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**Biden's Big Infrastructure Bill Boosts U.S. Jobs**



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WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

**TOP STORY**

# Around the Country, Workers are Taking Charge and Eyeing Unions

By Fred Bruning  
Graphic Communicator

**K**urt Reissenweber says something's up. People ask him about unions – and the advantages of membership – regularly these days and the president of GCC/IBT District Council 4 is glad to accommodate.

Reissenweber notes the hard-won gains made by organized labor over the years – an impressive list that includes paid vacations, pensions, unemployment insurance, overtime pay, child labor laws, family leave and collective bargaining, to mention only a few.

With polls showing public approval of organized labor on the increase and a spirit of independence evident in the nation's pandemic-weary work force, labor leaders like Reissenweber think it is time to seize the moment and exercise union clout.

"Unions have more leverage than they've had for years," he said. "We have a foothold now and should use it."

Around the country, workers are making clear they are weary of low pay, long hours and little voice in their own futures. With work stoppages, strong language and a remarkable number of strikes – so many in October that the month became known as "Striketober" – otherwise uncomplaining employees appear to have found their groove.

"We have definitely seen workers demanding more than ever before," said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3.

Can unions capitalize on worker dissatisfaction so profound that more than 4 million people quit their jobs in one month last fall? Labor leaders hope so.

"There is a new militancy out there," IBT general president James Hoffa told the Wall Street Journal.

*continues on PAGE 8*



**BTF notices on unpaid beneficiaries, unpaid benefits**

PAGE 16

**O'Brien-Zuckerman Win IBT Election**

PAGE 5





## Been Long Time Coming But it Looks Like Unions Have Found Their Groove

YEAR-END REVIEWS ARE COMMON IN the news media – attempts to recall and give perspective to the most important events of the year.

High on 2021 lists were covid, the economy, inflation, supply chain, fall elections.

Here's a major story largely overlooked:

Unions found their groove.

Around the country, workers demanded better pay and working conditions and walked off the job when management proved stubbornly unresponsive.



At 14 John Deere facilities in the mid-west, 10,000 members of the United Auto Workers went on strike. In Hollywood, a strike by 60,000 production employees was narrowly averted. Crews at the Kellogg cereal company stopped working and more than 2,000 staff members at a Buffalo hospital hit the streets.

Even in tiny Bradford, Pennsylvania, shift workers at the local McDonald's quit in protest over long hours and low pay. There were similar work actions at a Burger King in Lincoln, Nebraska, and a Del Taco in Circleville, Ohio.

Weary of slow wage growth and grueling schedules, workers around the country are asserting themselves and putting management on notice that the power balance is shifting. Public approval of organized labor has shot up, too, and non-union workers increasingly say they want representation, a voice in their future, and a chance to vote on wages and working conditions.

"There is a new militancy out there," IBT General President James P. Hoffa told the Wall Street Journal. "I do think it's an opportunity for labor."

Strengthening the resolve of workers are conditions that

# UNION STRONG UNION PROUD

barely could have been imagined a couple of years ago. Many companies are scrambling for help in a job market that remains tight because of covid and its aftermath. During the pandemic, millions of workers reassessed their lives and began looking for better alternatives.

Some are still wary about re-entering the workplace. Others have child care issues not easily resolved. And many nearing retirement have enlisted in what has become known as The Great Resignation – just deciding to scale down, kick back and bid good-bye to the boss and his time clock.

At the GCC/IBT, there have been families negatively impacted by covid. We have had severe illnesses and deaths. My heart goes out to all families affected.

In general, members have lost little work. Our skilled negotiators have achieved solid contracts, and we have avoided walkouts and work stoppages.

But we know this is a rare moment, as General President Hoffa notes.

Workers haven't had this kind of clout for years – nor a president as labor-friendly as Joe Biden.

No politician is perfect. But let's be clear: Biden is a great ally – as opposed to the billionaire business tycoon who preceded him – and the \$1 trillion infrastructure plan Democrats enacted will provide thousands of good-paying union jobs.

As the economy rebounds, we expect growth in the print industry. Our job at the national and local levels of the GCC/IBT is to stay focused, keep working hard, and organize, organize, organize.

Our Teamster partners are showing the same resolve. Sean O'Brien and Fred Zuckerman, elected by mail ballot in November to the posts of general president and general secretary-treasurer, have pledged to seize the moment and make the IBT an even more powerful force.

"Employers and politicians are on notice – the Teamsters union is back," O'Brien said. "Fighting for workers is a full contact sport. We call on every Teamster to put your helmet on and buckle your chinstraps because the fight begins today."

Unions built the middle class in America. Remarkable circumstances are providing a rare opportunity to expand our influence – and membership. We must not let the chance go by.

Happy 2022, one and all. Let's make it a year to remember. ■

## OUTLOOK

JAMES P. HOFFA TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT

## Much has been Achieved but Still More to Do

IF WORKERS AND THEIR ALLIES want to protect the gains they earned at the federal and state level last year, it is not too early to start thinking about the 2022 election.

In fact, it is essential.

Without legislative backing, all the good intentions of President Joe Biden and Congressional Democrats become just words. They, and the hardworking Americans who will benefit from these measures, need votes to make them a reality.

Much already has been accomplished by the Biden Administration.

Democrats in Congress boosted faltering multi-employer pension plans, saving the nest eggs of some 1 million hardworking Americans who otherwise would have faced substantial cuts.

That same legislation – the American Rescue Plan – provided more dollars for Occupational Safety and Health Administration enforcement during the coronavirus pandemic; granted states and localities funds to avoid mass layoffs that would have worsened



the recession; and supplied backing for transit agencies, airports, airlines and Amtrak.

So what's at stake?

The ability to win approval for great legislation like the Biden administration's historic infrastructure bill that will bring the United States more fully into the 21st century. Better roads, rails, bridges, water systems and power grids are paramount for not only job creation, but a better way of life.

And there is so much more to do. Passage of the Protect the Right to Organize (PRO) Act would strengthen the 86-year-old National Labor Relations Act so workers seeking to organize a union and negotiate higher wages and better benefits will be protected. Workers deserve a safe workplace, the ability to stand together and negotiate better working conditions, and to live a middle-class lifestyle.

Workers can continue to shape policy that will help the vast majority of families in this country. But it requires getting the word out to friends and family about what is at stake. Showing up and electing pro-worker people to office is how hardworking Americans can flourish in the years to come. ■



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## Pandemic Continues Amid Signs of Hope and Resilience

YEAR THREE.

The world is moving toward another year of covid-19 and it is reasonable to wonder if the pandemic will end, and when?

Stark truth: Not any time soon with vaccination rates far behind what health experts say are necessary to knock out the virus once and for all.



That is why GCC/IBT leaders at the local and international levels continue to urge members to put aside doubts and get vaccinated – booster shot, included.

As Dawn Hobbs reports on Page 4, there was a covid outbreak at a GCC/IBT shop in Michigan that underlined the need for workplace safety protocols.

Standards must be the subject of negotiations between management and the union but it is in everyone's interest that sensible protections be in place.

Companies should make certain the workplace is secure and employees must do their part by getting the necessary shots and wearing a mask when working inside and at close quarters.

"Unions are supposed to be about collective action – and literally putting on a mask to protect your union brother and sister should be relatively simple, as should company oversight and enforcement," Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3 told Hobbs.

In a separate Page 4 story, Hobbs examines supply chain problems and the impact of worker shortages on labor-management relations. So difficult is it to find workers in some cases that employers are offering existing workers hefty bonuses to recruit others – a remarkable situation, union officials said.

Supply and worker shortages connect to another surprising story – the sudden increase of union "clout" (Page 1).

Though union membership has been stalled for years, covid-related employment disruption has prompted millions of workers to reassess their circumstances, confront bosses and, in many cases, seek union representation.

Labor officials sense this may be a moment of rare potential – perhaps the beginning of a union renewal that can reverse decades of worrisome losses.

Now the idea is to make the most of the opportunity, leaders say.

"Unions have more leverage than they've had for years," he said. "We have a foothold now and should use it," said Kurt Reissenweber, president of GCC/IBT District Council 4.

That can-do spirit was echoed by Sean O'Brien, who won the IBT's fall election and, in March, will succeed James Hoffa, who is retiring as Teamsters general president after two decades. (Story, Page 5)

O'Brien, and running mate, Fred Zuckerman, campaigned on a platform of new ideas and aggressive organizing – with Amazon a prime target.

"Employers and politicians are on notice – the Teamsters union is back," said O'Brien, president of IBT Local 25, Boston. "Fighting for workers is a full contact sport. We call on every Teamster to put your helmet on and buckle your chinstraps because the fight begins today."

Steve Sullivan, president of GCC/IBT Local 3-N, Boston, knows O'Brien and said the man soon to lead the Teamsters is a high energy, no-nonsense guy who will demand plenty of himself and everyone else. "There's no standing on the sidelines," Sullivan said.

That kind of can-do spirit is essential to success – in union ranks, and national politics, too.

President Joe Biden, perhaps the most union-friendly chief executive since Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has had a tough year – covid, vaccine resistance, inflation, relentless right-wing harassment.

But Biden is undaunted. He backed the American Rescue Plan to help struggling families early in 2021 and, with Democrats, put together a \$1 trillion infrastructure package that passed with bipartisan support. (Story, Page 10)

The bill will produce millions of jobs – many of them in union sectors – and finance repairs and public works projects long overdue.

"Joe Biden has been a friend of unions throughout his political career and this bill shows his commitment to organized labor and working people," said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman.

These are tough times, for sure, but – in union ranks and beyond – we have solid, respectable leaders in place. They deserve our backing and loyalty. Time to buckle up and move forward to better days. ■

COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

## Back to the Future Via Brave 'New World' Work Stoppage

The corporate hierarchy has long tried to diminish labor activism in the United States by insisting that strikes and other workplace tactics have never had broad support or impact because they are fundamentally un-American.

Corporatists cluck that from the get-go America's cultural ethic has been grounded in veneration of individualism, appreciation for the financial blessings of the corporate order, and rejection of collectivism.

These self-serving fictionalizers seem unaware of a momentous labor event at America's very start: The Jamestown Artisans Strike of 1619.

So, I invite you to take a quick trip with me, back some 400 years to America's future, to witness this bold work stoppage organized in the very first permanent English settlement in North America.

We start in 1606, when King James awarded a royal charter to a private British corporation to possess the land and exploit the resources along a vast swath of Virginia's coast in "The New World" – which, of course, was the old world to thousands of Native Americans.

Things went horribly awry in a hurry, threatening the imminent collapse of the business venture. It turns out that too many of the settlers were British gentlemen seeking "adventure," and had no practical skills and even less willingness to do the labor.

Luckily, there was Poland.

Captain John Smith, the English mercenary who wrangled a leadership role in the new settlement, knew that skilled craftsmen could be, as a contemporary writer reported, "fetched ... for small wages," to work as free men in the colony and so escape near-slavery in Poland.

Smith recruited 11 of these artisans, skilled in glass blowing, pitch and tar making, turpentine distillation, soap making, timbering, well-digging, and shipbuilding. The Poles saved the Virginia Company's venture. The necessities they made – and profits from exporting them – stabilized the Jamestown economy.

By 1619, the settlement had grown to a few hundred colonists, and the corporation and crown allowed them to form a lawmaking assembly of "freely elected" representatives. The resulting Virginia House of Burgesses was the first elected government in British America.

Democracy! Well, sort of.

To vote or to be elected, you had to be (1) a landowner; (2) a male; and (3) an Englishman. Numbers 1 and 3 disqualified the Poles. After all, skilled as they were, they were



still just landless foreigners, presumed to have no ability or interest in the higher art of governance.

One can only imagine then, the open-mouthed astonishment of the British gentlemen when they heard a sharp outcry from these laborers that amounted to: "No Vote, No Work!"

While details are scarce, historic records of the Virginia Company confirm that the artisans did indeed go on strike – and the bigwigs in London and Jamestown realized they were in a pinch.

The owners' lust for profits quickly overcame their disdain for worker rights.

On July 21, 1619, the corporation declared the Poles to be Englishmen for purposes of voting, officially decreeing them "enfranchised, and made as free as any inhabitant there whatsoever." ■

Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes the *Hightower Lowdown*, a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fight by America's ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Annual subscription rates for the *Hightower Lowdown*: \$10, digital; \$15, print. Information at [Hightowerlowdown.org](http://Hightowerlowdown.org)



# New Calls for Shop Safety As Covid Fears Continue

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to the Communicator

As the covid pandemic persists into another year, GCC/IBT leaders renewed their call for strict workplace safety practices on the part of management and employees amid news of a covid outbreak at a shop in Michigan that drew OSHA intervention and threatened to temporarily shut down the operation.

At least 12 employees from WestRock, a packaging facility in Battle Creek, tested positive for the coronavirus in early December – a “bad situation” that led to fears of a temporary plant shutdown, one union leader said.

Alarmed by the unremitting threat of the delta covid variant and newer omicron strain, local officials and national GCC/IBT figures urged union members to get vaccinated and wear masks on the job even if employers have not imposed recommended anti-virus protocols.

“Unions are supposed to be about collective action – and literally putting on a mask to protect your union brother and sister should be relatively simple, as should company oversight and enforcement,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3, which represents West Rock.

With indications the omicron variant will spread widely, experts say it is more important than ever to be vaccinated – a position GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman has emphasized since the life-saving injections became available.

“Everyone who is able to get vaccinated has the duty to do so in order to protect those who are medically unable or too young to get vaccinated,” Freeman said last year.

Concerns over workplace safety increased late last year as the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals – dominated, 2-1, by Republican-appointed judges – considered a challenge

to a Biden administration order requiring U.S. businesses with 100 or more workers to impose vaccine mandates or weekly testing.

The order – intended to become effective Jan. 4 – would be monitored by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, but GOP-led states questioned the agency’s authority. Lawyers for the White House and Republican were to file arguments by Dec. 10.

In the meantime, GCC/IBT leaders continue to back vaccine and face covering safety standards but make clear any regimen sought by employers must be negotiated and that failure to comply will result in an unfair labor practice charge.

“Most employers are holding back to see what happens with the OSHA court case,” Castro said. “But I think most don’t want to do the mandate and if they do weekly testing, we have to negotiate who is going to pay for it.”

Whatever bargaining issues emerge, leaders insist safety remain a top priority as new covid cases are confirmed at GCC workplaces.

At West Rock – where OSHA is investigating a cluster linked to a single employee after Thanksgiving – management is scrambling to do contact tracing but is not testing the entire plant.

“They are trying to avoid a shutdown,” Castro said in early December. “We already had eight go out earlier this week and another four today, and as results of contact tracing come in, numbers are likely to get worse.”

Weariness with covid restrictions are evident, Castro said – a significant worry.

“There’s fatigue in some of our folks and they just don’t care anymore and aren’t wearing their masks,” he said. “And then there’s sloppiness and management not insisting people put their masks on and adhere to safety protocols.”



OSHA VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

In addition to the West Rock cluster, Castro said there are scattered cases at other area shops, including one that required a worker be hospitalized.

The spread of covid – accelerated as cold weather prompted more indoor activity – varies geographically. Midwestern states like Michigan have been hit hard while most southern states and areas in the far west fared better as of press time.

No matter the infection rate, safety protocols are essential. Joe Inemer, president of District Council 9, Philadelphia, said that while GCC shops in his area are not imposing vaccine mandates, employers are insisting that workers wear masks.

“So far, it’s been working, but we’ll see with this expected winter surge and the omicron variant,” Inemer said.

On the other side of the country, Ritchey said there has been a slight uptick in cases at GCC shops, but nothing resembling a surge.

“We represent over 6,000 members and at our large plants, we always have one or two out on covid,” said Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of District Council 2. “For the district council as a whole, we’ve been averaging about 100 people per month.”

While any mandatory safety regulations aimed at fighting covid were subject to negotiation, Ritchey said, he urged workers to protect themselves and others. “We support being safe.”

# What’s Happened to All the Workers?

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to the Communicator

The owner of Webb Communications, a GCC/IBT shop in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, sits in his office every day surrounded by stacks of flat screen televisions.

“I walked into his office and saw all of these TV sets piled up and asked what was going on,” said Joe Inemer, president of GCC/IBT District Council 9. “He said he was going to give them to employees who find new hires – but he can’t give them away.”

The Webb executive’s dilemma is increasingly familiar. “He’s been trying like heck to bring people in, but he can’t get people to work,” Inemer said.

At Quad Graphics in nearby Chalfont, management is offering \$1,500 for recruiting a worker – and paying the new employee a signing bonus of the same amount. If the person remains on the job for more than 90 days, Quad will pay \$1,500 more to each.

“But not one employee has taken him up on his offer,” Inemer said. “That’s how bad it is.”

The nationwide worker shortage and subsequent supply chain debacle has many companies scrambling to meet consumer demand – frequently without adequate material and at a higher cost – and could have an impact on union workers if shops are forced to curtail operations.

“I got a call the other day from the owner of Mercantile Press in Wilmington, Delaware, and he’s down to his last toner for his digital press,” he said. “When that last toner runs out, his press will just sit there and he’ll have to turn down orders.”

Operators are even running out of paper – a concern for print industry union leaders.

“Some of the other small shops are having a hard time



WORKWAVE VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

getting paper or they have to get heavier stock and it’s costing them more money,” Inemer said.

The Graphic Communicator has encountered similar issues. Supply chain problems demanded that the final edition of 2021 be published on stock not ordinarily used. “It’s remarkable,” said Dennis Murphy, a production specialist at Kelly Companies, the Maryland-based firm that processes the Communicator.

On the West Coast, worker shortages are common at union shops.

“Employers are offering incentives for new hires and we’ve bargained to get \$500 bonuses for those who stuck around during covid,” said the DC2 secretary-treasurer Clark Ritchey. Still, he said, there are at least 400 job openings. “Nobody can hire anybody right now.”

While some companies can’t find workers, others are struggling with higher costs – the same problem Inemer found on the other side of the country.

“Companies can’t meet customer demands because

there are shortages of product, even at our large shops like International Paper, WestRock and Packaging Corporation of America and what comes in is at a higher cost,” Ritchey said. “I’m hoping by the first or second quarter of next year all of this will change.”

Economists blame the pandemic for supply chain disruptions and worker shortages.

Many workers reevaluated their lives while at home during shutdowns, experts say. Millions of Americans left their jobs fearing covid in the workplace or facing child care issues. Others sought more rewarding work or better working conditions.

“We have definitely seen workers demanding more than ever before,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3.

As an example, Castro mentioned a recent development at Pollard Banknote Limited in Ypsilanti, Michigan. In 2009, employees lost a provision that allowed 40 hours pay for a 36-hour work week if they arrived for work punctually.

In recent negotiations, Pollard restored the old arrangement.

“There was a huge cry to get that back,” Castro said. “The members held together and got it. They wanted what they lost and they got it because of a sense of ‘now it’s our turn.’”

He also pointed to a settlement at Graphic Packaging International where workers won large wage and pension adjustments. “I’m seeing a lot of contracts where people are holding to higher wage demands,” Castro said.

Employers frequently complain of worker shortages but too often overlook the obvious, Castro said.

“Yes, there’s a worker shortage due to the pandemic, without a doubt,” he said. “But, really, it’s a wage shortage. They can’t get people to work anymore under their current wage and benefit packages.”



# GCC Says O'Brien Can 'Count on Us'

By Fred Bruning  
Graphic Communicator

When Sean O'Brien takes control of the Teamsters in March after more than two decades of leadership by General President James Hoffa he will need support from all segments of the 1.4 million-member labor organization to assure unity and achieve the ambitious goals outlined during a vigorous election campaign.

GCC/IBT leaders say O'Brien can count on them.

Union president Kurt Freeman praised O'Brien – and incoming general secretary-treasurer Fred Zuckerman – for emphasizing the need to build membership at a time when rank-and-file numbers nationally are stalled at the lowest levels in decades.

"The GCC's 2021 convention theme was 'Organizing for a Stronger Tomorrow' and our new IBT administration is making organizing a priority," Freeman said. "O'Brien and Zuckerman will bring enthusiasm and an exciting agenda to North America's strongest union."

Also applauding O'Brien's priorities was Steve Nobles, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president.

"After an overwhelming victory in the election, Sean O'Brien will be taking office with a large majority of support and a great deal of momentum," Nobles said. "I am confident under his leadership the IBT will continue to be the foremost labor union in the country. With Brother O'Brien's commitment to organizing we can work together to grow our conference."

O'Brien, 49, a fourth-generation Teamster and leader of IBT Local 25 in Boston, ran on a vow to unionize Amazon workers – alone, a daunting task – while extending the Teamsters' reach in the waste management and the grocery industries.

His win confirmed by an independent IBT election supervisor, O'Brien, known as a passionate and at times combative union official, immediately thanked supporters and made clear he was prepared for battle.

"Employers and politicians are on notice – the Teamsters union is back," he said in a message posted online. "Fighting for workers is a full contact sport. We call on every Teamster to put your helmet on and buckle your chin-straps because the fight begins today."

The message reflected O'Brien's reputation in New England labor circles as a dynamic, "hard charger" who approaches union work with "energy and drive," said Steve Sullivan, president of Local 3-N, Boston.

O'Brien, who also serves as secretary treasurer/principal executive officer of IBT Joint Council 10, has proven a reliable friend of 3-N and will extend that "strength and support" to the international GCC/IBT as Teamster general president, Sullivan said. "We've had a great relationship and I believe this will continue with the entire Graphic Communications Conference."

The forceful campaign style of O'Brien resonated with Teamster voters who backed the O'Brien-Zuckerman "OZ" ticket by approximately 2-1 over the opposing slate of Steve Vairma, secretary-treasurer of IBT Local 455 in Denver and a western region international vice president, and Ron Herrera, secretary-treasurer of Local 396, Covina, California, also a western division international vice president.

Vairma, president of IBT Joint Council 3 and director of the Teamsters warehouse division, and Herrera, a trustee of Joint Council 42 and director of the Teamsters port division, were endorsed by Hoffa, who called them "the Teamsters of the future." But, on the campaign trail, O'Brien characterized his opponents as symbols of the past.

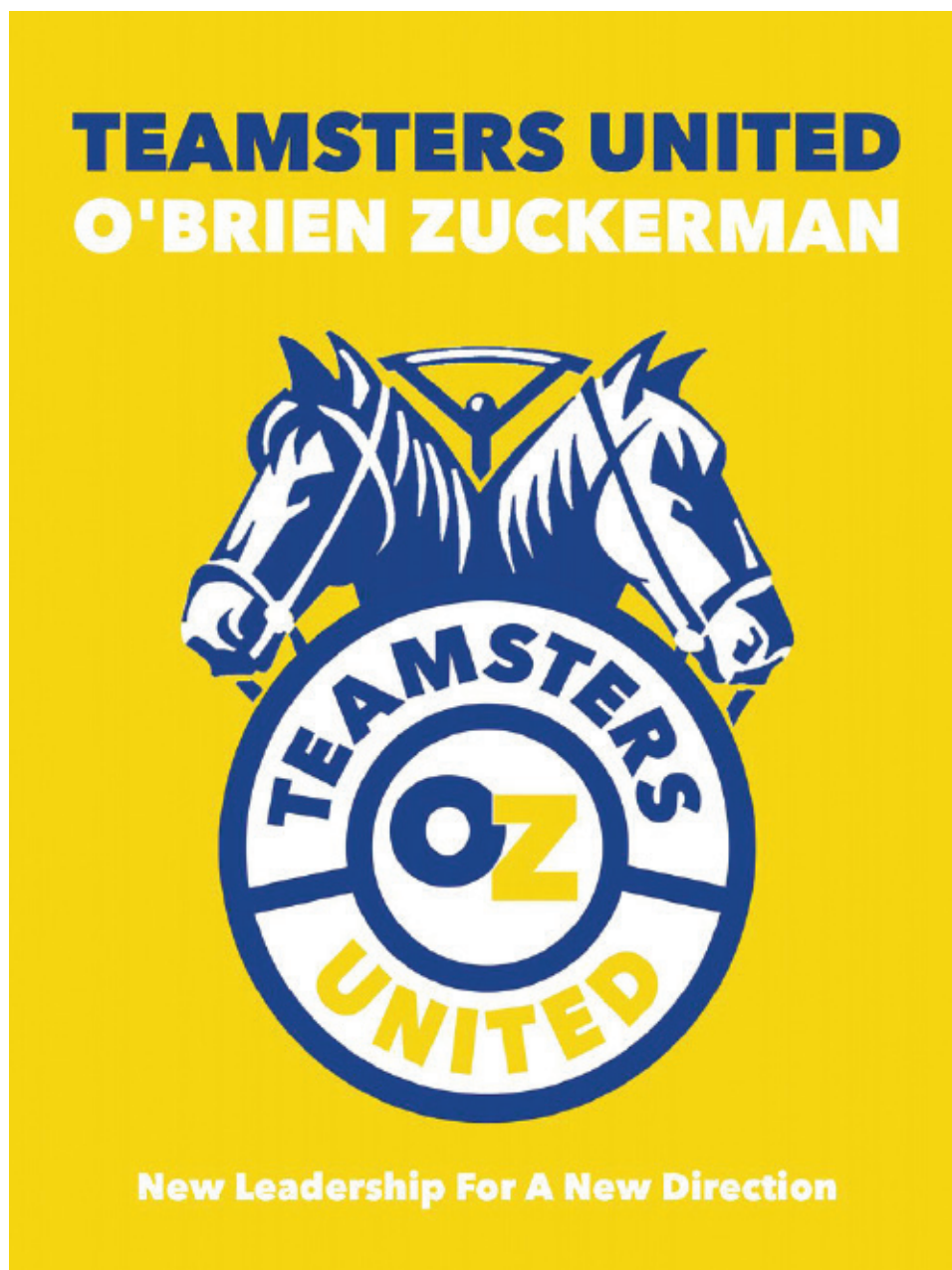
In particular, O'Brien, once a Hoffa ally who turned critic after being replaced as the IBT's top United Parcel Service contract negotiator, tied Vairma to what he portrayed as a go-slow, bureaucratic approach typical of old-line leadership.

Amazon was a case in point, he said. Organizing the online merchandising giant "should have been done 10 years ago when Amazon had only 20,000 workers," O'Brien said at a campaign debate.

Even before O'Brien's election to a five-year term as the Teamster's top officer, the IBT made clear Amazon had become a priority. At their convention last summer,



Sean O'Brien, left, takes office as Teamster general president in March succeeding James Hoffa, who is retiring after two decades of leadership. O'Brien's running mate on the 'OZ' ticket, Fred Zuckerman, will assume duties as IBT general secretary-treasurer. Winners in the IBT fall election, O'Brien and Zuckerman promise an aggressive approach to organizing. 'Fighting for members is a full contact sport,' O'Brien says. 'Put your helmet on and buckle your chin straps.'



New Leadership For A New Direction

Teamsters voted to establish a separate division dedicated to organizing at Amazon and named Randy Korgan, secretary-treasurer/principal officer of Local 1932, San Bernardino, California, as national director.

While focusing attention on Amazon and other organizing targets, O'Brien also must prepare for UPS negotiations scheduled for next year. O'Brien has been critical of the 2018 UPS settlement that he said gave the company too much consideration. "They know the concession stand's closed if we take over," he said before election results were announced, according to Bloomberg BusinessWeek.

O'Brien, eastern region IBT international vice president, began his career in the rigging industry and has been a Teamster since 1990. He became the youngest president in the history of Local 25 in 2006 and increased membership by 30 percent to 11,600, Bloomberg Businessweek reported.

Bloomberg noted that O'Brien had formed powerful political alliances and had a strong working relationship with Elizabeth Warren, the progressive Democratic senator from Massachusetts. A photograph in Local 25 headquarters shows Warren in a tractor trailer giving the thumbs-up sign, according to Bloomberg.

At the community level, O'Brien is a member of the board of directors of the Autism Speaks support organization. Local 25 is a leading fund raiser for the group and has lobbied the Massachusetts legislature on behalf of families affected by autism.

In 2015, O'Brien faced embarrassment after five Local 25 members were indicted by a federal grand jury for allegedly attempting to extort jobs from a non-union television production company. One of the five pleaded guilty. The others were acquitted. O'Brien, who was not implicated, insisted charges against his members were "fiction, at best," the Associated Press reported.

Running as a dissident candidate in the IBT election, O'Brien joined with Zuckerman, president of Local 89, Louisville, who made a strong – but ultimately unsuccessful – 2016 bid to deny Hoffa re-election. Last fall, the "OZ" ticket triumphed under the banner of Teamsters United, a grassroots network of union members.

Now O'Brien must show that the assertive approach he took on the campaign trail will pay off in the high-stakes effort to crack the code at Amazon and add thousands of new recruits to IBT membership rolls.

Steve Sullivan says his Boston labor colleague is the right person for the job.

"Sean leads by example and I can report first-hand that there's no standing on the sidelines," said Sullivan who attended a Local 25 victory event with 3-N secretary-treasurer Kevin Toomey after the election outcome was announced. "We all have to be in the game when it comes to the fight for our members future." ■



## Biden's Been Our Friend, Time to Show We're His

It's been a tough first year for Joe Biden.

He's taking plenty of flak.

Biden's been a friend of labor throughout his career. This is the time to say "thanks." For months, trouble piled up.

The coronavirus declined and came roaring back when the Delta strain arrived.

Prices went sky-high, the supply chain snarled and many consumer goods disappeared.

Republicans turned public health into a partisan flashpoint, arguing against safety protocols and vaccine requirements.

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan – widely seen as a prudent move after 20 years of fighting – ended in chaos when intelligence estimates woefully underestimated Taliban strength and mobility.

School board meetings often turned into shouting matches over mask wearing and race-related curriculum.

In Congress, GOP leaders made clear obstruction was Job No. 1 and even refused to work with Democrats on the debt ceiling – pettiness that jeopardized the global financial order.

Then came November.

Democrats suffered defeats in local and state races nationwide and in the most grievous loss, Glen Youngkin, a Republican businessman with no political experience beat Terry McAuliffe, a seasoned Democratic political pro, who was hoping to become Virginia's governor for the second time.

Democratic setbacks put Biden in the middle of an intra-party brawl with moderates claiming the party's progressive faction was pushing too hard for reform and left-wing activists complaining they were being marginalized and disrespected.

Organized labor backed Biden with enthusiasm in the 2020 election – and with good reason.

Let's not forget that the President has been a stalwart union partner since his earliest days in the Senate and continues to hail unions as the engine that created – and sustains – America's middle class.

Passed in March, Biden's American Rescue Plan was a lifeline to hard-pressed working Americans – Democrats and Republicans, alike – and included funding to protect the multi-employer pension plans so important to union members.

The rescue plan financed public health initiatives, extended unemployment benefits, provided direct payments to millions of Americans trying to pay their bill in the middle of a pandemic and increased safety regulations aimed at protecting essential workers who remained on the job despite the peril of covid.

It was an impressive package, but Biden wasn't through.

Democrats and the President next led a successful bipartisan effort to pass a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill that drew support from 13 Republicans in the House and 19 in the Senate who broke ranks with the "Party of No" and backed the measure.

Known as the American Jobs Plan, the infrastructure law will have far-reaching effect in red and blue states – boosting everything from bridge-building to broadband internet service in regions that have little access to the internet.

Thousands of good-paying jobs will be created – many in unionized sectors of the work force – and organized labor will benefit in other ways, too.

The National Labor Relations Board will be able to assess civil penalties against companies guilty of unfair labor practices. New enforcement powers will strengthen the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Consumers will get tax credits for electric cars – good news for unionized auto workers building the environmentally friendly autos.

This is historic stuff that never would have happened under a Republican president – and not necessarily with another Democratic administration, either.

Biden is committed to rebuilding the middle class. He believes in the power of organized labor to lift workers up and contribute mightily to the economy. Most important, the President – "Blue Collar Joe" – extols the dignity of work, and workers.

He's our kind of guy – not perfect but honest, decent and dedicated to the common good. Biden's been on our side for a long time. When opponents tear him down, we should be ready with an answer: "I'm union and I'm sticking with Joe." ■



## Point of View BY ROBERT REICH

# Corporate Culprits Spur Inflation

The biggest culprit for rising prices that's not being talked about is the increasing economic concentration of the American economy in the hands of a relative few giant big corporations with the power to raise prices.

If markets were competitive, companies would seek to keep their prices down in order to maintain customer loyalty and demand. When the prices of their supplies rose, they'd cut their profits before they raised prices to their customers, for fear that otherwise a competitor would grab those customers away.

But strange enough, this isn't happening. In fact, even in the face of supply constraints, corporations are raking in record profits. More than 80 percent of big (S&P 500) companies that have reported results this season have topped analysts' earnings forecasts, according to Refinitiv, one of the world's largest providers of market data.

Obviously, supply constraints have not eroded these profits. Corporations are simply passing the added costs on to their customers. Many are raising their prices even further, and pocketing even more.

How can this be? For a simple and obvious reason: Most don't have to worry about competitors grabbing their customers away. They have so much market power they can relax and continue to rake in big money.

The underlying structural problem isn't that government is over-stimulating the economy. It's that big corporations are under competitive.

Corporations are using the excuse of inflation to raise prices and make fatter profits. The result is a transfer of wealth from consumers to corporate executives and major investors.

It's called "oligopoly," where two or three companies roughly coordinate their prices and output.

And on it goes around the entire consumer sector of the American economy.

You can see a similar pattern in energy prices. Once it became clear that demand was growing, energy producers could have quickly ramped up production to create more supply. But they didn't.

They can get away with this because big oil and gas producers don't face much competition. They're powerful oligopolies.

Again, inflation isn't driving most of these price increases. Corporate power is driving them.

Since the 1980s, when the federal government all but abandoned antitrust enforcement, two-thirds of all American industries have become more concentrated.

Monsanto now sets the prices for most of the nation's seed corn.

The government green-lighted Wall Street's consolidation into five giant banks, of which JPMorgan is the largest.

It okayed airline mergers, bringing the total number of American carriers down from twelve in 1980 to four today, which now control 80 percent of domestic seating capacity.

It let Boeing and McDonnell Douglas merge, leaving America with just one major producer of civilian aircraft, Boeing.

Three giant cable companies dominate broadband (Comcast, AT&T, Verizon).

A handful of drug companies control the pharmaceutical industry (Pfizer, Eli Lilly, Johnson & Johnson, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Merck).

So what's the appropriate response to the latest round of inflation? The Federal Reserve has signaled it might raise interest rates as many as three times in 2022, according to the New York Times.

Meanwhile, Biden Administration officials have been consulting with the oil industry in an effort to stem rising gas prices, trying to make it simpler to issue commercial driver's licenses (to help reduce the shortage of truck drivers), and seeking to unclog over-crowded container ports.

But none of this responds to the deeper structural issue – of which price inflation is symptom: the increasing consolidation of the economy in a relative handful of big corporations with enough power to raise prices and increase profits.

This structural problem is amenable to only one thing: the aggressive use of antitrust law. ■

*Robert B. Reich served as secretary of labor in the Clinton administration. He is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and senior fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies. Reich has written 18 books, including his most recent, "The System: Who Rigged It, How we Fix It," and is co-creator of the documentary, "Saving Capitalism," streaming on Netflix.*



# When Will Inflation Stop?



We haven't had to worry about inflation since Ronald Reagan was in the White House but the pandemic has brought it back – and it may hang around through 2022.

In November, inflation hit 6.9 percent and, some economists say, part of the reason was the trillion-dollar American Rescue Plan passed during the early months of the Biden administration.

Most Americans received government checks. Unemployment benefits increased. Stuck at home because of covid, people saved more. Consumer spending quickly jumped to pre-covid levels. Online sales boomed. Homeowners made improvements and overdue repairs.

But there is more to the story than a well-intentioned rescue plan that, after all, tossed a lifeline to struggling families and workers thrown off the job because of a global health crisis.

We got blindsided by a supply chain breakdown.

Factories closed because of covid fears and an uncertain financial outlook. Shipments were stalled. Cargo ships remained anchored offshore. Once at dockside, they often could not be unloaded. There was a chronic shortage of workers, especially in the trucking industry.

So you had supplies that were hard to deliver and more people buying. That pushed prices higher.

Making matters worse, fuel prices spiked – for autos and home heating – as demand surged and cartels pumped less to grab higher profits.

Economists disagree on how long this round of inflation will last – and what to do about it.

The Federal Reserve could raise short-term interest rates in hopes of tamping down inflation but consumers soon would find auto loans and mortgage rates rising.

Eager to gain political advantage, Republicans – never bothered by facts – would blame President Joe Biden for what experts know is a global economic phenomenon.

One sidelight to the inflationary spiral is that Social Security payments for 70 million Americans will rise 5.9 percent this year. That's an average increase for all retired workers from \$1,565 to \$1,657 a month – the biggest bump in 40 years.

How older folks will spend their money – and what effect, if any, their habits will have on the inflation rate – is unclear.

The non-partisan Senior Citizens League notes that health care is a priority for older people – not the sort of consumer spending typical of their younger counterparts.

And, of course, what the government giveth it can taketh away.

While Social Security payments will grow, average Medicare premiums are set to rise at the same time.

In the end, retirees still will have a few extra bucks in their pockets – always a good thing.

Happy New Year from Uncle Sam. ■

*Jerry Morgan is a former Newsday business writer and member of Local 406-C.*

# Guest Spot

BY ALEJANDRO GUZMAN

# Greatness Ahead – if We Believe

In October, I joined the GCC/IBT family as national organizer. I wanted to share some thoughts on what it has been like since coming aboard.

As we all know, union membership has plunged perilously for decades all over North America. Enemies of organized labor in conservative think tanks and on Capitol Hill have done all they can to undercut the rights of workers and destroy the union movement.

But after meeting GCC/IBT leaders and talking to union members, I am convinced it won't be long before we start turning the tide.

During my first week on the job, I attended a GCC/IBT General Board meeting in Baltimore and spoke to a number of union officials – an impressive group of dedicated individuals with lots of energy and ideas.

Many asked what I considered my biggest challenge – a great question. I have thought long and hard about the answer.

This might sound like a cliché or something out of a motivational handbook, but it is my honest answer: I think my biggest challenge – and the most significant issue for all union leaders – will be ourselves and our vision.

I am convinced we can achieve great things. But we must believe in ourselves.

I can tell already that President Kurt Freeman and a Secretary-Treasurer Steve Nobles are determined to seize every opportunity – to build the union and expand its influence.

By thinking “big,” the GCC/IBT and our power-

ful Teamster partners can serve as models for the entire labor movement.

To take the next step, nothing is more important than organizing.

Polls show workers across the country are desperate for representation. They are tired of being treated as spare parts.

Recently, I heard a story about a man who had been on the job for nearly 50 years. Before retirement, the man told co-workers he hoped there would be a little send-off on his last day – perhaps a cake from the boss and a few kind words.

But there was nothing of the sort – just a wave good-bye as the worker left the shop for the last time.

Unions can't make management show better manners, or behave in more thoughtful fashion, but strong contracts like those achieved in the GCC/IBT can assure good pay, safe conditions, and a voice in their own futures. Cake would be nice, too, but a solid pension – the kind unions negotiate – is even, better.

The mission of the GCC/IBT is to make lives better. I am eager to help make it happen. ■

*Alejandro Guzman, formerly a Denver-based organizer for the Service Employees International Union, was named national organizer by the GCC/IBT in October. He succeeds Rick Street, who retired.*



# All the Best

## Print

### Silverview

John le Carré

The great British spy novelist, John le Carré, died little more than a year ago leaving behind a slender novel that sums up the author's wistful view of a world more ordered by deceit and disillusion than the easy notions of trust and decency we've been taught to revere. Set on the brooding English coast, “Silverview” is the story of spies, wearied by experience, who wonder what service to country means if the country they served barely can be recognized. After the upheaval and anger of recent years when political norms have been tossed aside and disruptive acts taken as commonplace, many Americans, like the memorable characters of le Carré, also may wonder what became of the shining place they once knew. **Viking, \$28**

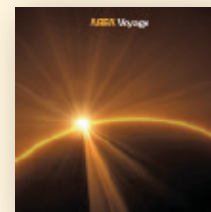


## Music

### Voyage

ABBA

At the funeral of Colin Powell, a military brass ensemble played “Dancing Queen” by the Swedish group ABBA – a longtime favorite of the former secretary of state. Powell was so devoted an ABBA fan that he once dropped to one knee and serenaded the Swedish foreign minister with a version of the group's 1975 hit, “Mama Mia.” ABBA's new album, “Voyage,” the group's first in 40 years, has the honest appeal of all their work – mainstream, for sure, but reassuring and a pure pop music pleasure. The singers lost an extraordinary admirer in Colin Powell but he'd be glad to know they're still around, and sounding sweet as ever.



## Video/Streaming

### Union Busting: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver

John Oliver

He's delivered merciless take-downs of Vladimir Putin, cryptocurrency, meat packing plants, professional wrestling, psychics, robocalls and, of course, Donald Trump to mention only a few of John Oliver's targets but the comedian outdid himself when he put union busting in his sights. Working with information from the Economic Policy Institute, Oliver spent more than 23 minutes on his Sunday night HBO show blasting big business for undercutting union drives and worker rights. Oliver, whose cheery manner belies his unsparing style, clobbers employers for everything from captive audience meetings to bogus threats of plant closings. Enough, already. Congress should “rebalance the playing field,” Oliver urges at the end of a memorable performance, and pass the PRO Act. For union activists and organizers, this is required TV viewing. Google “John Oliver Union Busting” and get ready to cheer.



## Internet

### Library of Congress

Loc.gov

From the papers of Abraham Lincoln to the history of labor pioneer Samuel Gompers, the Library of Congress website allows access to an internet bonanza – and testament to the power of government to serve and uplift the citizenry. A recent online exhibition celebrated the ancestry and traditions of Native Americans. Photographs showed President Theodore Roosevelt signing the 1902 Thanksgiving Proclamation Act. Visitors can find research on the role of organized labor during the Depression and a chronicle of the civil rights movement. Officials tell Americans this is “your” library – the people's library – and urge that everyone stop by, in person or online. Accept the invitation.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS







## 36 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD THANK A UNION



Unions have transformed America and built the middle class. But the public too often is unaware of those achievements – and, sadly, union members are not always fully informed, either.

Here is a widely circulated list of 36 benefits and protections – now taken for granted – that would not have been possible without the effort, influence and hard-won victories of organized labor. We should know our history and be proud.

1. Weekends
2. Breaks at work, including lunch
3. Paid vacations
4. The Family and Medical Leave Act
5. Sick leave
6. Social Security
7. Minimum wage
8. Civil Rights Act/Title VII prohibiting discrimination
9. 8-Hour work day
10. Overtime pay
11. Child labor laws
12. Occupational Safety & Health Administration
13. 40-hour work week
14. Worker's compensation
15. Unemployment insurance
16. Pensions
17. Workplace safety standards and regulations
18. Employer health care influence
19. Collective bargaining
20. Wrongful termination laws
21. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act
22. Whistleblower protection laws
23. Employee Polygraph Protection Act
24. Veteran's Employment and Training Services (VETS)
25. Compensation increases
26. Sexual harassment laws
27. American Disabilities Act (ADA)
28. Holiday pay
29. Employer dental, life, and vision insurance
30. Privacy rights
31. Pregnancy and parental leave
32. Military Leave
33. The Right to Strike
34. Public Education for Children
35. Equal Pay Acts of 1963 and 2011
36. Laws ending sweatshops in the United States

In his conversation with the Wall Street Journal, Hoffa, who will retire in March, said the Teamsters were fielding an unusual number of requests to form unions. Sean O'Brien, who was elected in November to succeed Hoffa, leaves no doubt that he will concentrate on organizing – Amazon is a major goal – and expanding the 1.4 million membership..

“There are big opportunities for the Teamsters in 2022,” O'Brien said in an email message confirming his victory.

But, leaders said, nothing will come easily.

Public opinion is trending toward unions, young people are more aware and workers everywhere are asserting their independence, but it is at the grassroots level that the hard work of union-building must be done, leaders say.

“We have to be focused,” said George Tedeschi, GCC/IBT president emeritus and editor of the Communicator. “We must make young people aware of unionism and urge existing members to spread the word. We should go into schools and speak to students about jobs

in the print and paper product industries. At the same time, we must recruit workers to help fill the hundreds of openings in our represented shops. The time for action is now.”

There should be no false hopes, leaders say – anti-union forces will fight any new organizing push and right-wing elected officials and media stars continue unrelentingly to undercut the labor movement. Hardline management teams will go on spending millions to frighten employees and spread false information when threatened by unionization. “Difficult employers are still difficult employers,” said GCC/IBT conference representative Nick Caruso.

Labor shortages have helped unions gain “more clout,” said Pat LoPresti, president of Local 1-L, New York, and labor has a great friend in the White House.

Making the most of that advantage will be the challenge for 2022.

“All of us as union members have a responsibility to carry on the organized labor movement,” said Kurt Reissenweber of DC-4. “If we don't, who will?”

## Supporting Future Generations



### The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund

2022 Academic or Vocational Training Program Scholarships

Application process opens on November 30, 2021 for academic or vocational scholarships for Teamster sons, daughters and financial dependents from the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund.



Deadline: **March 1, 2022**

For more information, visit [www.jrhmsf.org](http://www.jrhmsf.org) or scan the QR with your smartphone's camera or QR reader.



For the sons, daughters and financial dependents of Teamster members. Academic scholarship awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for high school seniors planning to attend a four-year college or university and training/vocational program awards of up to \$2,000 for use at community colleges or trade schools.



# Bold Infrastructure Bill: 'Jobs, Jobs, Jobs'

The bipartisan, \$1 trillion infrastructure bill – crafted by Democrats and signed late last year by President Joe Biden – is a bold investment in the nation's future and testament to the contributions of union workers and the labor organizations that represent them, IBT and GCC/IBT leaders say.

Attending signing ceremonies on the south lawn of the White House, IBT General President James Hoffa congratulated Biden for achieving “infrastructure legislation that will boost necessary transportation, electrical and water networks, create good-paying jobs and bring the nation's economy into the 21st century.”

GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman also praised the Biden initiative.

“President Biden has been a friend of unions throughout his political career and this bill shows his commitment to organized labor and working people,” Freeman said. “The infrastructure bill will create jobs, boost the economy and strengthen the middle class. It's an outstanding piece of legislation.”

Millions of union jobs could be generated by a wide range of projects – upgrades to the energy grid, maintenance improvements for the Amtrak rail system, high-speed internet access in rural communities, waterway cleanup, charging stations for electric cars, among them.

Though there is an emphasis on job creation, the bill also includes many quality-of-life features aimed at modernizing public transit, reducing traffic congestion, repairing bridges and highways and, generally, making it safer and less exasperating to travel on the nation's roads.

Major transportation projects account for \$110 billion of infrastructure spending – \$40 billion, alone, for what the White House calls “the single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system.”

At the signing ceremony, Biden hailed union leaders and said their support for the bill had been crucial at a time when the United States is struggling to recover from nearly two years of pandemic-related employment uncertainty and economic disruption.

“I want to thank organized labor...” the President said. “You all stood up. Jobs! Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!”

In turn, union officials applauded Biden for achieving a legislative success that they said was badly needed and years overdue.

“Working Americans have received the short end of the stick for too long,” said Hoffa. “It's time to change that path, and the White House is leading the way. Our nation needs good-paying jobs and a culture change that invests in America. This law will get it done.”

Ray Curry, president of the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), also was among the guests.

“This enormous accomplishment will address so many of the critical needs that every American relies on to live, work and succeed in our nation,” Curry said. “This has been a long time coming.”

The presence of Hoffa and other leading labor officials



At a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, President Joe Biden signed a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill that represented a bold investment in the nation's future and tribute to union workers. ‘I want to thank organized labor... the President said. ‘You all stood up. Jobs! Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!’ Joining the group of lawmakers, national leaders and administration officials was IBT General President James Hoffa, second row, second from left, who said the bipartisan legislation would ‘boost necessary transportation, electrical and water networks, create good-paying jobs and bring the nation's economy into the 21st century.’

at the ceremony demonstrated Biden's links to organized labor and underscored his reputation as perhaps the most pro-union President since Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

“I'm a union guy,” Biden said at an event earlier last year. “I support unions. Unions built the middle class. It's about time they start to get a piece of the action.”

Joining Hoffa and Curry for the White House event were Labor Secretary Marty Walsh, Roxanne Brown, international vice-president of the United Steelworkers; Lee Saunders, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers; and, Joseph Sellers, general president of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers.

Ahead of the ceremony, Biden named Mitch Landrieu, former Democratic mayor of New Orleans, to oversee implementation of the new law, known officially as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Landrieu will be in charge of “the most significant and comprehensive” infrastructure plan in generations – legislation that would boost U.S. competitiveness, strengthen the supply chain and help tame inflation, a White House statement said. Following up, Landrieu encouraged business and labor join in an effort to “rebuild America for the middle class.”

The bill's focus on middle-class Americans and blue-collar workers was noted by Ron Brownstein, a CNN senior political analyst.

In a piece on the CNN website, Brownstein wrote that jobs created by the infrastructure law largely do not require a college education – a “subtle but unmistakable shift” from the policies of previous presidents who linked financial success with higher education.

Biden sees things differently.

“Best of all, the vast majority of these jobs ... that we're going to create don't require a college degree,” Biden said



before signing the bill. “This is the ultimate blue-collar blueprint to rebuild America.”

Brownstein points out that Biden also supports educational opportunity – his wife, Jill Biden, is a college teacher and union member – but, says Brownstein, “the President and his team believe that more education alone, absent other targeted policies, isn't enough to create broadly shared prosperity.”

Biden, who often mentions his working-class background in Scranton, Pennsylvania, leaves little doubt who stands to benefit most from the infrastructure measure.

“And for all of you at home who feel left behind and forgotten in an economy that's changing so rapidly,” he said prior to the signing, “this bill is for you.”

## BIDEN RATINGS SLIP BUT LEADERS SAY HE'S BEST UNION ALLY SINCE FDR

By Zachary Dowdy  
Special to the Communicator

Joe Biden's approval rating continues to suffer as he deals with a persistent public health crisis and the economic dislocation it has caused, but GCC/IBT leaders hailed the President's job-producing \$1 trillion infrastructure plan and said he remains the best friend of labor to occupy the White House since Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Leaders noted that the bipartisan infrastructure measure followed the American Rescue Plan – a \$1.9 trillion omnibus bill that offered relief to millions of hard-hit workers and their families – and that the two bills represent a dramatic departure from the approach of Biden's predecessor, Donald J. Trump

“He's done more in his first year than the other guy did in four,” said District Council 9 President Joe Inemer, who also welcomed Biden's appointments to the National Labor Relations Board – a contrast, he said, to the pro-business members who served under Trump. “Biden's done a good job. He's an FDR for these times.”

Biden's loyalty to the labor movement is evident in many public statements – and of great importance to rank-and-file union members, officials said.

“For workers, I don't think we've had a better president than Biden in a long time,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3, in Detroit.

Castro joined Inemer in thanking Biden for helping to rescue faltering pension plans, including several covering thousands of GCC and IBT retirees.

“He deserves our support for that,” Castro said. “He gave the money to the pension funds that needed it.”

For Mike LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, Long Island, New York, Biden is showing resilience and courage in contending with a sharply divided Senate and political climate marked by fierce partisan battles.

“He inherited a mess,” LaSpina said, pointing to the covid-19 surge, immigration issues, foreign policy challenges and relentless obstruction from the Republican Party. “He's doing the best job possible under the circumstances. We should make clear we are grateful for his support.”



## TEAMSTER MEMBERS RETIREMENT PLAN DRAWS LARGE CHICAGO CONTINGENT

The Teamster Members Retirement Plan received a welcome boost with the enrollment of 1,300 participants from GCC/IBT Local 415-S, Chicago – a notable increase that officials said immediately made the pension program more robust and attractive.



“This is a real shot in the arm for the fund and all GCC/IBT locals should consider joining as a group, just as Local 415-S just did,” said Pat LoPresti, chairman of the plan, formerly known as the Inter-Local Pension Fund.

Chicago participants, who voted to join the plan late last year and will begin participation this month, now have the benefits of a well-regarded program, officials said.

“The plan is currently funded at 81 percent, meaning it is the equivalent of a healthy status multi-employer plan under the standards set forth in the Pension Protection Act,” said union attorney Peter Leff.

For years, there had been concern over falling participation in the former Inter-Local Plan.

The infusion of 1,300 Chicago participants vastly improves the plan’s prospects, said Larry Mitchell, former executive director for the Teamster Members Retirement Plan.

“The more new participants we have, the more we generate new contributions – and the more new contributions we have, the more it offsets benefits going to retirees,” said Mitchell, who, after 15 years, left the union fund to become a vice president of the employee benefits firm, Zenith American Solutions.

Mitchell said the Teamster Retirement plan was an “excellent fund to participate in because it was made for union members by union members. When a member contributes to this plan, there is no employer involvement.

Employee contributions are tax deductible, never in jeopardy – everything subscribers put in will be returned – and begin earning immediately.

“There is no vesting period, which is typically 3-5 years,” Mitchell said. “Instead, as soon as \$260 is contributed to the plan, the participant is 100 percent vested.”

Members earn an accrual rate of 1.75 percent on their contributions, Mitchell said. “It’s wonderful because there’s no mystery to calculating the benefit.”

The retirement fund was established 72 years ago in 1951 by locals in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit and Kansas City.

“It’s a pretty neat success story,” Mitchell said. “It started with 6,000 members and today has more than 69 participating locals with 34,000 members and has paid out over \$4.4 billion in benefits.”

For more information on joining the retirement fund, contact interim executive director Carrie Paragon at 630-752-8400.

## INTELLICOR SETTLES CONTRACT COVERING CENVEO WORKERS

Intellicor Communications recently settled on a contract covering GCC/IBT members at Cenveo Commercial Inc., the offset printing firm in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, it purchased in 2020.



“It was an asset sale, and Intellicor bought the building and the equipment from Cenveo, but not the union contract, so there was no recognition of the employees,” said Joe Inemer, president of Local 16-N.

There are four separate contracts at Intellicor – one each for the pressroom, bindery, traffic, and machinists – covering its nearly 100-member shop.

The plant was purchased in August 2020. Negotiations began the following month and concluded in November 2021.

“For more than a year, they were at-will employees,” Inemer said. “Now everyone is back in the union and they have a security clause and grievance procedure, and we even got them raises, which they didn’t have before.”

Wage increases for each group averaged about 3.5 percent, he said, adding that the new owners are eager to hire more workers. “But like everyone all across this country,” Inemer said, “they are having a hard time.”

In addition to the purchase of the Lancaster plant, Intellicor is renting the Cenveo plant about 6 miles east, which has about 80 workers and is nonunion – at least for now, Inemer said.

“There are plans for within the next 1-1/2 to two years to close that plant and bring most of the equipment and people over and get them back into the union, as well,” he said.

Inemer credits GCC/IBT conference representative Nick Caruso for an “outstanding job” in talks with Intellicor.

“The employees are very happy,” Inemer said. “The vote was very strong in favor of the contract. And now they have someone who is going to represent them well.”



## LEADERS MINDFUL OF COVID ISSUES AS CONFERENCE PLANS GO FORWARD

GCC/IBT leaders are making plans for this year’s conferences and hoping concerns related to the ongoing pandemic and public health issues do not cause disruptions in travel or schedules.

“We’re really hoping that covid-19 or any of the variants don’t interfere any more with any of our conferences – or really with life as we know it,” said Harry Selnow, secretary-treasurer of the Eastern Conference.

Conference organizers say agendas will emphasize covid-related issues including enforcement of workplace mandates, vaccine requirements and the role of OSHA in assuring shop safety.

Also certain to be discussed are matters related to worker shortages and supply chain problems, organizers said.

There will be presentations urging participation in the Teamster Members Retirement Fund, how to file unfair labor practice charges and the importance of aggressive organizing efforts at a time when public approval of unions continues to increase and workers in many sectors seek representation.

•Midwestern Conference: April 21-23, Embassy Suites, Hilton O’Hare, Rosemont, Illinois.

•Eastern Conference: April 24-26, Harrah’s Hotel and Casino, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

•North American Newspaper Conference: June 13-15, Embassy Suites, Tempe, Arizona. The executive board will meet June 11-12.

•Specialty Conference: Tentatively set for Sept. 22-24, Atlanta, Georgia.

## FOUR-YEAR AGREEMENT AT WESTROCK WRAPPED UP IN LESS THAN 2 WEEKS

GCC/IBT workers at WestRock in California recently won a four-year agreement with significant wage increases each year following only 10 days of negotiations, union leaders said.

The 150 members overwhelmingly ratified the contract in November at the Cerritos, California, plant, which has been represented by GCC/IBT Local 388-M, Los Angeles, for 11 years.



“We had increases in the defined benefit pension plan, increases in shift differentials, and 35 wage adjustments to different classifications,” said Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of District Council 2, which includes Local 388-M.

District Council 2 represents seven WestRock plants totaling 900 members. The Cerritos operation, which produces corrugated and solid fiber boxes, is the largest with 150 workers. DC-2 ratified a four-plant contract with WestRock earlier last year and has two upcoming negotiations left this summer.

“We go through this so often with them that we have a good working relationship,” Ritchey noted. “These last negotiations were very cordial. It boiled down to economics, which we did well on.”

Ritchey said the union negotiating team – which included WestRock employees – did excellent work.

“We had a great committee,” he said. “They are experienced and really understand how the process works.”

WestRock is a global enterprise with 95 locations in the United States and around the world. In an online statement, the company said it is committed to “sustainable growth,” innovation and “game-changing developments” in the paper and packaging fields.

*Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your GCC/IBT local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to reporter Dawn Hobbs at dawnhobbs@cox.net or call 805-284-5351.*



## Les chefs syndicaux félicitent la nouvelle équipe d'insister sur la syndicalisation

Por Fred Bruning  
*Graphic Communicator*

Quand Sean O'Brien prendra en mars la tête des Teamsters comme successeur du président général James Hoffa qui en a assuré le leadership pendant plus de deux décennies, il aura besoin du soutien de toutes les sections de l'organisation syndicale forte de 1,4 million de membres afin d'en assurer l'unité et d'atteindre les objectifs ambitieux qui ont été définis lors d'une campagne électorale vigoureuse.

O'Brien peut compter sur les dirigeants de la CCG-FIT.

Le président du syndicat Kurt Freeman a félicité S. O'Brien – et le secrétaire-trésorier général entrant Fred Zuckerman – d'avoir insisté sur le besoin de recruter des membres à un moment où leur nombre à l'échelle nationale n'a jamais été aussi bas depuis des décennies.

« La convention 2021 de la CCG avait pour thème « Syndiquer pour être plus forts demain » et la nouvelle administration de la FIT fait de la syndicalisation une priorité, a indiqué K. Freeman. S. O'Brien et F. Zuckerman vont insuffler de l'enthousiasme et apporter un programme passionnant au syndicat le plus fort d'Amérique du Nord. »

Steve Nobles, secrétaire-trésorier et vice-président de la CCG-FIT, salue aussi les priorités de S. O'Brien.

« Après sa victoire écrasante à l'élection, Sean O'Brien va entrer en fonction en bénéficiant d'un soutien largement majoritaire et d'un élan for-

midable, estime S. Nobles. Je suis convaincu que sous son impulsion, la FIT va demeurer le plus important syndicat du pays. Avec l'engagement qu'a pris notre frère O'Brien envers la syndicalisation, nous pouvons mettre nos efforts en commun pour agrandir notre conférence. »

S. O'Brien, 49 ans, Teamster de quatrième génération et chef de la section locale 25 de la FIT à Boston, a mené campagne en promettant de syndiquer les travailleurs d'Amazon – une tâche titanesque à elle seule – tout en étendant la portée des Teamsters dans les secteurs de la gestion des déchets et de l'épicerie.

Une fois sa victoire confirmée par un superviseur indépendant des élections de la FIT, S. O'Brien, qui est connu pour être un chef syndical passionné et à l'occasion combatif, a aussitôt remercié ses partisans et a clairement indiqué qu'il était prêt à se battre.

« Que les employeurs et les politiciens se le tiennent pour dit – le syndicat des Teamsters est de retour, a-t-il déclaré dans un message publié en ligne. Le combat pour les travailleurs est un sport de contact intégral. Nous demandons à tous les membres des Teamsters de porter leur casque et d'attacher leur mentonnière, car la lutte débute aujourd'hui. »

Le message reflétait la réputation qu'a S. O'Brien dans les cercles de travailleurs de la Nouvelle-Angleterre d'être un « attaquant féroce » et dynamique, qui aborde le travail syndical avec « énergie et détermination », a indiqué Steve Sullivan, président de la section locale 3-N de Boston.

S. O'Brien, qui est aussi secrétaire-trésorier et principal dirigeant du conseil conjoint no 10 de la FIT, s'est révélé être un ami fiable de la section locale 3-N et va étendre « cette force et ce soutien » à la CCG-FIT internationale en tant que président général des Teamsters, a fait savoir S. Sullivan. « Nous avons eu une excellente relation et je crois que cela va continuer avec toute la Conférence des communications graphiques. »

Le style de campagne énergique de S. O'Brien a plu aux membres votants des Teamsters, qui ont appuyé le tandem O'Brien-Zuckerman « OZ » dans une proportion d'environ 2-1 par rapport à leurs adversaires Steve Vairma, secrétaire-trésorier de la section locale 455 de la FIT à Denver et vice-président international dans la région Ouest, et Ron Herrera, secrétaire-trésorier de la section locale 396 de Covina, en Californie, lui aussi un vice-président international dans la région Ouest.

S. Vairma, président du conseil conjoint no 3 de la FIT et directeur de la division des entrepôts des Teamsters, et R. Herrera, fiduciaire du conseil conjoint no 42 et directeur de la division des ports des Teamsters, ont été appuyés par J. Hoffa, qui les a appelés « les Teamsters de demain ». Mais pendant la campagne, S. O'Brien a dit que ses adversaires étaient des symboles du passé.

Amazon était un exemple parfait, selon S. O'Brien. La syndicalisation du géant de la distribution en ligne « aurait dû être faite il y a 10 ans quand Amazon

n'avait que 20 000 employés », a-t-il déclaré lors d'un débat de campagne.

S. O'Brien, vice-président international de la FIT dans la région Est, a débuté sa carrière dans l'industrie du grément et est membre des Teamsters depuis 1990. Il est devenu en 2006 le plus jeune président de l'histoire de la section locale 25 et a, selon Bloomberg Businessweek, augmenté de 30 pour cent le nombre de ses membres, qui sont à présent 11 600.

S. O'Brien, qui s'est présenté comme candidat dissident lors de l'élection de la FIT, a pu compter sur le ralliement de F. Zuckerman, président de la section 89 de Louisville, qui avait mené en 2006 un combat rude – mais sans succès – pour empêcher la réélection de J. Hoffa. L'automne dernier, le tandem « OZ » a triomphé sous la bannière des Teamsters Unis, un réseau communautaire de syndiqués.

S. O'Brien doit à présent montrer que l'approche affirmative qu'il a adoptée pendant la campagne électorale sera payante dans la tentative, lourde de conséquences, pour s'introduire chez Amazon et ajouter des milliers de nouvelles recrues dans les rangs de la FIT.

Selon Steve Sullivan, son collègue syndiqué de Boston est celui qu'il faut pour le poste.

« Sean est un modèle et je peux affirmer, pour l'avoir constaté, que personne ne restera à l'écart. Nous devons tous nous impliquer dès lors qu'il s'agit de lutter pour l'avenir de nos membres. »

## Líderes de GCC/IBT prometen su cooperación al nuevo equipo de IBT

Par Fred Bruning  
*Graphic Communicator*

Cuando Sean O'Brien tome el control de los Teamsters el próximo marzo tras más de dos décadas de liderazgo por el presidente general James Hoffa, necesitará el apoyo de todos los segmentos de la organización laboral, que cuenta con 1.4 millones de miembros, para garantizar la unidad y lograr los ambiciosos objetivos articulados en el curso de una vigorosa campaña electoral.

Los líderes de GCC/IBT dicen que O'Brien puede contar con ellos.

El presidente del sindicato, Kurt Freeman, elogió a O'Brien, así como al secretario general-tesorero entrante Fred Zuckerman, por haber recalado la necesidad de aumentar la membresía en unos momentos en que a nivel nacional sus números se encuentran estancados a los niveles más bajos de las últimas décadas.

« El lema de la convención de GCC en 2021 fue 'Organizar Para Un Mañana Más Fuerte' y la nueva administración de IBT está dándole prioridad a la organización », dijo Freeman. « O'Brien y Zuckerman aportarán entusiasmo y un prometedor plan de acción al sindicato más fuerte de Norteamérica ».

Las prioridades establecidas por O'Brien merecieron también el aplauso de Steve Nobles, secretario-tesorero y vicepresidente de GCC/IBT.

« Tras ganar la elección con un contundente triunfo, Sean O'Brien comenzará su labor con el apoyo de una gran mayoría y una gran fuerza de arranque », dijo Nobles. « Confío en que bajo su liderazgo la IBT continuará siendo el sindicato más destacado del país. Inspirados por el compromiso del Hermano O'Brien con la organización, podremos trabajar unidos para la mayor expansión de nuestra conferencia. »

Con 49 años, O'Brien, un Teamster de cuarta generación y líder de la Local 25 de IBT en Boston, presentó su candidatura con la promesa de sindicalizar a los trabajadores de Amazon, que era ya por sí sola una tarea abrumadora, y al mismo tiempo aumentar la presencia de los Teamsters en las industrias de gestión de desechos y comestibles.

Una vez confirmada su victoria por un supervisor independiente de las elecciones de IBT, O'Brien, considerado un dirigente sindical apasionado y a veces combativo, expresó inmediatamente su agradecimiento a sus partidarios y dejó claro que estaba preparado para la batalla.

« Los empleadores y los políticos ya están avisados: El sindicato de los Teamsters ha vuelto », dijo en un mensaje publicado en línea. « La lucha por los trabajadores es un deporte de contacto. Recomendamos a todos los Teamsters que se pongan sus chalecos antibalas, porque la batalla comienza hoy ».

Este mensaje reflejaba la reputación de O'Brien en los círculos laboristas de Nueva Inglaterra donde estaba considerado como un « tipo duro » que ataca el trabajo del sindicato con « bríos y energía », como dice Steve Sullivan, presidente de la Local 3-N de Boston.

O'Brien, que sirve también como secretario tesoroer/funcionario ejecutivo principal del Consejo Conjunto 10 de IBT, ha demostrado ser un amigo fiable de la 3-N y brindará la misma « fuerza y apoyo » a la GCC/IBT internacional como presidente general de los Teamsters, afirma Sullivan. « Hemos mantenido una gran relación y creo que continuará con la totalidad de la Graphic Communications Conference ».

El enérgico estilo de la campaña de O'Brien tuvo un gran impacto en los votantes de los Teamsters que apoyaron la candidatura O'Brien-Zuckerman « OZ » aproximadamente dos contra uno sobre la contraria de Steve Vairma, secretario-tesorero de la Local 455 de IBT en Denver y vicepresidente internacional de la región oeste, y Ron Herrera, secretario-tesorero de la Local 396 de Covina, California y también vicepresidente internacional de la división oeste.

Vairma, presidente del Consejo Conjunto 3 de IBT y director de la división de almacenes de los Teamsters, y Herrera, fideicomisario del Consejo Conjunto 42 y director de la división de puertos de los

Teamsters, fueron apoyados por Hoffa, que los llamó « los Teamsters del futuro ». Pero, en la campaña, O'Brien caracterizó a sus oponentes como símbolos del pasado,

Amazon es un buen ejemplo, dijo. Los trabajadores de este gigante de la comercialización « tenían que haber estado sindicalizados desde hace diez años, cuando solo eran 20,000 », manifestó O'Brien durante la campaña.

O'Brien, vicepresidente internacional de la región este de IBT, comenzó su carrera en la industria camionera y ha sido miembro de los Teamsters desde 1990. En 2006 se convirtió en el presidente más joven de la historia de la Local 25 y aumentó el número de miembros en un 30 por ciento, hasta 11.600, según informe de Bloomberg Businessweek.

Presentándose como candidato disidente a las elecciones de IBT, O'Brien se unió a Zuckerman, presidente de la Local 89 de Louisville, que en 2016 presentó una fuerte, aunque finalmente fracasada, oposición a la reelección de Hoffa. En el otoño pasado, la candidatura de los « OZ » triunfó bajo la bandera de Teamsters United, una red popular de trabajadores sindicalizados.

Ahora O'Brien deberá demostrar que la enérgica postura que adoptó durante la campaña servirá para superar el gran desafío de « reventar el código » de Amazon y añadir miles de afiliados a IBT.



# In Memoriam

Listed here are GCC/IBT members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Membership Department of the office of the GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact the Graphic Communicator.

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
		14M	Anthony Ferrigno 02-09-19	577M	Rolf W Bruhn 01-30-19	23N	Clarence F Fritsche 01-14-19
		14M	Kathryn V Griffin 11-27-18	577M	Emerich G Horvath 07-24-18	24M	Gary G Mangan 02-06-19
		14M	Lilli Neri 01-15-19	577M	Robert J Laurent 10-27-18	24M	Edward Stawowczyk 03-23-19
		14M	James P Shockley 07-10-18	577M	Betty M Luebke 07-01-18	38N	Floyd D Massena 01-26-19
		14M	Jeremiah R White 01-26-19	577M	Donald M Pierce 07-21-18	58M	Ernest H Hull 10-16-18
		16N	Robert J Doyle 01-31-19	577M	Thomas L Pipp 10-11-18	77P	James M Jensen 02-04-19
		24M	Arthur J Bruno 01-19-19	577M	Norman A Tucker 12-02-18	77P	John J Konetzke, Sr 03-13-19
		24M	Harry E Tracey Jr 12-28-18	612M	Peter C Listowski 02-15-19	77P	Marlene C Schierl 10-19-18
		58M	Roland J Wenz 10-10-18	625S	James R Roof 01-07-19	100M	Ferenc Ladanyi 01-30-19
		72C	Donald C Parthree 01-25-19	853T	George A Durkee Jr 06-17-18	117T	Gloria J Church 01-17-19
		77P	Jeffery S Baker 11-17-18	853T	Donald R Larson 12-07-18	119B	Charles Q Briscoe 11-24-18
		77P	Beatrice A Brozovich 01-07-19	999ML	Joseph M Barnick 02-14-19	119B	Nelson Ramirez 03-22-19
		197M	Gary Smith 12-14-18	999ML	Richard E Birmingham 11-11-18	235M	Renate E Bagley 02-10-19
		241M	Isabel Gahwiler 01-20-19	999ML	Richard P Hawker 12-23-18	235M	Ronald W Hays 02-08-19
		241M	Ernest F Refice 01-30-19	999ML	Carole L Ray 01-08-19	235M	Charles B Roberts 01-18-19
		285M	Ralph B Franz 01-06-19	999ML	Gerald A Yelle, Sr 01-24-19	285M	Richard E Meeks 12-20-18
		285M	Robert G Vogtman 01-10-19	2289M	Ronald A Easton 12-04-18	388M	Patrick J Mchale 02-06-19
		388M	Bill Creekbaum 12-28-18	2289M	Charles O Garnsay 12-22-18	406C	Paul G Bennett 03-30-19
		388M	L G Hoover, Jr 01-05-19	2289M	Evelyn W Jasper 10-20-18	455T	Frank P Dimauro 01-14-19
		455T	Joseph M Hamilton 11-03-18	2289M	Lemona Nicolacopoulos 01-06-19	458M	David Breitzka 02-13-19
		458M	James P Broderick 12-10-18	2289M	Stanley M Toczydlowski 01-10-19	458M	William J Buresh 01-27-19
		458M	Doan Minh Hoang 12-15-18	6505M	Daniel R Axley Sr 01-29-19	458M	Clifford L Chandler 02-22-19
		458M	Enrique M Ledesma 08-26-17	6505M	Martin H Berra 01-02-19	458M	Peter Cuchetto 01-05-19
		458M	William C Mclean 11-21-17	6505M	Richard L Lamzik 12-27-18	458M	Frederick H Dude 10-27-18
		458M	Peter J Reilly 12-29-18	6505M	Donald L Miller 01-01-19	458M	Leonard S Gottschalk 02-06-19
		458M	James M Rosaves 01-29-19	6505M	Gene T Patrick, Sr 11-25-18	458M	Carmella A Heinstra 03-09-19
		458M	Robert J Sterner 02-06-19			458M	Donald W Madura 02-15-19
		458M	Steven Turus, Jr 01-29-19			458M	Kenneth D Maloney 02-25-19
		503M	Gary D Bommer 01-29-19			458M	James A Miller 12-23-18
		503M	George J Constas 12-03-18			458M	Leonard A Pudlo 12-16-18
		503M	Michael M Ewaniszyk 12-21-18			458M	Edward F Silverman 02-04-19
		508M	Mary J Cope 01-26-19			458M	Terry C Villanueva 03-02-19
		508M	John R Eyler 01-14-19			493M	Jerry L Dixon, Sr 03-03-19
		508M	Charlotte Patricia Forb 01-12-19			508M	Crystal G Fassler 01-08-19
		508M	Robertshaw Heys 01-28-19			508M	Donald D Fassler 06-02-13
		508M	Lawrence Jones 12-29-18			508M	William H Henke 01-23-19
		508M	Robert J Weber 01-23-19			508M	Dale M Henry 03-01-19
		518M	Wilma I Hayes 09-24-18			508M	Richard L Justus 03-07-19
		518M	Walter L Pennington 09-13-14			518M	Dino Righi 08-28-18
		518M	Rose M Satariano 01-31-18			518M	Ruth J Thompson 12-24-18
		518M	Robert G Short 02-02-19			527S	Roy A Griswell 01-26-19
		527S	Norma Gail Ellis 06-03-18			543M	Edward J Ramm 10-26-18
		546M	Allyn M Adams 02-12-19			543M	Ronald C Smith 01-28-19
		546M	Charles Bauer 01-16-19			546M	Billy J Devall 02-11-19
		546M	Robert L Brandon Jr 01-04-19			546M	William Martin, Sr 02-19-19
		546M	Paul J Thompson, Sr 02-10-19			546M	Robert C Miller 11-27-18
		555M	Lova Adams 01-09-19			555M	Jean-Marie Brunette 10-23-18
		555M	Gerard Bressani 01-27-19			555M	Alan Hadwin 12-04-18
		555M	Laureat Flynn 12-22-18			555M	Jean-Pierre Hetu 01-10-19
		555M	Jean Gilles Gaudet 01-01-19			568M	Ronald L Dart 03-06-19
		555M	Andre Montminy 12-28-18			572T	Russell H Wilson 01-06-19
		577M	Thomas W Aegerter 12-13-18	14M	John A Demelas 02-11-19	572T	Gregory Yaldizian 02-14-19

## CHARLES PRICE, REVERED GCIU OFFICE MANAGER, WAS 'THERE TO SERVE'

Charles C. Price, who served as office manager in the Washington, D.C. headquarters of the GCIU and its predecessor unions for more than 30 years and earned a reputation for civility and competence while guiding the organizations into the Information Age, died October 26 in Herndon, Virginia. He was 85.

Cause of death was related to pancreatic cancer, according to Price's son, Charles "Chuck" Price, who said his father died at home "surrounded by loved ones."

Throughout his career with the Graphic Communications International Union, Price set standards of respect and fairness that applied no less to staff members than top officials, said Bonnie Lindsley, who was hired by Price in 1987 for a data processing job and now serves as GCC/IBT information systems and membership records director.

"The unique thing about Charles was his ability to balance managing the office with the people he had to work with," Lindsley said. "He listened to everybody."

Lindsley said it was clear that Price, who oversaw the membership, computer and accounting operations, was devoted to organized labor and believed unions had a mandate to protect and uplift members.

As a manager, Price was not part of the GCIU bargaining unit but joined the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) – a gesture of solidarity that underscored his devotion to organized labor and those it represented, Lindsley said.

"Working for the GCIU wasn't just a job," she said. "He would stress that the individual member – the person in the shop – was who we were there to serve."

Price's commitment to working people was evident at the family home in Virginia, too, said Chuck Price.

At times, his father would join picket lines and explain to his son and daughter, Donna, that he was taking part to aid union members exercising their rights. "He wanted to support working people and make sure they were treated fairly," said Price.

Charles C. Price, son of Blanche and James Price, a print shop worker at the Pressmen's Home in Tennessee, began his career in the accounting department of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union (IPPAU) in 1959.

Holding an accounting degree from what is now East Tennessee State University, Price became office manager in 1967 when the IPPAU moved its



Charles C. Price

headquarters to Washington, D.C.

He remained in that post through two mergers that led to the GCIU – the IPPAU joining the Stereotypers/Electrotypers to form the International Printing and Graphic Communications Union which, in turn, merged with the Graphic Arts International Union to launch the Graphic Communications International Union.

As the computer age emerged, Price "helped ease the union through the technological revolution," the Communicator reported in 1999 when Price left his union post to care for his first wife, Doris, who was ailing, according to family members.

By that time, the digital world had led to a remarkable transformation in the workplace – GCIU headquarters, included.

"When you think about the leap from manual data entry to nearly complete automation in just four decades, it's really quite amazing," Price told the Communicator.

At a retirement party, GCIU president James J. Norton praised Price for his "attention to the needs of the union" while showing the staff "compassion and understanding."

Chuck Price said that sort of virtue was characteristic of his father, a faithful churchgoer and devoted Christian who never used profanity, did not drink alcoholic beverages and consistently showed kindness.

"He had a very mild temper," Price said. "If my sister and I did anything wrong, he would sit us down and tell us. He could convey a lot of feeling with a few words, and stern look."

Lindsley said working for Price was inspiring – and instructive.

"Not only did he teach me the ins and outs of union membership data, but he taught me the importance of unions," Lindsley said. "He was dedicated to the principles and goals of the union. Everything he did was to help achieve those goals."

Charles Price is survived by his wife of 15 years, Betty Lou; son, Charles; daughter, Donna Lafen; stepdaughters, Melinda Ewing and Donna Lee Williams; two grandchildren; a step grandchild; and, two step great grandchildren. Doris Price, mother of Charles Price's two children, died in 2002 after 42 years of marriage.



## Scoop! Organized Labor a Big Story

**B**reaking news: Labor is a big story.

Long a kind of editorial afterthought, coverage of unions in mainstream media is increasing rapidly – a sign that organized labor now enjoys higher public approval ratings and more newsroom staffers are seeking union representation.

Print publications and online outlets are assigning reporters to the labor beat, according to a story in the New York Times by media reporter Ben Smith, and several Internet sites devoted to workplace issues have come on the scene.

Some observers say recent organizing drives at news agencies have made reporters more sympathetic to labor issues, Smith writes, while other insiders contend more robust labor coverage simply indicates a smarter approach to business news.

Social media also is devoting space to labor and union issues.

Videos on conditions at Amazon and Frito-Lay produced by a group called More Perfect Union, Smith reported, have “each received more than two million views on Twitter.”

Union leaders welcome the attention.

Sara Nelson, international president of the Association of Flight Attendants, assured Smith news stories can prompt support and put pressure on recalcitrant employers.

“I can’t tell you how much that coverage means to people in the middle of a strike,” Nelson was quoted as saying.



## Volunteers Track Anti-Union Tactics

**H**ey, anti-union bosses – you’re busted

A new website called Union-Busting Tracker names companies and the heavy-handed law firms and consultants working behind the scenes to squelch organizing efforts.

It’s a volunteer effort by a group of union activists from around the country, according to the online news service LaborPress, and intended to keep members – and potential members – informed and energized.

“A shocking amount of young workers think unions are illegal and don’t know their rights,” Bob Funk, a Montana unionist who founded the website Laborlab.us, told LaborPress writer Steve Wishnia. “The union-busting industry takes advantage of people’s lack of knowledge.”

Volunteers reviewed LM-20 forms that so-called “persuader” firms – those who assist a company in anti-organizing efforts – are required to file with the Department of Labor and created an interactive “union-buster” map at [www.laborlab.us/unionbustingtracker](http://www.laborlab.us/unionbustingtracker)

Funk said the range of employers using outside firms to battle union organizing is wide – from Amazon to an elite private school in Chicago – and included a “horrifying” number of hospitals seeking to block nurses from joining a union even as medical personnel battle to save lives during the covid pandemic.

But, Funk told LaborPress, surveys show that when younger employees have access to information of the sort provided by the Union-Busting Tracker, they feel “more empowered.” Every day, Funk said, his group gets email asking how to start a union.

Making workplace gains is a long-term proposition, Funk acknowledged, but his volunteer team is committed to the mission. It is, he said, a “passion project.”

## Worker Shortage? Try Paying More

**E**mployers claim they can’t find workers – particularly in demanding fields like the private waste industry.

Chuck Stiles, director of the Teamsters solid waste and recycling division, says “exploitation” is the problem – not a reluctant work force.

“It’s a wage, benefits and workers’ rights shortage,” said Stiles in a piece he wrote for the online publication, Labor News Up to the Minute.

Stiles said major firms – Big Garbage, as the giant companies are known – have neglected workers for decades and are ducking the “hard truth” to save their reputations.

“Waste and recycling workers are leaving the industry because they are tired of the disrespect and poor working conditions,” Stiles said.

Other experts have made similar comments about the U.S. job market, overall.

New York Times writer David Leonhardt chided employers who claim they can’t find help.

“But companies have an easy way to solve the problem,” Leonhardt said in a commentary. “Pay more.”



## Autumn Walkouts Sign of Strength

**D**etermined to seize the initiative as covid-19 continues to rattle the labor market, union members walked off their jobs so often last fall that October became known as “Striketober” and experts said the trend could continue as employers struggle to find workers and workers sense that – for once – they have the upper hand.

“Strikes can be contagious for unions and workers,” Kate Bronfenbrenner, a Cornell University labor expert told NBC News. “There are shared issues that are pushing workers to go on strike – and workers are looking at each other and getting inspired.”

By mid-October, more than 100,000 workers were on strike or preparing to strike, according to Fortune Magazine, and ABC News reported that of the 255 strikes called in 2021, 43 had taken place in October, alone.

Hit by walkouts were employers ranging from individual McDonald’s restaurants to giant firms like John Deere, where 10,000 UAW workers settled on a contract after a month-long strike and three ratification votes.

Why now?

Joseph McCartin, Georgetown University professor specializing in labor, social and political history, told National Public Radio there were three reasons for the surge in worker militancy.

First, said McCartin, workers often become more emboldened as a crisis eases – the pandemic in this case – and economic conditions improve.

He said the so-called Great Resignation – workers quitting their jobs in unexpected numbers – has tightened an already difficult employment situation.

And, finally, McCartin said, workers likely have been encouraged to assert their independence because Joe Biden is perceived as an unusually labor-friendly president.

“People see now that they have an administration in power that’s really openly siding with workers...” – a rare sight, McCartin said.

## Amazon May face 2nd Alabama Vote

**N**ot so fast, Amazon.

A union drive at the company’s warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama, went down to defeat in April but organizers claimed Amazon didn’t play fair

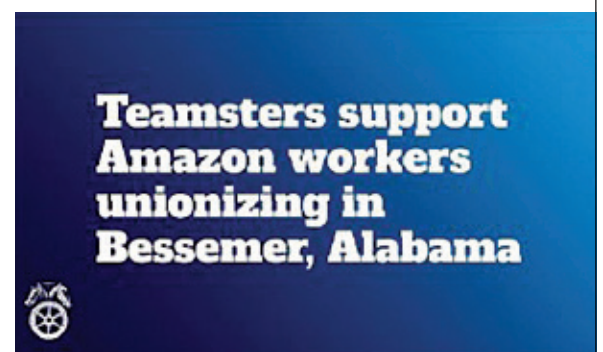
In November, a National Labor Relations Board hearing officer agreed – and recommended a second election.

The ruling – subject to review by the NLRB regional director – vindicated Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) officials who claimed the company used a variety of coercive tactics and warned at mandatory meetings that workers could lose pay and benefits if the union won, and even that the plant might close.

“Throughout the N.L.R.B. hearing, we heard compelling evidence how Amazon tried to illegally interfere with and intimidate workers as they sought to exercise their right to form a union,” said Stuart Appelbaum, the union’s president, in a statement announcing the hearing officer’s decision.

The hearing officer’s finding – rejected by Amazon – came as the Teamsters and IBT General President-elect Sean O’Brien pledged to make Amazon an organizing priority.

“I want Amazon to know that the Teamsters are coming for them.” O’Brien told the online publication Truthout in October. “We’re coming for them hard.”





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GCC-IBT-ATT-12-10-2021



# Unpaid Beneficiaries

The following is a list of persons whom the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund believes may be eligible to receive part or all of a participant's death benefit. The participant whose name is listed has died but the fund has been unable to locate the person listed as beneficiary. Potential beneficiaries, or anyone with information relating to their whereabouts, should contact the fund at 25 Louisiana Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001, or phone the office at (202) 508-6675.

PARTICIPANT NAME	LOCAL	DOD	BENEFICIARY NAME	PARTICIPANT NAME	LOCAL	DOD	BENEFICIARY NAME
Paul Arnold	MAL	03/2021	Judy Propes	Henry C Smith	B119	10/2021	Matthew N Smith
Darwin Au	M 14	06/2016	Helen Au	James Thrun	M577	05/2019	David Thrun
James R Bell	N 16	01/2016	Susan E Bell	James Thrun	M577	05/2019	Debra Green
Jean Bergman	L1	08/2018	Angel Gan	Thomas Wilkins	G591	01/2021	Robin Wade
Gary Pesavento	C137	03/2021	Nancy Pesavento	Garnetha Williams	B119	05/2018	David Williams-Dyer Jr

# Unpaid Benefits

In order to determine if there were retired participants whose heirs were entitled to, but did not collect, death benefits, The Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund (BTF) electronically compared a list of the fund's retired participants with various databases tracking dates of death.

The following is a list of deceased BTF retirees for whom no benefit claims were made as of September, 2021. The beneficiaries of these members may be entitled to a benefit from the fund. They, or anyone who knows the whereabouts of the beneficiaries, should contact the fund at 25 Louisiana Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001, or phone the BTF office at (202) 508-6675.

Note: Local indicated for a deceased participant may not be consistent with the individual's local at retirement date due to subsequent mergers.

NAME	LOCAL	DOD	NAME	LOCAL	DOD	NAME	LOCAL	DOD
Frank Adamo	L1	01/2018	Joseph Dominato	M 25	01/2021	Frederick J Papineau	M 25	12/2020
Wayne V Attig	MAL	01/2021	Burley L Dugan	M235	11/2020	Betty A Patrick	M285	01/2021
Manuel Avila	M4535	08/2020	Clayton F Eldridge	M261	09/2020	Pedro Portolatin-Arce	B119	04/2021
John Barbara	L1	10/2020	James Galvach	M612	01/2021	Dennis G Powell	M367	12/2020
James J Carole	L1	06/2021	James T Garrity	N 16	09/2020	Frank Purpura	L1	10/2020
Robert B Carpenter	C4	04/2021	Lawrence R Gray	M503	01/2021	Donald E Samuelson	T117-01	09/2020
Gary L Carter	M432	05/2021	Ronald Grecco	L1	09/2020	Philip Sandoval Jr	T572-01	04/2021
Malcolm G Clarke	T117-01	12/2020	Ernest A Guhl	M6505	10/2020	Robert E Schlichting	M458	04/2021
Betty L Crockett	MAL	02/2021	Jeff C Hagen	M197	10/2020	Richard O Schofill	N3	09/2020
Richard M Cxyz	MAL	04/2021	James H Hahn	B1	03/2021	Ronald Shaw	L1	12/2020
Anne Dal-Col	B119	01/2021	Darlene Halvorson	B1	03/2021	Robert V Smith	T853-01	12/2020
Eddie Mae Delk	M458	08/2020	Jerry Harmon Jr	M 25	04/2021	Dave T Spence	M25	11/2020
						Herbert Steverson	S527	01/2021
						John F Stone	T355-01	11/2020
						Daniel Sullivan	N2	09/2020
						Donald C Sundell	M518	03/2021
						Gene E Talbott	L1	11/2020
						Henry S Tedesco	L1	08/2020
						William D Tice	M24	12/2020
						Tadeusz Tomaszewski	M14	02/2021
						Jack Tremont	M4535	03/2021
						Marcel C Trudeau	N3	08/2020
						Alice I Tucker	MAL	03/2021
						Amberson L Upshaw	T117-01	06/2021
						Thomas Vlahek	N38	02/2021
						Robert G Williams Jr	T572-01	12/2020
						Kim Zimmerman	M514	12/2020

# Funny Business



"Why didn't you catch my mistakes when you had the chance?"



"No, your cats don't bother me. I work under constant surveillance at the office."



"I hate going into a staff meeting without"



"There will be no raises since good work is its own reward."



"It's your boss. He wants to make sure you're working at home."