



2020 District 2 Calendar of Events

JANUARY

- 8 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 9 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 16 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 1299 Hall, 11424 West Jefferson Avenue • River Rouge, MI
- 17 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Dist. 2 Southern MI Sub-Office, 20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300 • Taylor, MI
- 17-19 **AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil & Human Rights Conf.**
Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Ave Northwest • Washington, DC
- 21 **Town Hall Meeting**
Lucky Dogz Labor Temple, 157 S. Green Bay Road • Neenah, WI
- 21 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Kent Ionia Labor Hall, 918 Benjamin Avenue NE • Grand Rapids, MI
- 21 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 2-21 Hall, 1201 Sheridan Road • Escanaba, MI
- 22 **Town Hall Meeting**
Clarion Inn, 3640 East Cork Street • Kalamazoo, MI
- 22 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Old Morton Federal Credit Union, 516 Kosciusko • Manistee, MI
- 22 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
USW Local 2-148 Hall, 1201 Gillingham Road • Neenah, WI
- 23 **Town Hall Meeting**
Four Points by Sheraton - Milwaukee Airport, 5311 South Howell Avenue • Milwaukee, WI
- 24 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Milwaukee Labor Council Building, 633 S. Hawley Road • Milwaukee, WI
- 24 **WOS Quarterly Meeting**
Joann Lester Library, 100 Park Street • Nekeosha, WI

FEBRUARY

- 4 **Town Hall Meeting**
Eau Claire Labor Temple, 2233 Birch Street • Eau Claire, WI
- 6 **Town Hall Meeting**
Fraternal Order of Eagles, 1104 S. Oak Avenue, Marshfield, WI
- 11 **Town Hall Meeting**
Holiday Inn, 4079 US-10 • Ludington, MI
- 13 **Town Hall Meeting**
McRae Park Hall, 1301 N 2nd Ave, Alpena, MI
- 18 **Town Hall Meeting**
USW Local 4950 Hall, 1206 Baldwin Avenue • Negaunee, MI
- 25 **LM Review Session**
Milwaukee Labor Council Building, 633 S. Hawley Road • Milwaukee, WI
- 26 **LM Review Session**
Lucky Dogz Labor Temple, 157 S. Green Bay Road • Neenah, WI
- 27 **LM Review Session**
Kronenwetter Village Hall, 1582 Kronenwetter Drive • Kronenwetter, WI
- 28 **LM Review Session**
USW Local 2-21 Hall, 1201 Sheridan Road • Escanaba, MI

MARCH

- 2 **LM Review Session**
USW Local 12075 Hall, 3510 James Savage Road • Midland, MI
- 3 **LM Review Session**
Bungalow Inn, 1100 28th Street • Manistee, MI
- 4 **LM Review Session**
Clarion Inn, 3640 East Cork Street • Kalamazoo, MI
- 5 **LM Review Session**
USW District 2 Southern MI Sub-Office, 20600 Eureka Road, Suite 300 • Taylor, MI
- 10-12 **USW District 2 Collective Bargaining Training**
Four Points by Sheraton - Milwaukee Airport, 5311 South Howell Avenue • Milwaukee, WI
- 23-27 **CANCELLED & POSTPONED until April 2022**
District 2 Council Conference
Red Lion Hotel Paper Valley • 333 West College Avenue, Appleton, WI

MAY

- 3-8 **CANCELLED & POSTPONED until May 2021**
District 2 WOS Leadership Development Course (Levels I & II)
Zehnder's Splash Village Hotel & Waterpark, 1365 South Main Street • Frankenmuth, MI

OCTOBER

- 27 **Presidents Meetings (Michigan) 9:00 am (Eastern time)**
Presidents Meetings will be Virtual on-line.
- 27 **Presidents Meetings (Wisconsin) 1:00 pm (Central time)**
Presidents Meetings will be Virtual on-line.

NOVEMBER

- 3 **Election Day - United States**
- 17-18 **USW Virtual Education Conference**
2020 Virtual Education Conference: Smarter is Stronger
For more information, go to page 4

IMPORTANT NOTICES

SAVE THE TENTATIVE DATE
USW Collective Bargaining Training
is tentatively scheduled for
January 25-29, 2021
Blue Chip Casino and Conference Center
777 Blue Chip Drive - Michigan City, Indiana

All USW District 2 offices are now open. However, the guidelines listed below have been implemented as the health and safety of our members and staff continues to be our number one priority.

- Appointments are currently required. Please call your staff or the office to set up a meeting time.
- Face masks must worn inside all office areas at all times.
- Everyone will be required to sign in and out of the office.
- If you are not feeling well or have been in contact with a covid-19 positive person, please stay home for your safety and the safety of others.

We continue to be committed doing our part in preventing the further spread of coronavirus (Covid-19) while representing our members.



The schedule is designed to assist in planning this year's events. However, there is a possibility dates and/or locations could change due to unforeseen circumstances. Changes and corrections will be made ASAP and updated on the USW District 2 website.



United Steelworkers Education

2020 Virtual Education Conference: Smarter is Stronger November 17-18, 2020

- * More than 90 different sessions covering health and safety, bargaining, stewards rights and roles, organizing, building power through legislation...so much more,
- * Go to www.usw.org/educationconference for registration and more info,
- * Free for all USW members! Registration Code: **USW1942**

Five Weeks of Free On-line Classes Leading up to the Conference

(All Classes start at 7:30 PM Eastern Standard Time)

- * Week 1 (Wednesday, October 14) "We Are Steelworkers"
- * Week 2 (Wednesday, October 21) "The Union Difference"
- * Week 3 (Wednesday, October 28) "An Introduction to Collective Bargaining"
- * Week 4 (Wednesday, November 4) "Leading an Effective Local Union"
- * Week 5 (Wednesday, November 11) "Union Stewards 101"

Go to <https://education.usw.org/blog> to get the class registration links.

Everyday Education

The USW has a series of online education videos available for your use when and where works for you...on your computer, phone or tablet. Topics include investigating and writing grievances, FMLA, and contract interpretation.

Simply login to education.usw.org for more information



Stewards Corner: The USW's Steward Newsletter

Our new stewards' newsletter is available to all stewards and grievors. Go to www.usw.org/StewardsCorner to register to receive it in your email.

For more information about classes the education department is offering, please visit:
<https://www.usw.org/act/activism/education>

USW Activists Spotlight Election • *Thomas M. Conway, USW International President - October 20, 2020*

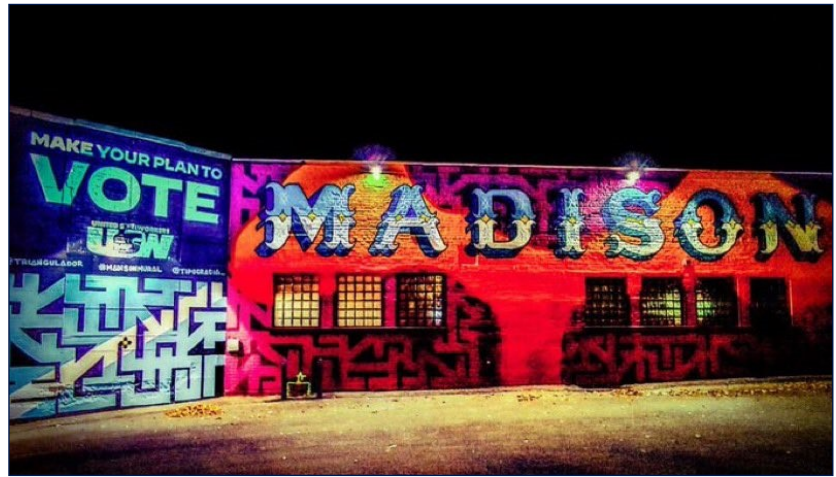
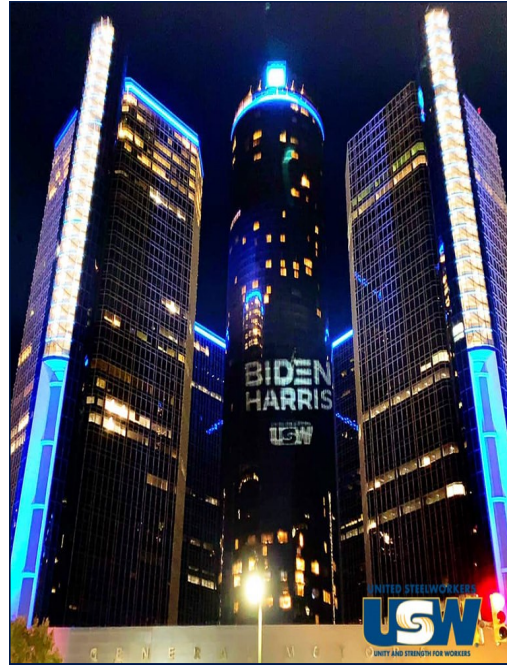
With the U.S. general election just two weeks away, I wanted to update you on an exciting project some of our activists have been pursuing to turn out the vote and call attention to the USW's endorsement of Joe Biden.

Six weeks ago, the union launched a multistate bat light tour spotlighting the importance of the election for workers and the need to make a plan to vote.

Some of you may know the bat light from the work of our strategic campaigns department calling for fair contracts.

The bat light is now traveling across battle ground states, calling attention to pressing issues at stake for workers in the 2020 election, including health care, retirement security, jobs and labor rights.

The bat light team, joined by rank-and-file members in each location, has been working incredibly hard the past few months, and everyone should be proud of all the "good trouble" they've started.



Check out more pictures of their handiwork at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/unitedsteelworkers/albums/72157715926632811/with/50482733182/> or follow them on Twitter @USWBat.

Finally, if you haven't already voted, please make your plan. I know many of you are helping with the election in other ways, and we're grateful for your hard work as well.

As ever, you can also continue to check in with usvoices.org for more election-related resources. Working people must keep fighting together until our leadership reflects our values and priorities.

In solidarity, Tom

A Steelworker makes the Case: Election is about Revitalizing Unions, Protecting Retirement - by Bruce Bostick, Peoples World

Here is why I am very enthusiastically supporting - along with my union, United Steelworkers, our retiree organization SOAR, ARA, our entire labor movement, and wide sections of our people - Joe Biden and Kamala Harris for president and vice president of our nation and urge all to do likewise.

Trump is attacking Social Security and retirement security. He favors a national anti-union "right-to-work" law. Most dangerously, he has made common cause with outright fascists, Nazis, and extreme racists and is destroying the democratic gains working people have fought so hard to win.

For anyone confused on these points, we need only to look to labor's history for lessons. Racist elements like the KKK, Proud Boys, and other white supremacists have always attacked and suppressed the rights of African-American working people; they've always committed inhuman violence; and they've always been the thugs used against union drives and picket lines. They and their ideology have long been used to divide us, always in the interests of our worst enemies. Working people have to stand against racism and division in all its forms and must defeat Trump to send those thugs back under the rocks they came out from.

In a Labor Day address in Harrisburg, Penn., back in September, Biden made it clear that he stands with us, working people, and plans to fight for our families and communities. He expanded on that position at the big UAW-organized plant in Warren, Mich., just days later, and has stayed on message going forward.

Declaring that he and Harris intend to be "the most pro-union administration in our nation's history," he went on to outline what he meant by that.

He stated that the "first step of the new administration will be to put in place a major federal jobs bill to rebuild our nation," to "rebuild our nation's crumbling infrastructure," using "the latest, state of the art, renewable energy" to do so.

Central to their program, he said, was passing a new labor law that will again make it possible for mass organizing campaigns by unions to organize unorganized workers into unions.

"In the '30s, when they passed the Wagner Act," Biden stated, "They didn't just 'allow' workers to organize, they *encouraged* them!" He and Harris will do this again, he insisted.

"We'll go after employers that regularly break labor law, and do it personally. We need to increase penalties and make sure they pay personally or are personally prosecuted!"

He stated that loss of retirement security was a huge problem his administration would work to correct. "We need to change corporate bankruptcy law in order to stop companies from stealing workers' pensions!" He spoke of the need to protect Social Security, pass the ProAct, and enact the Butch-Lewis Retirement Bill, which would limit the abuse of bankruptcy to steal workers' pensions.

When asked about companies moving work to low-wage, non-union areas globally, Biden pointed out that while Trump had promised to bring work back home, the practice of exporting jobs had actually increased dramatically during his administration.

Biden-Harris would fight this, he said, by putting in place "Buy American" requirements on federal work, as well as by putting a 10% tax on company profits from any work sent offshore.

Biden also called for a "national mask mandate" and putting medical professionals in charge of a national task force to combat COVID-19.

These positions outlined by Biden Harris are all ones that the AFL-CIO and the rest of organized labor have made priorities necessary to shift the balance of power away from big money at the top and back toward America's working families and communities.

We need real solutions to problems, not just band-aids to cover the cancers of inequality, closed shops, union busting, and racism. In other periods of great crisis, it wasn't electing a "great man" that solved problems. It was an active, fighting people's movement that combined with and pushed a good administration in the right direction.

It is possible to not just get rid of Trump (which is absolutely necessary), but the wide, active, and deep people's movement



Democratic presidential candidate, former Vice President Joe Biden, listens to Steelworkers discuss their priorities in the backyard of a home in Detroit, Sept. 9, 2020. | Patrick Semansky / AP

— continued on page 7 —

A Steelworker makes the Case: Election is about Revitalizing Unions, Protecting Retirement - by Bruce Bostick, Peoples World

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that is promising to fight for the issues Biden outlined makes big victories possible after Trump and the GOP are defeated. Things like a real national health care system, taxing the rich, real measures against institutional racism, policing reform, and other steps to meet people's needs can all be put on the agenda once the terrain of struggle shifts.

The Great Depression required a new Roosevelt administration, but also a massive unemployed movement and the new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) to push the New Deal administration and make things like Unemployment Insurance and Social Security a reality.

The 1960s saw the passing of historic civil rights legislation, the advance of women's rights, and more. All these were pushed by huge movements but also required the LBJ administration to sign them into law.

Today, our nation faces a crisis with multiple layers: economic depression, a global health pandemic, dangerous threats to democracy, and a system of institutionalized racism exposed for all to see.

We need to elect Biden-Harris and fight for the program outlined above. But we must also be ready to work like hell to fight and push the Biden-Harris government to pass it!

Then we will really have something to pass on to the next generations. A movement armed with a strong labor program, with Biden and Harris publicly standing for it, is what it's going to take. There are some who have said that Biden "isn't radical enough," that they'd have to "hold their noses" to vote for Biden-Harris. Well, whatever rings their bells, but for us union folks, working people, and retirees who've worked hard our entire lives only to have what we earned stolen from us, the decision is not a hard one to make.

Finally having people at the national level acknowledge and pledge to fight for what we have fought so long for is enough to have us standing up with our friends, neighbors, and co-workers in favor of Biden-Harris (with no disclaimers).



Vice President Joe Biden puts on a United Steelworkers hat at Pittsburgh's annual Labor Day parade in September, 2015. | Keith Srakocic/AP

USW Local 204 Donates Winter Coats and More - by Terri Parks



USW Local 204 in Alpena, Michigan, is at it again!

The local area Salvation Army is doing their coat give away next month, so members of Local 204 have stepped up and approved a budget to purchase brand new coats this year, creating the opportunity to buy 23 brand new coats to give to those in need along with hats, gloves and mittens.

Terri Parks, Local Union 204's Rapid Response Coordinator said, "This is a very important donation from our members as we all believe that no one should be cold in the winter months."

USW District 2 Rapid Response - Core Issue 3 - submitted by Sue Browne, Rapid Response Coordinator

Rapid Response is engaging in an educational series around our core issues. Below you will find Issue 3 focusing on Ensuring Affordable and Accessible Health Care. You can catch up on anything you missed and check out new information at:

<https://www.usw.org/act/activism/rapid-response/resources/usw-core-value-educational-series>



October 6, 2020

Ensuring Affordable and Accessible Health Care

USW Core Values Educational Series – Issue 3

The labor movement has always fought for affordable healthcare for workers and their families, both through collective bargaining and legislatively. But even with our ability to bargain, union members far too often must relinquish raises to sustain decent health insurance. In fact, in a membership survey earlier this year, USW members and retirees rated “affordable healthcare and prescription drugs” as their top issue.

Protecting the Affordable Healthcare Act (ACA)

The enactment of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 marked a key moment in expanding health care in America. While we’ve worked to perfect the bill in that time, others have repeatedly tried to repeal it in its entirety, gutting protections for USW members and retirees, and wreaking havoc on the healthcare of millions of American families. The Administration is currently arguing for the law to be overturned at the Supreme Court. This case will be heard shortly after the election. This would mean:

- **20 million People Would Lose Health Insurance** - About 20 million people who gained health insurance through the law, both through its expansion of Medicaid and through subsidized private plans on the “exchange,” would lose coverage if it is struck down. [The pandemic-related job losses mean that even more people are likely relying on ACA coverage now \(usw.to/3hn\)](#). States that expanded Medicaid, would also see particularly sharp spikes in the uninsured.
- **Pre-Existing Condition Protections Would be Gone** - The [Kaiser Family Foundation estimates \(usw.to/3hn\)](#) that almost 54 million Americans have a pre-existing condition that would lead to them being denied coverage if they could not get insurance through a job and had to try to buy on the individual market without the ACA’s protections. These folks are not statistics – they are our family, neighbors, and friends.
- **Kids Up to Age 26 Are No Longer Guaranteed Coverage** – If the ACA were struck down, the ability for parents to keep their kids on their insurance until age 26 would go away, and it would be up to each employer to decide whether to keep the provision for their health plan. We know what that means: concessions at the table to maintain what the law currently guarantees.
- **Lifetime and Annual Caps Would Return** – The ACA prohibits health plans from putting a lifetime or annual dollar limit on benefits you receive - an issue we would often see at the bargaining table. This was a game changer for those with high treatment costs associated with chronic illnesses like cancer and diabetes. Previous to the ACA, coverage could be terminated once the cap had been reached.
- **Retirees and Seniors Will Take a Hit** - The ACA reduces prescription drug costs when hitting the “doughnut hole.” Previously, when seniors hit this “hole,” they had to pay 100 percent of costs. Additionally, the ACA provides no-cost preventative screenings, a free wellness exam when joining Medicare, and protections against rising costs and age discrimination.

Whether it’s being able to keep our college aged children on our coverage, not having a lifetime cap on coverage, or worrying about how a pre-existing condition could affect coverage and affordability in the future – we know that there is much at stake [should the ACA be overturned by the Supreme Court in November \(usw.to/3ho\)](#).

(Click [HERE](#) to read other issues in our series on our webpage).

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USW District 2 Rapid Response - Core Issue 4 - submitted by Sue Browne, Rapid Response Coordinator

Rapid Response is engaging in an educational series around our core issues. Below you will find Issue 4 focusing on Ensuring Affordable and Accessible Health Care. You can catch up on anything you missed and check out new information at:

<https://www.usw.org/act/activism/rapid-response/resources/usw-core-value-educational-series>



October 8, 2020

Ensuring Affordable and Accessible Health Care

USW Core Values Educational Series – Issue 4

It's no surprise that affordable health care and prescription drugs was a top priority for our members when we surveyed them early this year. We know from bargaining outcomes that copays and deductibles are too high; prescription drugs cost too much; and some members, like too many Americans, avoid going to the doctor because they can't afford it – even with insurance coverage.

We Are Fighting for Health Care During the Pandemic.

In the wake of the coronavirus crisis, the U.S. has seen over [22 million people file for unemployment insurance \(usw.to/3hk\)](#) - tens of thousands of Steelworkers and their family members included. With health insurance tied to the employment of 55 percent of the American workforce, many newly unemployed and furloughed workers are being offered COBRA insurance coverage by their employers. However, the prohibitively high cost to maintain COBRA benefits is a significant financial burden for workers trying to preserve their vital healthcare coverage. [The Worker Health Coverage Protection Act \(H.R. 6514\), a piece of legislation the USW is actively supporting \(usw.to/3hL\)](#), would provide 100 percent federal financing to cover the full cost of COBRA premiums owed by workers who have lost their jobs, who are furloughed, or who have had their hours reduced as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

Advocacy on Healthcare Over the Last Few Years Has Focused on Affordability.

Repealing the Cadillac Tax - The legislation, which passed with bipartisan support, repeals a 40 percent excise tax on certain employer-sponsored health insurance plans. Many employers were using this tax as a reason to push higher costs onto employees. [Our union fought for years to have the tax repealed \(usw.to/3i1\)](#).

Protecting Families from Surprise Medical Bills – These are charges that occur when a patient receives care from an out-of-network provider in a situation where they are unable to choose other providers, such as emergency care or urgent medical transport. Recent studies show that these [surprise bills are common \(usw.to/3i2\)](#); many families experience substantial debt and even bankruptcy as a result of unreasonable charges for medical services. Our union has been advocating strongly for a legislative fix to this issue.

Working to Keep Prescription Drugs Affordable –The [PRICED Act \(usw.to/3i3\)](#) addresses healthcare costs and prescription drug prices by eliminating price gouging opportunities for “Big Pharma”. This legislation helps control the number one issue impacting our bargaining success – rising healthcare costs. Controlling the period of time that a pharmaceutical company can exclusively market new drugs, this will also save Medicare and the taxpayers \$7 billion over 10 years.

Keeping Healthcare Affordable for Retirees - [The Health Coverage Tax Credit \(HCTC\) \(usw.to/3i4\)](#) is a 72.5 percent credit for qualified displaced workers in the [Trade Adjustment Assistance \(TAA\) \(usw.to/3i5\)](#) program and those receiving benefits through the [Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation \(PBGC\) \(usw.to/3i8\)](#). The most expensive time for health benefits is between ages 55-64 before those close to retirement or in retirement qualify for Medicare. The credit almost expired last year but through advocacy by the USW Rapid Response and the USW Legislative & Policy department, we successfully [maintained this benefit for another year. \(usw.to/3i7\)](#)

(Click [HERE \(usw.to/CoreIssues\)](#) to read other issues in our series on our webpage).

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USW District 2 Rapid Response - Core Issue 5 - submitted by Sue Browne, Rapid Response Coordinator

Rapid Response is engaging in an educational series around our core issues. Below you will find Issue 5 focusing Protecting Retirement Security. You can catch up on anything you missed and check out new information at:

<https://www.usw.org/act/activism/rapid-response/resources/usw-core-value-educational-series>



October 15, 2020

Protecting Retirement Security
USW Core Values Educational Series – Issue 5

All workers have the right to retire with dignity and respect. In fact, retirement security that includes Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid was the [second highest rated issue in our "Your Union. Your Voice." survey \(usw.to/3ik\)](#). The USW has fought for decades to help pass meaningful legislation to protect workers' retirements. Given the direct link between government policy and how it can either help or hinder our retirement security, our union stays relentlessly engaged in those debates.

- **Protecting Retirement Savings During Bankruptcies** - Prior to 1974, if a company went bankrupt, workers had no recourse if their pensions disappeared. Our union fought for protections for pensions and ultimately was successful in helping enact the [Employee Retirement Income Security Act \(ERISA\) \(usw.to/3ic\)](#), the law that [established the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation \(usw.to/3id\)](#). ERISA was designed to protect retirement savings from mismanagement and abuse and clarify that the people in charge of those savings be held to a high standard – that is, they must act in the best interests of plan participants. It also requires transparency and accountability, ensuring that participants have access to information about their plans. Over the years, we have worked to ensure any updates to the law had our members' best interests in mind.
- **Safeguarding Social Security** - Social Security, much like a pension, operates on the promise that if workers defer wages (pay a payroll tax), it will be there when they retire. We have all heard the myth that Social Security will go bankrupt at some point in our lifetimes, [but this is simply not true \(usw.to/3ie\)](#). We do understand, however, that changes such as increasing the wage cap, would safeguard and shore up the fund. Recently, an [executive order \(usw.to/3if\)](#) was signed giving employers the option to allow workers who earn less than \$100,000 a temporary deferment (ending in January of 2021) on payroll taxes. There are some that even want to make this permanent. The catch is that workers will be expected to repay the deferred taxes owed, and [these taxes are the only source of funding for Social Security and Medicare \(usw.to/3ig\)](#). If the executive order were to be made permanent, Social Security as we know it would cease to exist, effectively breaking the promise and ensuring that workers never see the return on their investment.
- **Fighting to Protect Pensions** - When government decisions, bad trade policy, automation, and a financial crisis combined to create the perfect storm to throw some of our members' multiemployer pension plans into distress, the USW got to work to find a solution. [The Butch Lewis Act \(usw.to/3ih\)](#), a bipartisan piece of legislation emerged as the answer we could fight for. Butch Lewis creates a trust fund to make loans to qualified multiemployer pension plans that are in critical and declining status. These loans would be used to stabilize these plans and paid back over time, safeguarding the retirement security of millions of Americans. After years of Rapid Response pushing petitions, letters, phone calls, and meetings with legislators to educate them on the issue and urge their support, Butch Lewis was passed in the House in July 2019. Today Butch Lewis sits in the Senate Committee on Finance with [39 bipartisan cosponsors \(usw.to/3ij\)](#) waiting to be scheduled for a hearing. [We continue to urge the Senate to pass the Butch Lewis Act today \(usw.to/3ij\)!](#)



Retirement security remains a top priority for our union. We'll continue to show up for these fights!

(Click [HERE \(usw.to/CoreIssues\)](#) to read other issues in our series on our webpage).

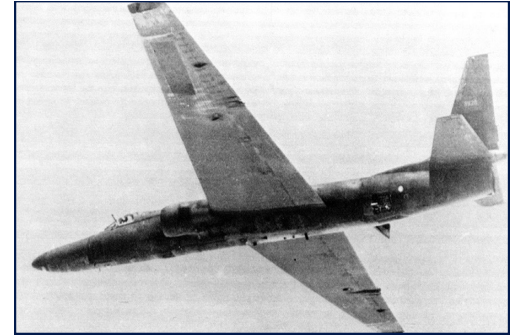
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This Month in History • JFK's Address on Cuban Missile Crisis Shocks the Nation • October 22, 1962 - by History.com



In a televised speech of extraordinary gravity, President John F. Kennedy announces on October 22, 1962 that U.S. spy planes have discovered Soviet missile bases in Cuba. These missile sites - under construction but nearing completion - housed medium-range missiles capable of striking a number of major cities in the United States, including Washington, D.C. Kennedy announced that he was ordering a naval "quarantine" of Cuba to prevent Soviet ships from transporting any more offensive weapons to the island and explained that the United States would not tolerate the existence of the missile sites currently in place. The president made it clear that America would not stop short of military action to end what he called a "clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace."

What is known as the Cuban Missile Crisis actually began on October 14, 1962 - the day that U.S. intelligence personnel analyzing U-2 spy plane data discovered that the Soviets were building medium-range missile sites in Cuba. The next day, President Kennedy secretly convened an emergency meeting of his senior military, political, and diplomatic advisers to discuss the ominous development. The group became known as ExCom, short for Executive Committee. After rejecting a surgical air strike against the missile sites, ExCom decided on a naval quarantine and a demand that the bases be dismantled and missiles removed. On the night of October 22, Kennedy went on national television to announce his decision. During the next six days, the crisis escalated to a breaking point as the world tottered on the brink of nuclear war between the two superpowers.



On October 23, the quarantine of Cuba began, but Kennedy decided to give Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev more time to consider the U.S. action by pulling the quarantine line back 500 miles. By October 24, Soviet ships en route to Cuba capable of carrying military cargoes appeared to have slowed down, altered, or reversed their course as they approached the quarantine, with the exception of one ship - the tanker Bucharest. At the request of more than 40 nonaligned nations, U.N. Secretary-General U Thant sent private appeals to Kennedy and Khrushchev, urging that their governments "refrain from any action that may aggravate the situation and bring with it the risk of war." At the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. military forces went to DEFCON 2, the highest military alert ever reached in the postwar era, as military commanders prepared for full-scale war with the Soviet Union.

On October 25, the aircraft carrier USS Essex and the destroyer USS Gearing attempted to intercept the Soviet tanker Bucharest as it crossed over the U.S. quarantine of Cuba. The Soviet ship failed to cooperate, but the U.S. Navy restrained itself from forcibly seizing the ship, deeming it unlikely that the tanker was carrying offensive weapons. On October 26, Kennedy learned that work on the missile bases was proceeding without interruption, and ExCom considered authorizing a U.S. invasion of Cuba. The same day, the Soviets transmitted a proposal for ending the crisis: The missile bases would be removed in exchange for a U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba.



The next day, however, Khrushchev upped the ante by publicly calling for the dismantling of U.S. missile bases in Turkey under pressure from Soviet military commanders. While Kennedy and his crisis advisers debated this dangerous turn in negotiations, a U-2 spy plane was shot down over Cuba, and its pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson, was killed. To the dismay of the Pentagon, Kennedy forbid a military retaliation unless any more surveillance planes were fired upon over Cuba. To defuse the worsening crisis, Kennedy and his advisers agreed to dismantle the U.S. missile sites in Turkey but at a later date, in order to prevent the protest of Turkey, a key NATO member.

On October 28, Khrushchev announced his government's intent to dismantle and remove all offensive Soviet weapons in Cuba. With the airing of the public message on Radio Moscow, the USSR confirmed its willingness to proceed with the solution secretly proposed by the Americans the day before. In the afternoon, Soviet technicians began dismantling the missile sites, and the world stepped back from the brink of nuclear war. The Cuban Missile Crisis was effectively over. In November, Kennedy called off the blockade, and by the end of the year all the offensive missiles had left Cuba. Soon after, the United States quietly removed its missiles from Turkey.

The Cuban Missile Crisis seemed at the time a clear victory for the United States, but Cuba emerged from the episode with a much greater sense of security. The removal of antiquated Jupiter missiles from Turkey had no detrimental effect on U.S. nuclear strategy, but the Cuban Missile Crisis convinced a humiliated USSR to commence a massive nuclear buildup. In the 1970s, the Soviet Union reached nuclear parity with the United States and built intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of striking any city in the United States.

A succession of U.S. administrations honored Kennedy's pledge not to invade Cuba, and relations with the communist island nation situated just 80 miles from Florida remained a thorn in the side of U.S. foreign policy for more than 50 years. In 2015, officials from both nations announced the formal normalization of relations between the U.S and Cuba, which included the easing of travel restrictions and the opening of embassies and diplomatic missions in both countries.

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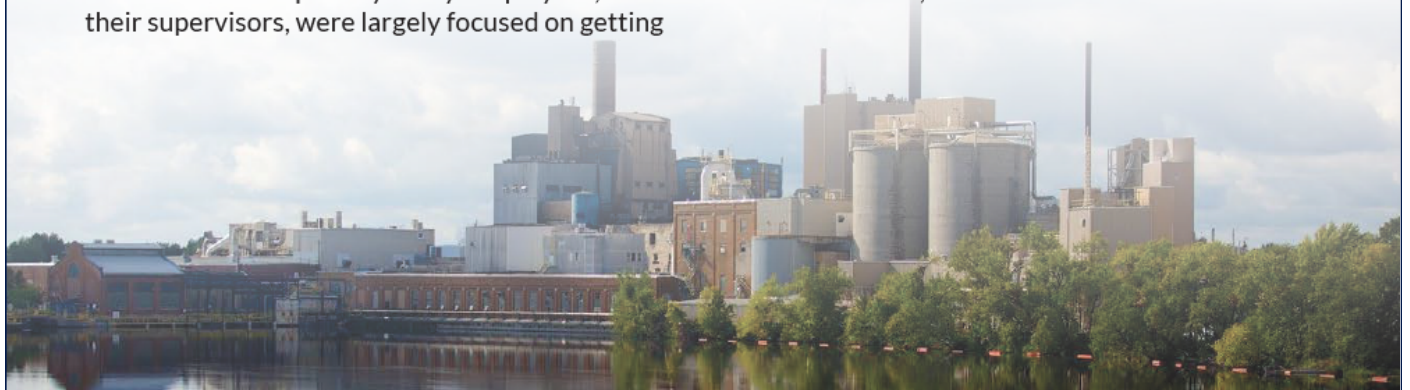


HER PERSPECTIVE: Celebrating women making a difference in our industry

Meet Tammy Winker:
 USW Safety Advocate
 Domtar's Nekoosa Pulp & Paper Mill (Wisconsin)

Meet Tammy Winker just once and you get it immediately. Her infectious smile. The pride she has in having raised two wonderful, now adult, children as a hard-working single Mom. The glee she exhibits when sharing her stories of having supplemented her income helping others as a local paramedic. But her passion is never more evident than when she talks about her almost 3 decades in the mill business and the inner sense of good she especially feels in her latest role. (OK, she seems equally passionate about the Green Bay Packers going back to the Super Bowl.) We asked her to take a few minutes out of her busy schedule to share her thoughts by answering a few questions. She obliged. You'll certainly be glad she did.

- 1. What is it like being a female in the paper mill business? Has it been difficult to earn respect in an industry that has long been male-dominated? For me, it's been great. I was able to earn respect from my peers right from the start. I set out with the goal of being a team player, willing to learn and was ready to work hard from day one. I think my co-workers also saw in me what we see in so many women... empathy, a caring attitude and a willingness to listen and learn. In 2011, I became the first woman ever to machine tend on the N9 machine at our mill.*
- 2. You joined our industry in the early 1990's. How has it changed over the years? I'm glad you asked. Safety is much more of a priority today. Employees, and their supervisors, were largely focused on getting*
- the job done back then. Safety was unfortunately more of an afterthought in those early years. That is certainly not the way it is today.*
- 3. What roles have you played in your career? How did you end up in your current position? Like many of us, I started out as a laborer, doing whatever it took. I advanced to various positions on the machines. I asked to be a company first responder and a member of the emergency response team. I jumped at the opportunity to become our USW Local 59 Safety Advocate. I'm the second person to occupy its 24-month term and the first woman. It was a comprehensive interview process and I prevailed. When it ends, I will return as a machine tender.*



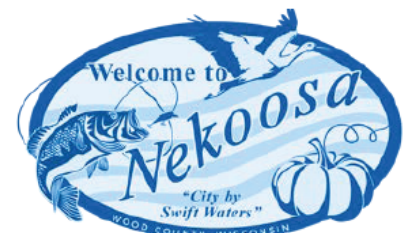
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“Tammy cares deeply about safety because she cares deeply about people. A safety advocate in Nekoosa, as well as a USW/Domtar joint subcommittee member, Tammy demonstrates her commitment to educating and influencing her co-workers about health and safety each and every day.”

...Paul Bierley, Senior Manager of Corporate Health and Safety/Domtar’s Pulp and Paper Division.

4. *What made you want to transition from operations to safety?* It fits who I am perfectly. I’ve always loved helping people. As a person who wants to make a difference, I love listening and being a voice as an official liaison to management. Educating others on proper procedures keeps me learning which I really like. Conducting 4 official safety meetings a month keeps me at the top of my game.
5. *What has been your greatest on-the-job challenge?* There is always so much to learn if you want to stay current. There are also two natural challenges every mill faces. The first is convincing and requiring experienced people to break some old habits and commit to learning and executing newer, safer ways. The other is what we call “green on green.” That is when less experienced people find themselves training new people. However, at Domtar, we take both of those challenges head-on and are continuously working to improve upon them.
6. *What communications vehicles work best for you when it comes to educating your team?* Some old-fashioned methods still work extremely well. One-on-one talks with team members. Always being visible and approachable on the floor. Consistently communicating with supervisors and upper management to share concerns. And taking advantage of the daily morning meeting...to name a few.
7. *What specific ideas, programs or tips would you recommend to maintain a 24/7/365 culture of safety first?* You can never be overeducated on safety or procedures. Lead by example. Identify a potential concern EVERY time you might see one. Let people know that sharing safety concerns or potential hazards is valued and not shunned. Our company has also run a very impactful “I work safely for...” program where employees’ families were shown on monitors around the mill. It has been extremely well received.
8. *Can you cite an example of safety improvement that you, your team and your company are proud of?* I feel great about the way the entire Domtar team came together to work with the city to fund greater traffic safety initiatives at the main entrance to the mill. It signifies our team unity. I also personally appreciate the installation of TV monitors that now minimize potential hazards in blind corners.
9. *Is there anything else you’d like to share with other members of the pulp and paper community in general?* One quote has stuck with me since I first heard it. “Safety is a journey with no end.” Always be ready to stand up for your own safety...and that of every employee, contractor or visitor.



Tammy closed our interview with the same effervescence and passion. “I am and we all are very fortunate that Domtar values safety the way they do. That’s clear. My only disappointment is that my 2-year term as a Safety Advocate will be ending soon. But as you’ve probably figured out...I’ll still find more ways to help keep our team as safe as possible.” All of us at PPSA are absolutely sure that she will.



MESSAGE FROM PITTSBURGH



Thomas M. Conway, International President

Posted: October 15, 2020 • page 1 of 2

Hanging by a Thread

Tom Michels worked 31 years at LTV's iron ore mine in northern Minnesota - and had already started making retirement plans - when the company's bankruptcy wiped out his job and most of his hard-earned pension.

Michels took a series of odd jobs to make ends meet until he became eligible for the Social Security benefits that now enable the 71-year-old to buy food, cover health care costs and even travel a little with his wife, Vicky.

Yet because of Donald Trump, Michels' retirement hangs by a thread. If Trump destroys Social Security, as he threatened to do, Michels and millions of other Americans will be cast into poverty with little hope of ever bouncing back.

Some will have no choice but return to the work force and toil until they die. Others, too frail to work and lacking other resources to pay mounting bills, would lose everything they spent their lifetimes building.

"I hate to even think about what's going to happen if he's reelected," observed Michels, a former member of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 4108 whose income, without Social Security, would fall to just several hundred dollars a month.

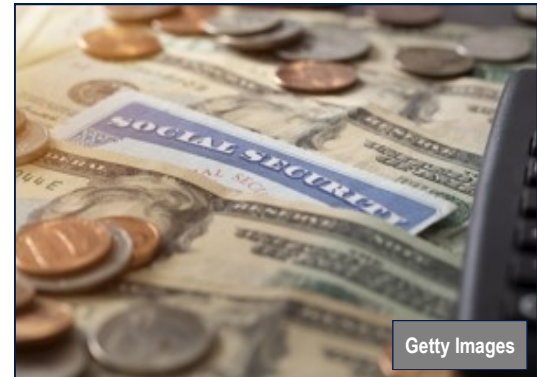
"Social Security is not an entitlement. It's something we bought and paid for. Every hour we worked, we were paying for Social Security," Michels said, adding Trump has no right to deprive retirees of benefits they earned.

Because of the country's aging population, Social Security next year will spend more money on benefits for retirees than it takes in through workers' payroll taxes. Many beneficiaries already struggle because payment amounts set by the government fail to keep up with health care costs.

But instead of shoring up this popular and essential program, Trump wants to kill it.

He repeatedly proposed cutting Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income, which provide crucial assistance to Americans no longer able to provide for themselves and their families.

This past winter, just as the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Trump expressed his desire to take up so-called entitlement reform if reelected. Astute retirees like Michels understand that is code for cutting programs like Social Security and Medicare.



Getty Images

Then, in August, Trump proposed eliminating payroll taxes under the guise of leaving a few more dollars in the paychecks of Americans struggling to weather the COVID-19 recession.

However, payroll taxes fund Social Security, and cutting off that revenue stream would destroy the program within just a few years. Trump tried to dupe Americans into thinking that abolishing the payroll tax would be good for them.

"It sounded attractive, the way he put it," noted Michels, president of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Chapter 33-4 "But in reality, it's not very attractive. There'd be nothing left."

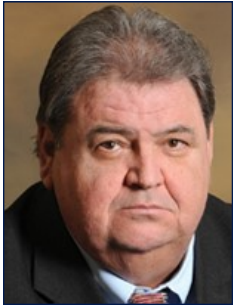
Trump's attacks on Social Security come as Americans depend on the program more than ever.

Greedy corporations no longer provide the pension programs that once supported retirees through their golden years. Even employers that promised pensions, like those employing Michels and fellow SOAR activist Scott Marshall, often abandon their obligations through bankruptcies or other sneaky maneuvers.



Tom Michels

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MESSAGE FROM PITTSBURGH



Thomas M. Conway, International President

Posted: October 15, 2020 • page 2 of 2 - continued from page 14

Hanging by a Thread

Marshall worked for a glass company, a rail car manufacturer, a steelmaker and a paper mill, each offering pension plans. "They all shut down before I could qualify for a pension," explained Marshall, who lives in Chicago. "Social Security is the only retirement income I have."

Marshall, a vice president of SOAR, noted that another 1.3 million Americans belong to multiemployer pension plans facing insolvency because of investment losses, industry consolidation and other factors over which workers had no control.

The Democratic-controlled House last year passed a commonsense bill, the Butch Lewis Act, that would make low-interest loans to these struggling plans and ensure they continue meeting their obligations to members. But Trump and his Senate Republican cronies refuse to support the measure, even though some of the troubled plans will run out of money in just a few years.

The uncertain future of these plans makes members' Social Security benefits all the more important.

During his 2016 campaign, Trump promised to protect Social Security. If that were truly his goal, he would ensure that millionaires and billionaires, like himself, finally begin contributing their fair share to the program.

Americans pay 6.2 percent of their wages to Social Security. But the government only applies the tax to the first \$137,700 of a person's income. That means millionaires and billionaires pay nothing on most of their fortunes and effectively slide by on a tax rate far below the 6.2 percent ordinary citizens pay.

Abolishing the income cap would ensure the long-term viability of Social Security. And that would only be fair because, as Marshall noted, workers created the wealth that America's rich enjoy. They earned dignified retirements in return.

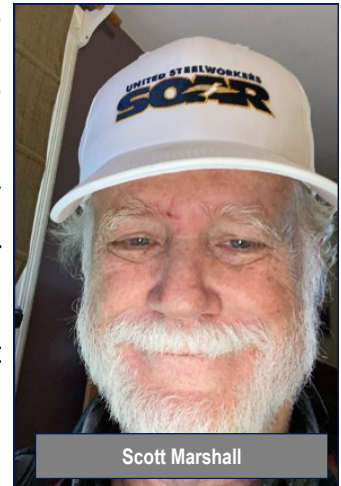
But, instead of providing for ordinary Americans, Trump gives handouts to the 1-percenters. While demanding cuts in the Social Security programs protecting disabled and ill workers, he signed the 2017 tax giveaway for millionaires and corporations.

"I know people who voted for Trump originally and are now backing off of him for just that reason," Marshall said. "They totally get what he's trying to do to Social Security. They're not going to put up with that."

After losing their livelihoods and pensions, Michels said, he and his colleagues looked in vain for jobs providing wages and working conditions comparable to what the USW ensured they received at LTV.

Only when they became eligible for Social Security did most of his co-workers regain a measure of financial stability. If Trump strips that away now, Michels said, many LTV retirees would be unable even to afford health care.

"It would be devastating," he said.



Scott Marshall



The coronavirus pandemic has impacted the lives of millions of working people and our families. Go to the AFL-CIO Website or <https://aflcio.org/covid-19/state-resources>

Select your state to find the resources, programs and benefits available in your area to assist you during this crisis.

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