

THE COMMUNICATOR



Volume 3 Number 4 | Printing Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America | Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2025

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Labor Day:
'Workers Over
Billionaires'

Workers'
LABOR
Day

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Tariff Policies
Will Cause Pain
For Consumers



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White House
Restore Funds
For NPR, PBS



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Solidarity Conference in Atlanta Shows PPPWU Power and Persistence



By Fred Bruning
The Communicator

Atlanta – United by common purpose, perseverance and confidence in a labor organization that has prevailed for 140 years, delegates to the first PPPWU Solidarity Conference spent three productive days sharing information, building relationships and demonstrating the sort of mutual support that assures progress and prosperity.

"We are family," said Ken Roberts, Local 577-M, Milwaukee in remarks that drew cheers and applause from an energized audience last month at the Hilton Garden Inn-Millennium Center. "The camaraderie here is awesome."

Around the meeting room, posters and banners reflected the theme of determination and resilience emphasized by Solidarity Conference organizers and speakers. "Powerful. Persistent. Proud," was the message. "Keepers of the Trade. Experts in our Industry."

The meaning was clear: A steadfast PPPWU will prevail as the pre-eminent labor organization in the printing, packaging and production fields and resist attempts by any rival to lure away members and challenge the union's authority.

Since scuttling a 20-year GCC/IBT merger agreement in 2022, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters has sought to "raid" PPPWU locals and district councils with aggressive tactics widely rejected by the labor movement.

"They're using every trick in the books," said Robert Loreda, Local 388-M, Los Angeles.

Solidarity Conference leaders said the union was maintaining a strong, united front against IBT tactics and turning back continued Teamster efforts to disrupt. "We have to be vigilant," said PPPWU President Steve Nobles.

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Israel Castro In Sec-Treas Post After Passing Of Clark Ritchey

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Israel Castro

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This issue of The Communicator includes a notice on worker objections to agency fees. PAGE 16

In Atlanta, Hopeful Display of Strength And Can-do Spirit

WHAT IS SOLIDARITY?

Here's the Cambridge Dictionary definition: "agreement between and support for the members of a group, especially a political group."

That's a good try but doesn't go far enough to capture the mood, commitment and determination evident last month in Atlanta at the PPPWU's first Solidarity Conference.



In three days, leaders of the Newspaper, Specialty, Eastern and Midwestern conferences demonstrated why our union prevails and remains the leading trade organization in the printing and packaging industries.

It was a historic moment – the inaugural event of a new and efficient conference – and the sense of purpose was evident in casual conversations and informative speeches from the podium.

Delegates adopted a constitution – our thanks to Janice Bort of Local 72-C for a great job drafting the document – and cheered the new PPPWU secretary-treasurer Israel Castro. And there was a touching tribute to Israel's predecessor, Clark Ritchey, our widely beloved colleague who died unexpectedly in June at age 58.

On a personal note, I want to say again that Clark was an extraordinary union leader. He was smart, compassionate and unwavering in his support of members.

We worked well as a team. I relied on his wisdom, insight, patience and bold thinking. I will miss him – brother unionist, talented labor professional, dear friend.

It is our good fortune that a person with Israel Castro's integrity and vision is prepared to assume responsibilities in the union's second-



highest office. Clark would have wanted us to waste no time and, I promise, we will do nothing less.

In Atlanta, I could feel Clark's can-do spirit.

Hard work lay ahead but the mood was upbeat, the outlook hopeful, the dedication of local and district leaders undeniable.

And let's be clear.

Delegates weren't kidding themselves.

Again and again, representatives said the union must keep its focus, emphasize organizing, resist efforts to undercut and demoralize the organization.

Though it breaks every rule of decency and defies established union practice, Teamster leadership still is trying to raid the PPPWU. Just to be clear, this union is strong, united and not going anywhere.

We know, too, that we – and all unions – face a tough, anti-labor threat on Capitol Hill and in the White House.

When President Donald Trump fired Bureau of Labor Statistics Commissioner Erika McEntarfer because a jobs report displeased him and replaced her with diehard conservative, E.J. Antoni, we knew there was real trouble.

McEntarfer, an economist with more than 20 years of government service, was respected by Republicans and Democrats. Antoni, who comes from the hard-right Heritage Foundation, is viewed as a partisan operative dedicated to an extreme economic agenda.

Trump's impulsive action was made worse by Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer who said she "wholeheartedly" agreed with the president instead of defending McEntarfer, a DOL employee.

How can we expect Chavez-DeRemer to stand up for ordinary workers if she won't protect a decent and admired member of her own agency?

But as Solidarity Conference delegates made clear in Atlanta, the PPPWU is not easily intimidated or turned around.

At the grassroots level and in Washington, we will protect our rights, speak up for working Americans and carry on with courage and conviction. This is our mandate – represented by inspiring leaders like Clark Ritchey – and we will not fail the test. ■

OUTLOOK

HAROLD MEYERSON

The Price of Rushing to a Dictator's Defense

IF THERE'S ONE THING ABOUT DONALD TRUMP OF which we can be certain, it's that he's a sucker for tin-pot dictators.

His attractions to Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un may come and go, but he's found a soul brother in Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, the country's former president who, after being defeated for re-election, attempted to cling to power by engineering a coup (which, thankfully, failed).

Trump, who escaped prosecution for inciting an attack on Congress in an attempt to overturn the 2020 election, rushed to Bolsonaro's defense by hitting Brazil with a 50 percent tariff.

"The way that Brazil has treated former President Bolsonaro, a Highly Respected Leader throughout the World during his term, including by the United States, is an international disgrace" Trump wrote in a letter to Brazilian President Lula da Silva. "This Trial should not be taking place. It is a Witch Hunt that should end IMMEDIATELY."

As justification for the tariffs imposed in July, Trump claimed a U.S. trade deficit with Brazil.

Problem is the United States actually enjoys a trade surplus. Last year, it came to \$7.4 billion and the imbalance continues in 2025, as well.

Thanking Trump for his help, Bolsonaro employed the kind of rhetoric Trump so covets. "Thank you, Illustrious President and friend," he wrote. "Your excellency went through something similar. Thank you for existing."



THE AMERICAN PROSPECT

Trump's unprecedented use of tariffs to punish a democracy for seeking to defend itself from a coup – Bolsonaro was convicted last month and sentenced to 27 years – has so stunned commentators that the effect such a tariff would have on American consumers hasn't yet fully registered.

So, consider this: In 2023, 35 percent of the imported coffee beans that make up our morning pick-me-ups came from Brazil – and that was lower than the usual level, since Brazil had suffered from a drought that year.

At a time when affordability has become the flashpoint for working- and middle-class discontent with the economy, Trump is effectively proposing to send the cost of coffee skyrocketing.

A lesser man might be deterred by the economic consequences and political fallout from this threatened tariff but give Trump credit where credit is due: His commitment to overthrowing democracy in Latin America's largest nation will not be deterred by such mundane considerations. ■

Harold Meyerson is editor at large at The American Prospect magazine. This piece first appeared on the American Prospect website, prospect.org, and is reprinted with permission of the author.



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12301 Old Columbia Pike, Suite 310,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
240-223-0310

e-mail: info@pppwu.org

GEORGE TEDESCHI
Editor

FRED BRUNING
Managing Editor

AFFILIATIONS
Canadian Labour Congress
Member of International
Labor Communications Association
of Labour Media



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For Labor – and the Nation – Respect is Key to Progress

IN A COUNTRY THAT OFTEN SEEMS DEEPLY DIVIDED AND BADLY disillusioned, the PPPWU Solidarity Conference in Atlanta last month served as reminder of what can be accomplished when dedicated people work together for a common purpose.

The event brought together delegates from the Newspaper, Specialty, Eastern and Midwestern conferences for a three-day meeting committed to mutual support, member service and a renewed spirit of purpose and perseverance. (Coverage on Page 1, 8-9)



Solidarity organizers arranged a busy schedule with speakers, committee meetings and strategy sessions. There were relaxed moments, too, when delegates and guests renewed old friendships, recalled past success and spoke optimistically of the future.

Israel Castro, principal officer of DC-3, was introduced as the new PPPWU secretary-treasurer replacing Clark Ritchey, who died unexpectedly in June at age 58. Members and guests honored Ritchey with testimonials lauding his diligence, negotiating skills, concern for members and respect for all people.

“We showed what solidarity really means,” said President Steve Nobles after the concluding session. “This is how a union should work – and how a country should function, too. Cooperation is the key. Without support and respect there cannot be progress.”

If only that were the message coming out of Washington these days. Instead, we have a White House administration that seems determined to disrupt and drive apart.

Among the targets of President Donald Trump and his lieutenants have been Labor Department professionals dismissed for no legitimate reason, civil servants fired by the thousands without cause, federal unions stripped of bargaining rights, public broadcasting

denied funding, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration forced to abandon workplace safety regulations. (Stories on Pages 10, 12, 16)

At the same time, the wealthiest Americans earn special consideration – a trend so alarming that union leaders made “Workers Over Billionaires” the theme of September observances of Labor Day.

“Corporate America takes as much as they can get,” said Pat LoPresti, president of Local 1-L, who marched in New York City’s huge pro-worker parade. “We have to put our foot down. Enough is enough.” (Page 4)

A widespread sense of outrage is building as the White House caters increasingly to Big Tech executives and Wall Street elites, experts said as Labor Day approached.

“I’ve seen how powerful working people can be when they come together,” said Jennifer Abruzzo, National Labor Relations Board general counsel fired by Trump. “The bosses and billionaires see it, too – and it terrifies them.”

Also rattling the working class is the worrisome shape of the American economy.

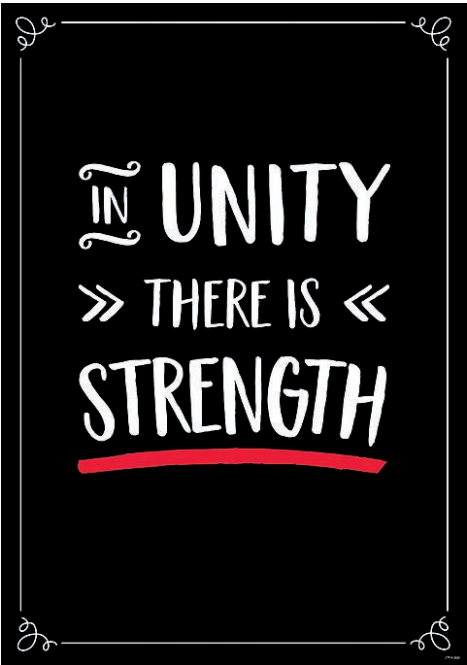
As union pension expert George Kraw points out in another insightful analysis, Trump’s erratic – and often punitive – tariff scheme will inevitably boost prices and put fixed income Americans at particular disadvantage. “Retirees and working people are high up on the list of those who will feel the most pain,” Kraw warns. (Page 5)

Financial writer Jerry Morgan has a similar warning. Prices are heading up, Morgan said in his Bottom Line column – including for your morning cup of coffee. (Page 7)

So you can be sure, Solidarity Conference leaders were not kidding themselves.

For the PPPWU, organized labor and the nation, these are uncertain times. The country’s political norms, sense of purpose and reputation are at risk. The economy is shaky. Workers wonder what will happen next?

But the message in Atlanta was clear: The union remains focused, resolute and forward-looking. Challenges will be met with new vigor. Our determination is unbroken. We have what it takes to endure. Solidarity makes us strong.



COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

Feisty Journos Fight for Justice in Austin

IN 2018 MY NEWSPAPER DIED.

Well, actually, the emaciated carcass of the Austin (Texas) American-Statesman still had a feeble pulse. But its journalistic voice and soul were gone, stripped out by the notorious financial predators of Gannett, the huge media conglomerate that had recently bought the paper.

Happily, though, the Statesman has made a near-miraculous recovery, thanks to a small-but-feisty band of actual journalists who believe in local newspapers.

They fought Gannett bosses tenaciously, gaining a voice by forming a union, striking, and finally compelling the giant to sign a union contract. Victory!

Uh – not yet. Just months later, Gannett sold the newspaper to Hearst, another massive media conglomerate.

This new relationship started well, but soon turned sour when Hearst honchos abruptly refused to honor the paper’s contract with the union.

Then they began firing employees and jacking around with the newsroom’s health care and retirement benefits. Adding pettiness to greed, Hearst honchos even refused to let Statesman journalists take a holiday that corporate managers get. What the hell?



Bear in mind that Hearst is a phenomenally profitable, \$13-billion-a-year, multi-media behemoth.

CEO Steven Swartz pockets millions of dollars a year and lives in luxury. Also, Austin is a booming media market worth gazillions to Hearst! No need to be so pathetically stingy!

So, the hardy members of the Austin News Guild are back doing what working people have to do – organizing and mobilizing for a little more justice.

“We’re no strangers to the petty tactics of corporate



elites,” they say, so the guild is relaunching its grassroots campaign to battle the bigshots, fight for fairness, and protect local news.

To track progress, go to: AustinNewsGuild.org

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



Thousands of labor allies – including the Democratic governor of New York, Kathy Hochul – marched up Fifth Avenue in a Labor Day observance focused on the need to narrow the worrisome income gap in the United States and put ‘workers over billionaires.’

SUSAN WATTS/OFFICE OF GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

Labor Must ‘Wake Up’ to Role of Big Money

By Fred Bruning
The Communicator

The call was clear and echoed emphatically by union members at 1,000 rallies, in 900 cities and every state – Workers Over Billionaires.

A month after Labor Day, the union-led demand for economic justice continues to resonate with Americans appalled at the nation’s widening income disparity and the influence of big money on President Donald Trump’s policy priorities.

“Together we will demand a country that puts workers over billionaires,” said May Day Strong, a coalition of labor and community groups, in a statement.

Coast to coast, activists rallied to hail the accomplishments of organized labor and denounce anti-labor Trump administration initiatives – everything from summary dismissal of federal workers to undermining union bargaining rights.

Nothing seems off limits.

In one stunning anti-worker move, the Trump administration proposed removing or changing dozens of Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations and in another the administration moved to fire experts trying to prevent mining disasters and illness afflicting miners.

“We have to wake up,” said Pat LoPresti, president of Local 1-L, New York, who joined other PPPWU members, thousands of labor allies and New York Governor Kathy Hochul in a Sept. 6 march along Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. “He’s catering to the wealthy – and himself.”

Labor must fight back against the powerful forces opposing worker rights, leaders said.

“So let them hear this: You will not divide us,” said United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain on Labor Day in Detroit. “You will not break us. You will not win because solidarity is not just our strategy. Solidarity is the answer. Solidarity forever. Let’s get it done.”

Since Trump’s assault on the federal work force began earlier this year, at least 150,000 civil servants – many of them union members – have left their jobs because of voluntary resignations, layoffs or firings, according to the New York Times. Another 445,000 have lost union bargaining rights, the Times reported.

“These unprecedented cuts follow President Trump and billionaire Elon Musk’s mission to downsize the federal government under the guise of cost savings and improved efficiency,” said the Economic Policy Institute, a non-profit research organization.



ETSY VIA GOOGLE IMAGES



PHOTO COURTESY LOCAL 1-L

At the New York parade, Chris Scafani, Local 1 business agent and organizer, left; Pat LoPresti, president, center; and James Santangelo, secretary-treasurer made clear that unions are essential to the protection and preservation of the American middle class. In one survey, nearly three-quarters of Americans said children of this generation likely would not do as well as their parents. ‘A union contract is the only way to guarantee a fair deal for workers,’ said PPPWU President Steve Nobles.

The Trump administration’s “mismanagement of the federal government will have lasting repercussions for generations,” EPI said.

Of particular concern is the impact of job cutbacks on black employees who make up nearly 20 percent of the federal work force. White House attempts to drastically shrink the federal government will have “serious implications for federal workers and their families – especially Black workers,” EPI said.

Just before Labor Day, Trump sought to rescind bargaining rights for an expanded list of federal employees – a move denounced as ill-advised and vindictive by labor leaders.

“Issuing these executive orders just days before the holiday that honors everything working people have fought and died for – including our right to come together with our co-workers in a union and bargain for what we deserve – shows us that this administration’s callous disregard for workers’ rights knows no bounds,” said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler.

Among the agencies targeted by Trump in his latest move were NASA, the National Weather Service, the Office of the Commissioner for Patents and the Bureau of Reclamation which oversees hydroelectric plants across the country, according to the New York Times.

Everett Kelley, president of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), said Trump’s action showed “American workers what he really thinks about them.”

Kelley noted that a similar order in March threatened bargaining rights for thousands of federal workers – including the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Science Foundation – and blasted the latest edict as a “clear example of retaliation” against union members and their leaders.

But all workers are at risk when big money interests gain outsized influence, analysts say.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office reports that income for the richest .01 percent of Americans grew 27 times faster than the bottom 20 percent reminding some

Continues on page 13



Members of Local 1-L, New York, foreground, joined union members from the Allied Printing Trades Council in an emphatic celebration of labor rights and common purpose. Labor leaders around the country warned that the Trump administration was swayed by big money interests and that greed was contorting the economy. ‘Corporate America takes as much as they can get,’ said Pat LoPresti, president of Local 1-L. ‘We have to put our foot down. Enough is enough.’

PHOTO COURTESY LOCAL 1-L

Trump's Tariffs: Worst is Yet to Come

By George M. Kraw

Americans are going to pay for President Donald Trump's erratic tariffs and trade policies – make no mistake.

Retirees and working people are high up on the list of those who will feel the most pain. Neither the courts nor Congress have the power or the will to stop the President, especially one who has shown a willingness to skirt court orders and ignore legislation that doesn't suit him.

Here's what to expect:

- Declines in the value of pension fund assets may result in funding shortfalls for defined benefit plans.
- Balances in 401(k) and IRA accounts may go up and down sharply, compelling retirees to revisit their withdrawal and expenditure plans.
- Volatility may also prompt pension fund managers to alter investment strategies, potentially exposing assets to heightened risk or reduced returns.

When Trump told an interviewer that parents may not be able to buy as many dolls for their children this Christmas, he wasn't kidding. Also costing more are major consumer items like new and used cars – already expensive and becoming more so. The era of cheap household goods – toys, television screens, clothes, computers and other everyday items – is rapidly coming to an end.

Recent government inflation reports have been erratic and contradictory but they do show that inflation is embedded in the Trump economy. Some of that inflation was already in the system. But much of this is the result of tariff-driven price increases, along with the anticipation of more trade barriers and higher prices.



George M. Kraw

One federal appeals court has declared a portion of the Trump tariffs illegal. But that decision is stayed while the case goes to the Trump-friendly Supreme Court. No matter how the Supreme court rules in the current case, some tariffs will survive. They will be a tax on imported goods and have wide-ranging consequences. Whatever tariffs gain in revenue they almost surely will

The Administration's response to bad economic news is to fire the government employees reporting the bad news. The head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics found herself out of a job, shortly after presenting a poor jobs report this summer.

Firing the messenger doesn't change economic facts. And fudging numbers won't stop inflation or decrease unemployment.

lead to negative consequences when inflation hits and the economy slows.

In addition, retaliatory measures from other nations, supply chain disruptions, and increased input costs add layers of complexity to the economic landscape. The Trump Administration claims that foreign manufacturers will absorb the additional cost. That is a fantasy.

For active workers and retirees, rising prices for essential goods and services – including food and prescription medications – will erode purchasing power. Over time, this reduces discretionary spending or increases withdrawals from personal savings, like retirement accounts.

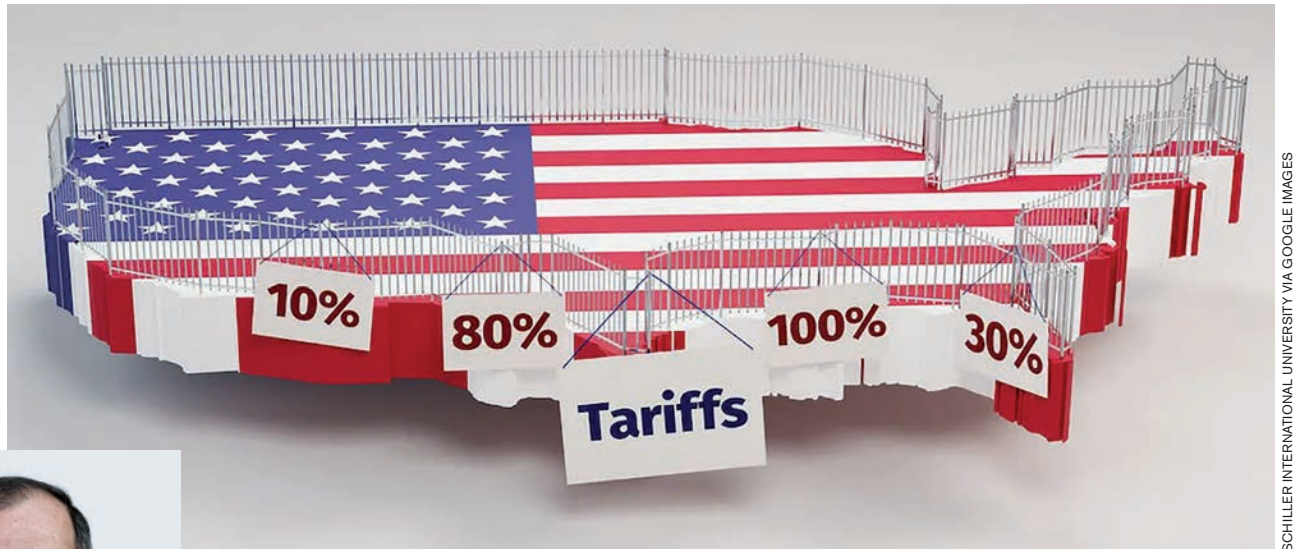
Financial markets haven't felt the full effect of Trump Administration tariffs, but they will. These markets are sensitive to uncertainty of the sort tariffs and retaliatory measures cause. Significant market fluctuations can have long term consequences for the retirement assets of individuals.

Many pension funds already face underfunding because promised benefits exceed available assets. Should tariffs contribute to an economic slowdown or recession, lower investment returns or outright losses will increase funding deficiencies, increasing uncertainty and concern for present and future retirees.

Periods marked by trade tensions and tariff-related uncertainty have often led to pension fund problems. The tariff and trade disputes witnessed in the late 2010's provide a useful history lesson. When the Trump administration enacted tariffs on steel, aluminum, and a variety of Chinese imports, financial markets experienced heightened volatility. Some benefit plans saw delayed and reduced employer contributions.

As I write this, the stock market is hitting new highs. It shows the signs of a classic bubble that will eventually burst. Given the erratic twists and turns of the Trump Administration, retirees and pension funds should buckle up. Higher consumer prices, and greater market volatility will make for difficult, unpredictable days ahead.

George M. Kraw is a benefits lawyer in Silicon Valley and was a labor representative to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Advisory Committee from 2002-2005.



SCHILLER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY VIA GOOGLE IMAGES



US Funds via Google Images

MAKE CERTAIN TO PLAN NOW FOR A SECURE RETIREMENT

By Maggie Peck

Are you planning to retire someday?

If so, you'll want to make certain you are taking every opportunity to save for the future.

At The Members Retirement Plan (TMRP), you can help supplement your retirement savings with as little as \$5-a-week with a maximum limit of up to \$7,000 a year, all tax deferred.

TMRP is a 100 percent funded defined benefit plan offering you a great savings vehicle for both you and your loved ones in the future.

We offer a disability, death and joint survivor benefit.



Are you getting those additional benefits with your 401K or traditional pension?

PPPWU members, there is no time better than the present to begin participating in TMRP or increase your current contributions – with an accrual rate of 1.75 percent – to get the most out of this great benefit.

Contact your Local or TMRP at 630-752-8400 today to find out just how easy it is.

Maggie Peck is executive director of The Members Retirement Plan, formerly The Teamsters Retirement Plan, and is based in St. Charles, Illinois.

Bargaining Rights? Don't Be So Sure In Time of Trump

Here's a scary story.

Approximately 5,000 unionized workers at the Department of Veterans Affairs on Long Island and in Brooklyn and Queens lost their bargaining rights this summer – bang, just like that.

Threatened are workplace protections, pay, benefits and grievance rights members thought were guaranteed. Unless the courts intervene – the union is suing for relief – all those gains could be gone, good-bye.

"This is ridiculous, they're telling people they can't join a union," Robert Dennis, president of the American Federation of Government Employees' Local 1843, told Newsday. "This is our freedom. They're causing chaos and fear so that people will not want to be part of the union."

Dennis said he had been given orders to clear out of the union office at the Northport VA hospital. In other words, close up shop and make it quick.

Why?

Veterans Administration officials say ending union contracts will make it "easier for VA leaders to promote high-performing employees, hold poor performers accountable, and improve benefits and services," according to Newsday.

Union leaders say baloney.

"...the action by VA Secretary Doug Collins was a clear case of retaliation against AFGE members for speaking out against the illegal, anti-worker, and anti-veteran policies of the Trump administration," the union said in a press release.

But, wait, here's the really frightening part.

The anti-union move in New York is being repeated around the country and VA workers are not the only targets.

President Donald Trump – you know, the guy who campaigned as the friend of working Americans – signed an executive order in March rescinding union rights for most federal employees. Just like that as many as 1 million workers lost bargaining rights.

The administration's phony claim is that union contracts hinder progress and merit-based advancement and – can you believe this? – pose a threat to national security.

Nonsense.

At hand, of course, is a broad and familiar Republican assault against organized labor that intensified last year when the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation published a manifesto of extreme policy proposals – many anti-union – called, "Project 2025," that Trump now finds useful as a right-wing roadmap.

So the familiar question must be asked again: Why would union members vote for an anti-union president?

No doubt, there are many answers – worries over economic issues, culture war divisions, complaints that the Democratic Party has drifted too far toward the educated elite.

But as Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, recently told the New York Times, Democrats remain the party of working people even if that message often goes unheard.

"And if it's not heard," she said, according to the Times, "it's as if it doesn't happen."

Millions of union members believed Trump would lower grocery prices, end wars, bring back manufacturing, provide millions of high-paying jobs – usher in a Golden Age.

We're still waiting.

Democrats aren't perfect and organized labor should make certain the party keeps working-class needs at the top of its agenda.

But Trump and the right-to-work Republicans who enable his erratic decision-making and anti-union tactics are doing real damage – and he's just getting started.

If there is a challenge to national security and common purpose, look at the White House not labor unions.



Point of View

BY ROBERT B. REICH

Is America in a Second Gilded Age?

On August 23, 1971, fewer than two months before he was nominated to serve as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Lewis F. Powell, Jr. wrote a memo to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

It was titled, "Attack On American Free Enterprise System," and outlined ways in which corporate America should defend against "disquieting voices" – environmentalists, consumer advocates, and labor unions. Powell warned that their voices were growing louder and their influence was gaining in the halls of Congress.

I remember the time very well.

The nation was witnessing a flowering of reform. Just as the "muckrakers" of the early 20th Century had spawned the Progressive Era in response to the wide inequalities and corruption of the first Gilded Age, 1960s reformers sought to rebalance the American economy in favor of all its stakeholders.

Lewis Powell was deeply alarmed. He told corporate America that businesses must pour money into political campaigns, public relations campaigns, and litigation all aimed at putting an end to this wave of reform.

Corporate America duly followed Powell's advice. An entire corporate-political complex was born, including tens of thousands of lobbyists, lawyers, political operatives, and public relations flacks.

I saw Washington change.

When I arrived in 1974 to work in the Ford administration, it was a rather seedy town. By the time I returned as secretary of labor in 1993, it had been transformed into a glittering center of corporate America – replete with elegant office buildings, fancy restaurants, five-star hotels, major conference centers, and a booming real estate market that pushed Washington's poor, most of whom were Black, out of the increasingly upscale Northwest portion of the city and made two of Washington's adjoining counties among the wealthiest in the nation.



By that time, corporations employed some 61,000 people to lobby for them – more than a hundred lobbyists for each member of Congress.

That tsunami of big money from giant corporations, their top executives and major investors was engulfing American politics. It not only sunk reform; it began to rig the entire system in favor of the moneyed interests and against average working people.

In subsequent years, the Supreme Court opened the floodgates, ruling absurdly that money was speech under the First Amendment and corporations were people.

Is America in a second Gilded Age featuring robber barons like Musk, Bezos, Zuckerberg, and the biggest robber of them all – Trump.

What's the answer? No easy one, of course, but we have to get big money out of politics. Start with campaign finance reform – public funds matching small-donor contributions to candidates that agree to limit their campaign spending.

Robert B. Reich served as secretary of labor in the Clinton administration and is Emeritus Carmel P. Friesen Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He is the author of numerous books, including, "Coming Up Short: A Memoir of My America," as noted in "All the Best," Page 7. This piece appeared originally as a Substack newsletter (robertreich@substack.com).

Lotta’ Cash for Cuppa’ Joe

If President Trump doesn’t like his approval rating now wait until tariffs hit and Americans start paying another 15-20 percent for their morning cup of Joe.

It’s a simple political formula: tariffs jack up coffee prices, favorability numbers go down.

Even Trump should understand that.

Ro Khanna, a Democratic congressman for California, plans to introduce a bipartisan bill in Congress to block coffee tariffs and courts question the legality of Trump’s import levies but, for now, prices are creeping up.

The United States is the largest coffee drinking country on Earth but we produce less than 1 percent of what we consume – mostly in Hawaii. The rest comes from Brazil, Colombia, Vietnam and Indonesia. Trump has slammed all with punishing tariffs.

And while tariffs are supposed to protect industries from foreign competition there is no coffee growing industry here to protect. We simply don’t have the climate for a coffee bean crop.

Even without the tariffs, coffee prices have been rising.

A Google survey in September found the average cup of regular from a coffee shop was \$3.51. Other choices – from decaf to a designer frappe – ranged from \$3.56 to \$6.12.

The investment company EMPOWER conducted a survey and found that, on average, a cup of coffee four days week costs \$44.50 a month.

But that’s only the morning cup. A lot of people drink coffee throughout the day – a

habit that soon could bust any worker’s budget.

Remember: No matter what the White House says, tariffs are a tax on consumers.

Federal Reserve Board chairman Jerome Powell said in August the effect of tariffs on prices are undeniable and costs likely will continue to increase.

For now, the courts are the consumer’s best hope.

A federal appeals court ruling declaring Trump’s tariffs illegal is expected to draw Supreme Court review.

Perhaps it is time for the high court to remember that the Founding Fathers knew it was “the power of the purse” – the ability to raise taxes and decide how to spend the money – that made kings so powerful.

That’s why they made a conscious decision to give Congress – not the President – the power of the purse. It’s right there in the Constitution.

So the Supremes face a major decision: Uphold their oath to protect the Constitution or bow to a would-be king who has upended the healthy economy he inherited – and made it harder to afford even a cup of coffee. ■

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



Strong Unions, Strong Nation

We know that unions promote economic equality and build worker power, helping workers to win increases in pay, better benefits, and safer working conditions. But that’s not all unions do.

Unions also have powerful effects on people’s lives outside of work. They help foster solidarity, promote civic and political engagement, provide reliable information to working-class communities about how economic policies impact their lives, and serve as a counterweight to corporate power in our democracy.

Throughout history, unions have been engines of resistance to entrenched and undemocratic power – mobilizing working people to challenge inequality, defend civil rights, and push back against authoritarianism in all its forms.

High union density is consistently associated with a much broader set of positive spillover effects across multiple dimensions: from higher wages and better benefits; to more equitable tax systems; safer workplaces; stronger public services; and healthier, more inclusive democracies.

However, union density levels across the country are not nearly as high as they could and should be. While nearly half of all nonunion workers say they want a union in their workplace, just 11.1 percent of all workers are covered by a union contract.

Current law places too many obstacles in the way of workers trying to organize and gives employers

too much power to interfere with workers’ free choice.

It is therefore critical that policymakers enact reforms that restore a meaningful right to organize and collectively bargain.

One simple way to help accomplish this would be to pass much needed labor law reform. The Protecting the Right to Organize and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate acts strengthen rights for private- and public-sector workers and would give workers access to a union and the well-being it promotes.

The evidence is clear: When unions are strong, workers have more power and communities thrive. In the face of rising inequality and authoritarianism, unions organize, educate, and mobilize working people to defend voting rights, push back against disinformation, and expand civic participation.

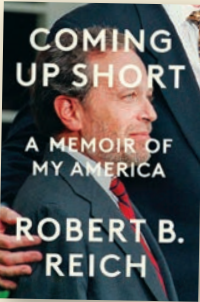
They help build the democratic muscle memory we need to withstand authoritarian backsliding. Rebuilding worker power is not just good policy – it is a democratic imperative. ■

This piece reflects the conclusions of an Economic Policy Institute report by EPI policy director Celine McNicholas, senior policy analyst Margaret Poydock, president Heidi Shierholz and economist Hilary Wething. The full report appears on the EPI website, epi.org.

All the Best

Print
Coming Up Short: A Memoir of My America
Robert B. Reich

Robert Reich, former labor secretary under President Bill Clinton (and frequent op-ed contributor to The Communicator), is 4’-11” but the good-natured title of his memoir has less to do with physical stature than concern that Americans are not vigorously enough opposing economic inequality, corporate greed and “Trumpian” political treachery – that we are coming up short. Despite his alarm, Reich ends on an optimistic note. “I’m confident our sense of fairness will re-emerge,” he writes. With democracy under daily pressure, let’s hope so.. **Knopf, \$30.**



Music
The Secret of Life: Partners, Volume Two

Barbra Streisand is a Brooklyn girl – she went to public schools and worked the counter at a local Chinese restaurant as a teenager – and while wildly successful never forgot her working- class roots. Blue-collar moxie has been evident throughout her career. Streisand says what she thinks and her foundation tackles a host of important issues – from climate change to support for Ukraine in its war against Russian invaders. In this album, Streisand shows her intrepid, street-wise spirit, teaming up with an assortment of diverse artists. Among the guests are Paul McCartney, James Taylor, Ariana Grande, Mariah Carey, Tim McGraw, the British R&B singer-songwriter “Seal,” Icelandic star Laufey – and you’ll hardly believe the touching duet with Bob Dylan on “The Very Thought of You.” At 83, Babs from Brooklyn can still bring it. You gotta’ problem with that? **Columbia Records, \$13.98**



Streaming
Slow Horses

Now in its fifth season, this Apple TV+ series is about political intrigue, bureaucratic stupidity and the good guys coming in first, after all. Exiled to an outpost called Slough House, a team of British MI-5 security service castoffs – “Slow Horses” led by the awesome Gary Oldman as a bedraggled, irritable, but, of course, brilliant spymaster – prevail against the forces of evil and uppity leaders who prove far more plodding than the oddballs they consider hopelessly inept. Clever plot lines, plenty of action, endearing characters, terrific cast – as outstanding entertainment, “Slow Horses” is running out in front. **Streaming on Apple TV+**



Internet
ProPublica.org

As printed newspapers tragically began to go out of business, many wondered what would – or could – take their place. While there is nothing like picking up a daily paper – likely produced by members of the PPPWU and its predecessor unions – many admirable online news operations have moved into the vacuum. One of the most prominent is ProPublica, a nonprofit outlet funded largely by foundations. With a team of 150 editorial professionals, ProPublica – the winner of eight Pulitzer Prizes – says it aims to “dig deep into important issues, shining a light on abuses of power and betrayals of public trust.” Remarkably, the online paper is free – though it is so good you’ll want to consider an occasional gift to keep ProPublica on the case.



'COMMITMENT IS ESSENTIAL'

continued from PAGE 1

While officials in Atlanta spoke confidently of the union's future, they said PPPWU leadership was cautiously exploring merger opportunities with larger labor organizations.

With that possibility under consideration, representatives of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB) addressed delegates.

PPPWU leaders said that while no move is imminent, the IAM and IBB would be prime candidates for a merger and that both have guaranteed PPPWU autonomy should a partnership be arranged.

Nobles made clear that a merger requires several steps including general board approval, authorization at a special union convention and, ultimately, ratification by rank-and-file members.

Despite what could be a lengthy process, affiliation with another group is inevitable, Nobles said. "It's going to happen."

This is an exhilarating period of change and renewal, leaders told Solidarity delegates as the union looks toward the future with high spirits but, at the same time, to the recent past with sadness over the loss of former PPPWU Secretary-Treasurer Clark Ritchey.

At the first Solidarity session, leaders and delegates honored Ritchey, a beloved colleague who died unexpectedly in June at age 58.

Described as a labor professional of enormous talent whose devotion to members was limitless, Ritchey suffered a heart attack in Chicago on his way to a union pension meeting.

"He had all the traits of a great union leader," said PPPWU President Emeritus George Tedeschi.

Though the Ritchey tribute was a solemn interlude, the mood at the Solidarity Conference was upbeat, energetic and optimistic.

At one point, delegates sang a resounding chorus of "Solidarity Forever," with Tedeschi acting as choir director by keeping time with his cane as lyrics appeared on a large screen. "Solidarity Forever, for the union makes us strong," Tedeschi declared. "Be proud of our union. I am. We all should be."

Earlier, in another lighthearted moment, Tedeschi, 85, was hailed as "King George" with a slide show recalling his 66 years of union activism -- as president of Local 406-C, Long Island, the GCIU and GCC/IBT. "I've been around for awhile," Tedeschi said. "I'm still kicking."

Harry Selnow, president of Local 612-M, West Caldwell, New Jersey, said Tedeschi had been a remarkable union stalwart. "George has been the king for years," Selnow said.

Soon, it was back to business.

The challenges facing organized labor -- and the PPPWU -- received ample attention.

Local and conference representatives told of shops closing as a result of automation and difficulties dealing with employers seeking gain for themselves while resisting contract improvements for workers.

Mike LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, warned of the potential impact of artificial intelligence -- "AI" -- on the workplace, especially in regard to PPPWU editorial employees at Newsday. "That's my worry now," he said.

Joe Inemer, president of Local 16-N, Philadelphia, lamented the decline of newspapers and the jobs they represent. "People say newspapers are a thing of the past, but we need newspapers," Inemer said, and echoed LaSpina's concerns about the unknown consequences of AI.

Unions continue to face familiar problems -- but remain on guard for workers, delegates said.

Jeffrey Vogel, president of Local 577-M, Milwaukee-Madison, said there were bosses who try to deny union representatives the right to meet with employees and urged officials to resist this sort of petty harassment and "stay the course."

International organizers Pedro Olguin and Ryan Janota reported on recent victories and challenges associated with recruiting new members.

The organizers showed two professionally produced recruiting videos and noted the importance of reaching younger workers by means of social media.

Innovation is vital, they said, but so is personal outreach.

"We must build relationships," Olguin said. "If we can't build relationships with people, we are lost."

"Commitment is essential," said Janota.

Expanding the membership base is important, agreed Chris Sclafani, business agent and organizer at Local 1-L, New York. "We can't stop organizing or we'll lose everything we already fought for," Sclafani said.

At the same time, said 1-L President Pat LoPresti, it was imperative to keep existing members "in the loop" about important developments in the workplace and the obligations of union membership.

"That's what keeps the union strong, keeps solidarity together, what gives us leverage at the bargaining table," LoPresti said.



In three productive days, delegates to the first PPPWU Solidarity Conference emphasized a theme of determination, resilience and mutual support. Posters around the meeting room at the Hilton Garden Inn-Millennium Center in Atlanta hailed union members in the print, packaging and production sectors as 'Keepers of the Trade,' and 'Experts in Our Industry.' A spirit of optimism and common purpose prevailed. 'We are family,' said one attendee to applause and cheers.

Israel Castro Follows Clark Ritchey as Secretary-Treasurer

By Dawn Hobbs

Special to the Communicator

Israel Castro has assumed duties as PPPWU secretary-treasurer following the unexpected death in June of Clark Ritchey and promised to continue "moving the union forward" with the same commitment of his widely admired predecessor.

"Clark was a great leader," said Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3. "He's on my mind a lot. I want to honor his legacy and do his memory justice. I'm aware that I have very big shoes to fill."

Ritchey, who served as DC-2 secretary-treasurer while holding the union's second-highest job at the international level, suffered a heart attack on June 1 shortly after arriving in Chicago for a pension board meeting. The veteran labor leader died three days later in the hospital at age 58.

Castro, 47, and Ritchey had a close working relationship and were key to the union's success as it moved toward independence from the Teamsters over the past several years, said PPPWU President Steve Nobles.

"We miss Clark greatly but are fortunate to have a person of Israel's talent, dedication and enthusiasm to step in and make certain we succeed," Nobles said. "Like Clark, Israel is devoted to providing every member the highest level of service and I am confident he will do an outstanding job."

Castro said he had frequent conversations with Ritchey about the direction of the PPPWU.



Israel Castro

"We talked about the future a lot and how we were going to be moving the union forward," he said. "I'm going to make sure we see that happen."

George Tedeschi, PPPWU president emeritus, hailed the choice of Castro for international office.

"Israel is a smart, hard-working labor leader who is the right person for the secretary-treasurer's job," Tedeschi said.

Castro, a member and officer of the PPPWU and its predecessor unions for 27 years, brings significant experience to the job of international secretary-treasurer.

A Michigan resident, he was elected president of DC-3 in 2016 and, in 2019, became the district council's secretary-treasurer and, then, a general board member.

Castro served as a trustee of The Members Retirement Plan (formerly, The Teamsters Retirement Plan) and for the past five years has been Central Region representative on the general board.

Last year, Castro was named PPPWU organizing director. That job title has been eliminated but Castro will continue coordinating organizing efforts as union secretary-treasurer. In addition to serving at the international level, Castro will remain principal officer of DC-3.

Castro said the shock and sadness of Ritchey's death has not diminished but that he -- and all PPPWU leaders -- were determined to keep the union working at peak efficiency.

"We must actively build on Clark's legacy as we move forward," Castro said. "He will always be an inspiration. Knowing that we are continuing his work brings me a feeling of peace."



PPPWU President Emeritus George Tedeschi led a rousing chorus of the familiar labor anthem, 'Solidarity Forever,' as lyrics appeared on a large screen and music filled the meeting hall. 'Solidarity Forever, for the union makes us strong,' said Tedeschi, a union activist for 66 years and former president of Local 406-C, Long Island, the GCIU and GCC/IBT. 'Be proud of our union. I am. We all should be.'

Delegates said there was hope for a revived union movement in the United States as polls show public approval high and young people increasingly open to affiliation.

Education must be emphasized, said Jim Longerbone, president of Local 1-M, St. Paul, and newly elected leader of the Solidarity Conference.

"We need our knowledge to be passed on," Longerbone said. "It's the only way we are going to survive and grow."

Nick Caruso, former conference representative, said the same discipline should prevail in contract negotiating – be prepared. "Knowledge is key," said Caruso who, with PPPWU international representative Chris Hancock, led an extensive – and well-received – instructional session on how to get best results at the bargaining table.

While unions gain public approval, powerful forces are still aligned against organized labor.

Officials warned that the authoritarian policies of Donald Trump and the president's erratic trade and tariff policies already put workers at a disadvantage. Thousands of federal workers have been fired without cause, for instance, and Trump has negated bargaining rights of many others.

Workers' rights can be undercut by "the stroke of an executive order," Nobles warned, while LoPresti said White House policies had "enriched" businesses but done little for workers. "There is government intimidation every day," LoPresti said. "We have to overcome that."

Across the country, union members are demanding "workers over billionaires" while Trump's alliance with some of the wealthiest individuals in the country undercuts his campaign vows to be the champion of blue-collar America.

For the PPPWU an immediate issue is how to consolidate strength in an uncertain economic environment when plants are closing and technology is replacing workers. Membership is declining, officials acknowledged. Partnering with a larger group is unavoidable.

But overall the news is good, officials said – the PPPWU has an outstanding reputation in labor ranks and is seen as an attractive merger partner.

Representatives of the IAM and IBB confirmed that assessment. Leaders of both unions agreed that the PPPWU is a labor organization with a bright future – one they would be eager to bring into their ranks.

"We would be proud to welcome you," said Brian Bryant, IAM international president. "You would breathe new energy into our efforts and in how we can grow our union."

In another presentation, Timothy Simmons, IBB international president, also expressed enthusiasm about the prospect of an alliance with the PPPWU.

"We're here to work with you if you want to work with us," Simmons said. The IBB leader said he was optimistic about the labor movement and his union's role in it. "The time is ripe for organizing," Simmons said. "There has never been a better time than now."

PPPWU leaders said they were proceeding carefully on the merger front to make certain the union gains security without forfeiting its independence.

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CLARK RITCHEY IS HAILED FOR 'HUMBLE GREATNESS'

As boyhood photos of Clark Ritchey appeared on a screen behind the speaker's podium, the former PPPWU secretary-treasurer was recalled as a stalwart ally of union members, talented and devoted labor leader and, as President Emeritus George Tedeschi said, just a "good guy."

Ritchey died unexpectedly in June at the age of 58 in Chicago on his way to a union pension meeting shocking friends and colleagues and briefly leaving the union with a vacancy in its top leadership ranks.

PPPWU leaders moved quickly to name general board member and District Council 3 principal officer Israel Castro as replacement for Ritchey in the union's second-highest job.

Aside from what was described as his exceptional abilities as a union leader, Ritchey was recalled as a tireless champion of working people who fought for labor rights, put others before himself, and sought no personal gain or recognition.

"He had a kind of humble greatness," said former conference representative Nick Caruso during a tribute at the first PPPWU Solidarity Conference in Atlanta. "It was never about Clark Ritchey. It was about you."

In emotional remarks, PPPWU President Steve Nobles said Ritchey's death was a "great loss" in professional and personal terms. "He was my partner and confidant," Nobles said.

Nobles said Ritchey, who also served as DC-2 secretary-treasurer, showed particular toughness in resisting a deal proposed by the Teamsters that would hand District Council 2 to the IBT. "He got us through a very difficult time," Nobles said.

Mike Maddock, longtime friend of Ritchey and DC-2 president, said Ritchey's strength in the face of IBT pressure was admirable.

"He saved us from the Teamsters," Maddock said. "He was a strong leader and good friend of mine. I just loved the guy."

Tedeschi recalled his long association with Ritchey and said his potential as a union leader was evident immediately.

"He had all the traits of a great union officer – smart and charismatic," Tedeschi said. "He had great ambitions for this union."



Clark Ritchey

WHAT DOES SOLIDARITY MEAN? UNITY, COMMITMENT, DEDICATION

By Zachary Dowdy
Special to The Communicator

Delegates to the first PPPWU Solidarity Conference in Atlanta gathered in the spirit of fellowship, common purpose and commitment to organized labor – solidarity!

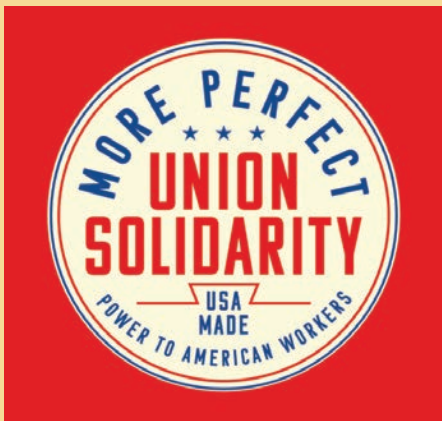
Here are thoughts from a cross-section of conference leaders on the meaning of a word that has guided union activists for generations:

"The most important thing solidarity teaches is taking care of each other so we can take care of our members."
– **Janice Bort, secretary-treasurer, Local 72-C, Washington, D.C.**

"The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 actually talks about employees having the right and ability to band together for mutual aid and protection. I've always felt that was a perfect way of putting it. That's what solidarity really is. We achieve it, I think, by getting together, talking about shared experiences, shared challenges, and deciding what we do about it." – **Israel Castro, PPPWU secretary-treasurer and DC-3 principal officer**

"Unity and solidarity, first of all, indicate that everybody is together. It indicates that we're strong and we're going to go forward to do what's best for our members." – **Joe Inemer, president Local 16-N, Philadelphia**

"Union solidarity is working people working together for each other. That's what a good union does for its members. We achieved it by forming the PPPWU so we can better represent our members after our breakup with the



Teamsters." – **Mike LaSpina, president Local 406-C, Long Island**

"The union has always acknowledged the importance of maintaining a middle class and it's rapidly slipping through our hands. Solidarity is the only way to bring back the middle class. And I'm sure we've got it in us to make that happen – to show our solidarity achieves our goals and protects our members through collective bargaining." – **Pat LoPresti, president Local 1-L, New York**

"Solidarity is commitment, unity and dedication to the labor movement and all its members. At the PPPWU, we work hard to uphold those principles every day." – **Steve Nobles, PPPWU president**

"I think solidarity is that we, as union members, stick together – we help one another. It's a question of standing strong and standing together and fighting the tough fights we have when dealing with employers and big companies. Solidarity is a matter of brotherhood and sisterhood, of people sticking together and fighting for the cause and workforce we represent." – **Harry Selnow, president Local 612-M, Caldwell, New Jersey**

"I think union solidarity is bringing the leaders together for a common purpose, a common cause. It not only starts with us, but we have to promote it to our members as well. We achieve it through things like the Solidarity Conference where we meet and take what we shared to our members." – **Eddie Williams, president Local 527-M, Atlanta**

Isn't This the Way of Banana Republics?

What if your kid flunked math and blamed the report card? Labor officials, financial experts and political figures said President Donald Trump tried a similar ploy when he fired the Bureau of Labor Statistics commissioner after a poor summer jobs report stoked fears Trump's controversial tariff plan would tank the American economy.

"Recklessly firing the Bureau of Labor Statistics commissioner because you don't like the new jobs numbers won't do a thing to change the clear and simple fact: President Trump's policy choices are costing hardworking Americans their jobs," said the AFL-CIO in a statement.

Without evidence, the President complained on social media that Erika McEntarfer, a respected economist confirmed as BLS commissioner last year by an overwhelming bipartisan Senate vote, had "RIGGED" employment numbers "to make the Republicans, and ME, look bad."

Shortly after, Trump nominated E.J. Antoni, an economist at the conservative Heritage Foundation, to replace McEntarfer. Antoni has been a frequent critic of the BLS and contributed to the controversial Project 2025 document that has provided a guideline for Trump's policy objectives in the second term.

Mainline economists expressed alarm about the nomination of a highly politicized figure like Antoni.

Jason Furman, who served as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the White House under President Barack Obama, said Antoni was "an extreme partisan" who is "completely unqualified to be BLS commissioner," according to NBC News, and former labor secretary Robert Reich dismissed Antoni as a "political hack."

PPPWU President Steve Nobles called Trump's abrupt dismissal of the highly regarded McEntarfer as "impulsive, immature" and unfortunately familiar. "This is what he does," Nobles said. "If he loses an election or if he doesn't like job numbers, the President denies reality and blames everyone but himself. Working people deserve better leadership."

Trump – who has pressured Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell to resign and tried to fire Lisa Cook, a Fed governor – lashed out after BLS, an independent agency of the Labor Department, reported only 73,000 jobs had been created in July and, perhaps more worrisome, that numbers for May and June had been overestimated by 258,000.

Experts noted that economic data developed by the United States government is revered worldwide and that politicizing the BLS would undercut confidence.

"If you want people to stop trusting the numbers coming out of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, firing the person who is confirmed by the Senate to make sure those numbers are trustworthy is a real good way to do it," Martha Gimbel, executive director of the Budget Lab at Yale, told the New York Times.

Former BLS commissioner William Beach, a Trump appointment, also warned that politicizing the jobs report could threaten credibility. "I don't think there's any grounds at all for this firing," Beach said on CNN. "And it really hurts the statistical system. ... This is damaging."

Janet Yellen, who served as Treasury Secretary during the Obama administration also sounded alarm. "This is the kind of thing you would only expect to see in a banana republic," Yellen said, the Times also reported.



Economists said Trump's imposition of high tariffs, unevenly applied and often based on personal grievance, had a profound negative effect on the job market. The business channel CNBC said experts warn that the "on-again-off-again approach to tariffs creates uncertainty for businesses, leading many to pull back on hiring."

Also contributing to the bleak employment report, experts said, were Trump's aggressive immigration policies, widespread federal layoffs and continued high interest rates but tariffs have shaken the global and domestic economies.

"President Donald Trump's latest wave of sweeping tariffs is shaking the foundations of global trade and leaving a trail of economic pain across rich and poor nations alike," said Firstpost, an online news service based in India.

Firing a respected official like McEntarfer only made matters worse, critics said. Democrats said Trump was panicky and ducking reality – the President had decided to "shoot the messenger," said Chuck Schumer, Democratic Senate leader – while undercutting an economy that was thriving when he took office.

"President-elect Trump will inherit unquestionably the strongest economy for an incoming administration since the George W. Bush administration," the Economic Policy Institute said days before Trump was inaugurated in January.

Even some Republicans – usually obedient – questioned Trump's dismissal of McEntarfer.

"If the president is firing the statistician because he doesn't like the numbers but they are accurate, then that's a problem," said Senator Cynthia Lummis from the deeply conservative state of Wyoming in a broadcast interview. "It's not the statistician's fault if the numbers are accurate and that they're not what the president had hoped for."

Most worrisome, analysts said, was Trump's resorting to a tactic more consistent with dictatorships and corrupt regimes than free societies.

Amy Traub, senior researcher and policy analyst with the non-profit National Employment Law Project said Trump's action was a "direct assault on the foundations" of government. "It is a profoundly dangerous, undemocratic step that threatens our economy," Traub said.

Union Label Signals More than a Century of Progress

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the article, "Resilient Bug Still Spreading Union Message" in the summer edition of the Communicator. You captured how important the "bug" is to unionism.

Our allied labels are essential in political printing for politicians to identify themselves as worker-friendly and labor-friendly. Allied labels make it possible to identify individual shops printing the product. Most important, the labels help shops and locals work together to enforce the use of the label.

More than a century ago, allied printing trade associations were created to help stop jurisdictional wars between the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union and compositors from the International Typographical Union.

George Berry, President of International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union negotiated a concession agreement with the International Typographical Union establishing the Allied Printing Trade Councils – the St. Louis Agreement.

These councils gave pressmen the sole jurisdiction over pressrooms.

At first the ITU members at the Werner Printing Company in Akron, Ohio – publishers of

the Encyclopedia Britannica – refused to give up compositor control of the pressroom.

The Bookbinders Union stepped in and forged a three-party agreement. According to terms of the pact, ITU flatbed and web pressmen, helpers and feeders would be transferred to the IPPU unions, and all ITU bookbinders to the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, without prejudice or fee.

This agreement also allowed for the Allied Printing Trades Labels to be controlled by local councils of the three International Unions. These councils forced the local leaders of the three unions to have meetings and work together to control the printing of the Allied Bug. Local leaders find themselves working together today for the same reasons.

Janice Bort
Secretary-treasurer
Local 72-C, Washington, D.C.



LOCAL 1-L SCORES 6 NEW SHOPS PROVEN HARD WORK PAYS OFF

Chris Sclafani has been pounding the pavement doing cold “knocks” at smaller East Coast shops convincing six to affiliate with the PPPWU in just over a month.

The hard work paid off with 30 new members and six corresponding contracts quickly “signed, sealed, and delivered,” said Sclafani, business agent and organizer at Local 1-L, New York.

As part of his effort, Sclafani met with politicians to emphasize the importance of union printers and the right to display the union label – or “bug” – on campaign materials.

“I’ve told the politicians how the smaller shops are hoping to get political work and how New Jersey needs to keep printing in New Jersey and not send to Texas where it’s cheaper, or how Brooklyn needs to keep printing in Brooklyn, and on and on,” said Sclafani, who has worked 30 years as a union pressman and has served two years as organizer.

Sclafani even got 1-L leaders to update Local 1-L’s website, litho.org, and started using QR – Quick Response – codes on fliers.

“The site was outdated,” Sclafani said. “There’s a lot of younger workers out there and to learn about the union they look on social media. QR codes on the fliers take them immediately to our website. They don’t read long fliers, they read online.”

His latest success was at a woman-owned print and mail shop in Staten Island, New York.

Other shops Sclafani recently organized were in New Jersey and Long Island.

“The small shops, you go right in there, get them a nice raise,” Sclafani said. “Workers are happy and the employer now has an opportunity to make more money because of the union label.”

John Zoccali, executive vice president of Local 1-L, said he worked with Sclafani in the beginning.

“We gave him the tools he needed and he went for it,” said Zoccali, who is also a delegate for both the New York State and the Tri-State Area Allied Printing Trade councils and is heading the effort to get politicians to keep their printing in state.

“Chris is a hard worker,” he said. “He has that excitement and passion.”

Sclafani credits the assistance he received from leaders at Local 1-L, including Zoccali and president Pat LoPresti, and from PPPWU secretary-treasurer Israel Castro.

“Everyone helped each other and that’s what made it work,” Sclafani said. “We’re a team.”



Chris Sclafani, Local 1-L, New York, business agent and organizer, helped 30 workers gain union representation at print shops in New York and New Jersey.

PHOTO COURTESY LOCAL 1-L

DC-3 GOLF TOURNEY SUPPORTS VITAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

District Council 3 is continuing its long tradition of community involvement by raising money for non-profit organizations that need donations more than ever because of Trump administration economic policies, union leaders said.

The 22nd Annual William Browning Golf Scramble raised \$36,670 for vital community programs that face increasing financial strain because of White House policies that have boosted consumer costs and put added pressure on struggling families.

“I’m a strong believer that a union is a reflection of the people in their community,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of the PPPWU and District Council 3.

More than 150 people, including community members and those from other unions, attended the September event at Timberwood Golf Club, Ray, Michigan.

“We should always be striving to help the community, especially in times like this when there are so many government cuts by the current administration,” Castro said. “It’s time for us to step up and dig in our pockets to help people get the assistance they need.”

Recipients will receive checks before the holidays, Castro said.

The William Browning event initially began as an effort to support autism awareness but branched off to assist other groups, such as programs that aid hungry families, victims of domestic abuse, and wounded veterans.

It is held in honor of William (Bill) Browning, former secretary-treasurer of Local 2-C and 2/289-M known for his love of golf and devotion to community service. Since its inception, the tournament has raised more than \$200,000 for local programs. Browning died in 2004.



PPPWU President Steve Nobles and grandson, Logan Cottick, 7, cruise the links at 22nd annual DC-3 William Browning Golf Scramble. Since its inception, the event has raised more than \$200,000 for community programs.

PHOTO COURTESY DISTRICT COUNCIL 3

JOBS LOST AS ARIZONA REPUBLIC SHUTS DOWN PRINT OPERATION

The Arizona Republic, a Gannett publication, is shutting down print operations this month putting 36 PPPWU press operators out of work, according to union leaders.

Mike Maddock, District Council 2 executive representative, negotiated severance terms in a final bargaining session in August. The company agreed to pay workers one week’s pay for every year of service up to 28 weeks and a \$1,500 bonus.

The plant was set to close early this month. Health insurance will be paid through Oct. 31.

Steve Nobles, PPPWU president, said the shutdown is part of an industry-wide consolidation.

“The newspaper industry continues to decline,” Nobles said. “That makes it essential that we look for every opportunity to increase our presence in other sectors. Despite changes across the American economy, we will organize, grow and prevail.”

PPPWU President Emeritus George Tedeschi said the impact of the digital age has been profound.

“The closing of newspapers and other sources of print information outlets was predictable decades ago when the computer and digital era began. A new age had arrived that would make it easier, faster and much cheaper to eventually digitize information and advertising that once produced enormous income. Our union – and some publications that worked with us – should be commended for being able to delay the closing of many print facilities. We are dedicated to protecting union members now and in the digital future.”



EXTREME TRUMP TARIFF POLICIES THREATEN MORE PPPWU SHOPS

Trump administration tariffs that first hit PPPWU shops in southern California now threaten union jobs in Texas, leaders say.

“Print shops are cutting hours due to the fact that businesses are hesitating to spend money,” said Oscar Lopez, president of Local 4535-M, Houston “They fear an economic downturn due to the current administration’s tariff policies.”

Lopez said numerous shops have lost accounts or fear potential losses and have cut hours two weeks each month to 32 hours from 40-plus.

“This is a problem – it’s a big detriment all around,” Lopez said, noting that cutbacks put workers at risk of losing pay and medical benefits that demand at least 30 hours of work a week.

Trump’s extreme tariff agenda has resulted in many problems, Lopez said – from supply chain issues to increased price of materials from overseas.

“It’s hitting from all angles,” Lopez said. “Operating costs are more, press room chemicals, equipment are all made off-shore. All the costs have gone up.”

In California, some corrugated box shops near the Mexican border have already lost accounts – a situation that was being monitored by DC-2 secretary-treasurer Clark Ritchey before he died unexpectedly in June. Ritchey, who also served as PPPWU secretary-treasurer, warned “there’s a lot of uncertainty at this time.”

Leaders fear circumstances could rapidly deteriorate if the trade war initiated by President Donald Trump is not soon brought under control.



Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your PPPWU 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.

La primera Conferencia de Solidaridad en Atlanta fue un éxito «rotundo»

Fred Bruning
The Communicator

Atlanta — Unidos por un propósito común, la perseverancia y la confianza en una organización laboral que ha prevalecido durante 140 años, los delegados de la primera Conferencia de Solidaridad del PPPWU pasaron tres días productivos compartiendo información, fortaleciendo relaciones y demostrando el tipo de apoyo mutuo que garantiza el progreso y la prosperidad.

«Somos familia», afirmó Ken Roberts, del Local 577-M de Milwaukee, en observaciones que arrancaron vítores y aplausos de un animado público en el Hilton Garden Inn-Millennium Center. «Aquí el compañerismo es formidable».

Alrededor de la sala de reuniones, afiches y pancartas reflejaban el tema —la determinación y la resiliencia— destacado por los organizadores y ponentes de la Conferencia de Solidaridad. «Poderoso. Tenaz. Orgulloso», fue el mensaje. «Guardianes del oficio. Expertos en nuestra industria.»

El significado era claro: un PPPWU firme prevalecerá como la organización laboral preeminente en los campos de la impresión, el embalaje y la producción, y resistirá los intentos de cualquier rival de seducir a miembros y desafiar la autoridad del sindicato.

Desde que en 2022 echó por tierra

un acuerdo de fusión de 20 años entre GCC e IBT, la Hermandad Internacional de Camioneros [IBT, por sus siglas en inglés] ha intentado «saquear» los locales y consejos de distrito del PPPWU con tácticas agresivas ampliamente rechazadas por el movimiento obrero.

«Utilizan todos los trucos posibles», afirmó Robert Loredó, del sindicato Local 388-M de Los Ángeles.

Los líderes de la Conferencia de Solidaridad dijeron que el sindicato mantenía un frente fuerte y unido contra las tácticas de la IBT y repelaba los continuos esfuerzos de los Teamsters por desorganizar. «Tenemos que estar alerta», declaró el presidente del PPPWU, Steve Nobles.

Aunque los representantes en Atlanta hablaron con confianza del futuro del sindicato, afirmaron que la dirección del PPPWU estaba explorando con cautela oportunidades de fusión con organismos sindicales más grandes.

Ante esta posibilidad, los representantes de la Asociación Internacional de Maquinistas (IAM, por sus siglas en inglés) y de la Hermandad Internacional de Caldereros (IBB, por sus siglas en inglés) se dirigieron a los delegados.

Los dirigentes del PPPWU afirmaron que, aunque no hay ninguna medida inminente, la IAM y la IBB serían los principales candidatos para una fusión y que ambos han garantizado la autonomía

del PPPWU en caso de que se acuerde una sociedad colectiva.

Nobles dejó claro que una fusión requiere varios pasos, como la aprobación general del consejo, la autorización en una convención sindical extraordinaria y, en última instancia, la ratificación por parte de los afiliados de base.

A pesar de lo que podría ser un proceso largo, la afiliación a otro grupo es inevitable, dijo Nobles. «Va a suceder.»

Este es un momento estimulante de cambio y renovación, dijeron los dirigentes a los delegados de Solidaridad, ahora que el sindicato mira hacia el futuro con gran ánimo, pero al mismo tiempo, al pasado reciente con tristeza por la pérdida del ex Secretario-Tesorero del PPPWU, Clark Ritchey.

En la primera sesión de Solidaridad, los dirigentes y delegados rindieron homenaje a Ritchey, un querido colega que falleció inesperadamente en junio a los 58 años.

Descrito como un profesional laboral de enorme talento cuya devoción por los afiliados no tenía límites, Ritchey sufrió un infarto en Chicago cuando se dirigía a una reunión sobre pensiones sindicales.

«Tenía todos los rasgos de un gran líder sindical», afirmó George Tedeschi, presidente emérito del PPPWU.

Aunque el homenaje a Ritchey fue un plazo solemne, el ambiente de la Conferencia de Solidaridad fue animado, enérgico y optimista.

En un momento dado, los delegados entonaron un sonoro coro de «Solidarity Forever» [«Solidaridad pa' siempre»], en el que Tedeschi actuó como director del coro llevando el compás con su bastón mientras la letra aparecía en una gran pantalla. «Solidaridad pa' siempre, con la fuerza sindical», declaró Tedeschi. «Estén orgullosos de nuestro sindicato. Me da orgullo. A todos nos debe dar.»

La nueva conferencia reúne a cuatro unidades del PPPWU —Periódicos, Especialidades, Este y Medio Oeste— que anteriormente se reunían de forma independiente.

Compartir ideas, entrar en contacto con otros líderes, adquirir conocimientos: los asistentes afirmaron que los tres días les habían llenado de energías y que sirvieron de instrucción.

«Saldré de aquí con muchos más conocimientos que cuando entré», afirmó Gary Adams, presidente del Local 6505-M de San Luis, Misuri.

Cuando los delegados entonaron el estribillo final de «Solidarity Forever», quedó claro que se había renovado la fe en el movimiento obrero y en el PPPWU.

Steve Nobles afirmó que el sindicato había mostrado una admirable fortaleza a pesar de los retos de los últimos años y que la Conferencia de Solidaridad demostraba que el futuro del PPPWU estaba asegurado.

«Llevamos aquí 140 años y seguiremos aquí 140 años más», dijo Nobles.

Long Island Local Uses Online Survey to Gauge Member Priorities

By Zachary Dowdy
Special to The Communicator

Months ahead of negotiations, Local 406-C, Long Island, launched an electronic survey to identify what members most wanted in new contracts — a first for the local and an innovation that leaders said proved highly successful.

Two bargaining units — editorial and electronic prepress — are soon to begin bargaining talks with Newsday, the employer for the majority of 406 members. Contracts for the two units expire at the end of this year.

Local officials decided to poll members over several weeks by using free online software.

“This method allows us to get a clearer picture of where our members stand,” said Local 406-C President Mike LaSpina. “It is a good way to add up our options and decide how to go forward with the company.”

The digital questionnaire was emailed to members who selected four priority concerns from a list of 11. Members also were invited to write short narrative statements providing more detail.

Votes for each priority were tallied by the electronic program which created a graph showing top choices.

LaSpina said at least half the members of editorial and electronic prepress units responded to the survey — an encouraging response — and that many provided insightful explanations for their preferences.

When the polling was complete, members participated in a Zoom conferencing session to gain the perspective of union leaders.

“We found the members were very engaged in this process,” LaSpina said. “People liked using such an easy tool to let their needs and wants be known and discussed.”

UNIONS BLAST CUTS TO PUBLIC BROADCASTING AS ATTACK ON FREE PRESS

PPWU President Steve Nobles joined other media-sector union leaders calling on the Trump administration to restore funds for public broadcasting and denouncing attempts to undermine a free press and squelch dissent.

“As a union with members in the information field, we consider the denial of funds for public broadcasting an attack on all media and workers in the news business,” said Nobles. “American citizens will be the biggest losers.”

After President Donald Trump assailed the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) as a biased “monstrosity” and said it should not be supported with taxpayer money, the Republican House and Senate rescinded more than \$1 billion in funding already allocated.

CPB, which was expected to shut down last month as a result of congressional action, facilitates funding to National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System in the television realm.

NPR and PBS will continue to function but face significant financial challenges because of Trump cutbacks.

Union officials in the media and allied sectors warned that defunding the CPB was tied to a broader administration strategy of controlling information and those who provide it.

“This rescission is part of a coordinated attack on journalists and media workers,” said Jon Schleuss, president of the NewsGuild-CWA.

In a resolution posted on its website, the Communications Workers of America said the CPB funding pullback “jeopardizes the jobs of CWA members, undermines access to trusted information, and erodes a vital public service.”

The union called on Congress to “fully restore CPB funding in the federal budget, ensuring that local PBS and NPR stations can continue to serve their communities with integrity and independence.”

Nobles, who noted that the PPPWU represents newspaper workers in mechanical and editorial areas, said CPB cutbacks and other anti-press actions by the Trump administration were cause for alarm across the media landscape. “It’s wrong, short-sighted and un-American. Congress should immediately get the CPB back in business,” Nobles said.

Listed here are members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact The Communicator.

Local	Date of Death		Local	Date of Death	
Death Benefit Claims Paid					
March 2023					
3N	James W Turbitt Jr	01-23-23	458M	John R Ferraro	02-01-23
4B	Joe G Jones	10-08-22	458M	Michael E Fiolka	01-11-23
4B	John I Schaeffer Sr	01-07-23	458M	Frank Guillen, Sr	01-25-23
4C	Jerrie L Teachey	12-19-22	458M	Walter A Harles	01-23-23
14M	Richard S Carroll	10-25-22	458M	Kenneth M Hoffswell	01-13-23
14M	Blondell Forrest	12-30-22	458M	Melvin E Johnson	01-06-23
16N	Casper Colluro	08-26-21	458M	Thomas W Kruss, Jr	02-03-23
16N	Peter J Hoke	09-16-18	458M	Randall W Landess, Jr	12-30-22
16N	Duane A Rowles	02-24-23	458M	Kenneth G Patterson	01-24-23
16N	Annette E Teagle	01-10-22	458M	George J Pecucci	02-06-23
16N	Michael Vogel Jr	01-02-23	458M	Geraldine J Poltrock	02-14-23
24M	Walter B Fitzpatrick	01-17-23	458M	Robert P Roche	02-11-23
24M	Calvin N Kirkbride Jr	02-16-23	458M	Robert E Rokavec	02-12-23
24M	Roger B Stockman	01-06-23	458M	Anthony W Sebastiano	01-31-23
24M	Leonard J Tares	02-08-23	458M	Robert Swansen	12-20-22
25M	James Elroy Bailey	03-31-19	458M	Raymond Zarembski	02-12-23
25M	Essie L Barber	12-17-22	493M	Richard K Shimmel	01-27-23
25M	Earl Dunn	12-29-22	503M	James W Butwid	01-10-23
25M	Donald E Frank, Sr	02-17-23	503M	Marilyn E Herowski	10-28-22
25M	Harry D Hawkins	02-13-23	503M	Harold J Wilson	03-01-21
25M	Michael A Kowalczyk	10-09-22	518M	Leland J Mapes	04-13-22
25M	Donald J Macdonald	02-01-23	527S	Carl Ross Major, Jr	04-08-22
25M	Willie L Miller	11-21-16	555M	Francois Guillemette	11-25-22
25M	Joseph A Niese	11-07-22	555M	Jean-Francois Houle	01-03-23
25M	Gary W Roth	11-10-22	555M	Vyon Joly	11-22-22
25M	Robert W Teall	02-14-23	555M	John Lewchuk	02-22-23
25M	Robert C Wilson	12-18-22	555M	Robert B Rousseau	02-03-23
25M	William C Ziegler	01-11-23	572T	Edward Gutierrez, Jr	12-31-22
77P	Roger W Hartfiel	11-24-22	572T	Margarita H Valle	07-29-16
77P	Peter J Scovronski	01-24-23	577M	James G Bartholomew	02-16-23
77P	Thomas M Steffen	01-28-23	577M	Elberta V Bollom	01-29-23
100M	George E Richardson	11-25-22	577M	Donald W Gerardin	02-13-23
117T	Daniel R George	09-19-22	577M	Richard A Janecky	02-07-23
117T	Daniel B Ross	12-16-22	577M	Jerome A Kowalkowski	01-29-23
119B	Paolo Civello	02-07-23	577M	Eugene D Lyskawa	01-25-23
119B	Edison G Hope	12-02-22	577M	Gerald E Priebe	12-18-22
119B	Julia O Sacasa	03-01-23	612M	Stephen C Brinkofski, S	09-22-22
197M	Jamie B Mcrae, Sr	11-26-13	612M	John E Vann	01-12-23
197M	Lee E Woods	12-02-22	853T	Henry F Guitron	08-20-22
235M	Michael J Bobbitt	01-17-23	853T	George C Harvey	10-04-22
241M	Anthony J Cali	01-21-22	853T	Wayne C Johnson	02-06-23
241M	Rose A Reese	02-24-23	853T	Kenneth Lum	05-31-22
285M	James E Bolden	09-16-21	999ML	Orange C Barnum	01-17-23
285M	Jeffrey L Gordon	01-11-23	999ML	James P Buettner	02-10-23
388M	Brian L Ilagan	08-05-98	999ML	Donald D Cornwell	01-27-23
388M	Altero N Varani	12-04-01	999ML	Robert E Krug Jr	01-01-23
388M	Paul W Wamsley	01-05-23	999ML	Daniel R Luthy	01-17-23
455T	David W Antener	09-04-22	999ML	Edria Tiltotson	11-18-22
458M	Bruce G Bolte	02-06-23	999ML	Helen E Tucker	01-13-23
458M	Edward T Cutler, Sr	08-08-21	999ML	Margery S Wiles	10-14-22
458M	Michael C Difulvio	02-20-23	999ML	Stanley Witkowski	02-23-23
458M	Donald L Dunaj	01-05-21	4535M	Manuel Cuellar	12-21-22
			4535M	Billy Wirzberg	11-11-22
			6505M	Johanna D Arnold	01-09-23

Local	Date of Death	
6505M	Betty J Combrevis	01-29-23
6505M	James C Diilberto	02-20-23
6505M	Dorothy M Olson	01-11-23
6505M	Turner V Reid III	11-14-22
6505M	Louis H Valci	02-03-23
Death Benefit Claims Paid		
April 2023		
1B	Marilyn L Malecha	03-14-22
1B	George Saba	03-08-23
1L	Gregory Shenloogian	01-10-23
1M	Thomas G Evans	02-13-23
1M	Jolene G March	03-04-23
2N	George A Gomez	01-29-23
3N	Gloria R Frasco	02-17-23
14M	Gabriel Juszczuk, Sr	10-17-22
16N	David Joseph Sabatino	03-09-23
25M	Chelsey L Adams	11-23-22
25M	Diane M Dietrick	03-03-23
117T	Leon R Lucas	02-19-23
119B	Thaddina Fields	02-26-23
235M	Johnny R Harper	01-16-23
235M	Everett G Horton	10-11-22
285M	Ronald E Collins	03-01-23
367M	Eddie J Braswell	12-04-22
367M	Robert L Watson	06-04-03
458M	Robert Szukalla	01-26-23
555M	Marie-Berthe Dube	03-04-23
577M	Ronald C Benisch	10-08-22
577M	Violet M Knop	02-12-23
705S	Ryan D Edger	02-27-23
999ML	Phylis I Howe	01-29-23
Death Benefit Claims Paid		
May 2023		
1B	Wayne R Ball	01-18-23
1L	Leo J Di Blasio	03-05-23
1L	John E Mason Sr	01-18-23
1M	Melvin C Saign	04-21-23
1M	Wesley R Schwantz	03-20-23
1M	Alice A Siegle	03-26-23
2N	Joseph P Mcallen	03-01-23
2N	Robert Mullen	02-18-23
2N	Howard Schenker	03-23-23
3N	Andrew J Frolich Sr	03-09-23
3N	Paul G Lucia	04-14-23
3N	Harold E Schaller	03-12-23
14M	Bernard Polsky	04-01-23
14M	Joseph Raspa	04-07-23
16N	Kenneth L Hayward	03-18-23
17M	Richard H Shie	08-21-22
17M	Jack M Thomas	09-21-21
24M	Thomas J Boehm	02-27-23
25M	Jerry J Cantini	03-11-23
25M	Frank J Galinsky	03-18-23
25M	William T Goff, Jr	02-06-23
25M	James J Johnson	03-14-23
25M	Swilferd Lemons Jr	03-26-23
25M	Richard C Marklin	03-07-23
25M	John C Miller	04-16-23
25M	Deo D Schaurer	10-11-21
25M	Fredrick W Schmidt	01-18-23
25M	Angelo J Sgambati Sr	04-16-18
25M	Barrie Starr	03-29-23

Local		Date of Death
25M	James M Turnbull	03-16-23
77P	William J Buchanan	04-18-23
100M	Colin W Harding	01-18-23
117T	John F Abate	03-05-23
117T	Violet B Warren	03-09-23
119B	Henry Dominguez	12-18-22
119B	Elvira Gomez	06-18-22
137C	Nancy J Searfoss	03-21-23
241M	Michael Drozd	04-01-23
285M	John L Player Iii	08-13-22
285M	Stanley P Sitkowski, Sr	02-03-23
388M	Victor Nasarow	03-08-23
406C	Andrew A Antonawich, li	03-01-23
406C	Frank Sigismondi	02-25-23
455T	Robert R Parker	01-20-23
458M	David A De Leo	03-02-23
458M	George R Gebhardt	03-19-23
458M	William Gordon	04-15-23
458M	Eugene T Ogrodnny	10-18-22
503M	Samuel R Loiacano	03-28-23
503M	George M Martini	04-03-23
527S	Joe L Woodward	03-29-02
555M	Robert Bourget	03-30-23
555M	Therese Conway	04-09-23
555M	Roger Legault	04-11-23
555M	Robert Moreau	03-29-23
555M	Danielle Ouellette	12-18-22
555M	Robert A Stacey	03-29-23
572T	Walter J Demamiel	11-24-22
572T	May A Francone	03-12-23
575M	James E Ellis	01-02-23
575M	John C Williams	03-08-23
577M	Joseph H Drechsler	03-05-23
577M	Aldo P Fallico	03-30-23
853T	Frank C Blanchard	03-14-22
853T	Robert J Hosking, Sr	02-15-23
853T	Joseph A Sola	01-06-23
999ML	Regina L Gnaou	11-08-22
999ML	W D Johnson	02-10-23
999ML	Walter R Lawrence	03-27-23
999ML	Lucille Spreitter	04-10-23
6505M	Worley Frye	09-03-21
6505M	Leroy A Hallemeier	03-02-23
6505M	John L Rudd	03-23-23
6505M	Wilbert E Steinhauser	03-21-23
Death Benefit Claims Paid		
June 2023		
1B	Hans Ludwig	05-12-23
1B	Nancy E Milbradt	05-16-23
1B	Marylou Skallet	01-19-23
1L	Joseph A Belleville, Jr	04-15-23
1L	Michael Pistey, Jr	04-15-23
1M	David D Johnson	05-06-23
2N	James F Borland Jr	04-25-23
2N	Robert F Chelikowsky	04-19-23
2N	John M Hayes	01-03-23
2N	Donald R Smith	05-01-23
3N	Norman J Belanger	04-16-23
3N	Howard T Giroux	05-08-23
3N	Delphis F Levia, Sr	01-14-23
3N	Mark D Mcfarland	04-28-23
3N	Richard J Perkins	03-28-23
4C	John V Matthews, Sr	05-20-23

Local		Date of Death
14M	Ida Molitor	05-01-23
14M	Carl J Patro	12-04-22
16N	Manh D Lieu	05-15-23
16N	Cameron R Witherow	05-14-23
24M	Libero R Barca, Sr	04-24-23
25M	Diane M Dietrick	03-03-23
25M	John W Gardner	04-10-23
25M	Daniel R Hebert	04-04-23
25M	Michael Morosko, Sr	04-25-23
25M	David P Scully	05-01-23
25M	Theodore W Shelton	Sr01-24-23
77P	John Knostenberg	03-07-23
77P	James M Mcquillan	05-19-23
77P	Donald F Pottner	04-17-23
77P	Johannes G Rutten	05-12-23
100M	Frank Szostak	02-10-20
117T	Edward F Borgias	04-16-23
117T	Richard H Kelly	03-17-23
119B	Howard Saldinger	04-16-23
119B	Irene E Washington	11-04-22
235M	Dean E Conner	01-17-23
355T	Robert E Lowe	04-22-23
388M	George E Kiger	05-15-21
388M	Rudy W Refuerzo	09-09-21
406C	John L Lapid	01-07-23
455T	Conrad E Frank	12-17-22
458M	Robert H Bartz	04-21-23
458M	Robert A Braman	02-07-23
458M	Sarah A Collier	09-28-22
458M	Robert M Crom	03-04-23
458M	Eugene F Fifielski	04-16-23
458M	Ignatius C Garcia	12-18-19
458M	Thomas E Jacobs	01-07-23
458M	John E Jaloway	02-13-23
458M	Ronald L Jefferson	07-10-21
458M	Robert F Linkenheld, Sr	03-11-23
458M	Adwar Y Odicho	03-13-23
458M	Robert L Ohm	04-24-23
458M	Thomas J Sevcik	04-08-23
458M	Allen G Smith	04-11-23
458M	Edwin A Tremmel	03-13-23
503M	Francis L Zawodzinski	10-20-22
514M	Harriet L Mcclhenry	12-18-21
514M	Jacqueline A Meek	06-23-22
543M	Raymond W Morris	04-18-23
555M	Richard Brodere	04-25-23
555M	Roger Ethier	11-29-22
555M	Anna A Houle	02-07-23
555M	Richard Perron	04-13-23
568M	John E Coon	01-10-23
568M	Carl T Stone	05-06-23
572T	Gilbert Ferrales	04-12-23
572T	Wayne E Kunert	03-28-12
572T	Winnona H Reid	04-02-23
577M	Jerome N Matkus	04-14-23
577M	Blanca E Morrow	03-31-23
577M	Kenneth W Rode	04-22-23
612M	Eric L Johnson	04-19-23
853T	Albert B Lee	04-02-22
853T	Margaret Roppo	04-10-23
996t	Jean S Fujino	11-01-20
999ML	Roger J Simard	04-14-23
6505M	William H Armstrong	01-27-23
6505M	Kenneth S Koons	05-11-23

'WORKERS OVER BILLIONAIRES'

continued from PAGE 4

experts of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and income disparities of the so-called “Gilded Age.”

At his inauguration in January, President Donald Trump gave Big Tech billionaires front-row seating – an unmistakable gesture of favoritism with worrisome implications, experts say.

“It was a not-so-subtle sign that the second Trump administration will be staffed, advised and led by titans of wealth. Which means that Trump’s golden age looks an awful lot like a new Gilded Age,” said an essay in the online news site Politico.

PPPWU President Steve Nobles said the White House affinity for billionaires amid growing income disparity is troubling – and makes a compelling case for union membership.

“A union contract is the only way to guarantee a fair deal for workers,” Nobles said. “Left to their own devices, the wealthy will continue to keep more for themselves and leave less for everyone else.”

The public is worried – and fed up.

More than half of Americans in a Pew Research Center poll said the gap between rich and poor is a major problem, 56 percent said the economic system needs complete or major reform and nearly three-quarters said their children were likely to be worse off financially than their parents.

Something is wrong when a few make so much and many make so little, labor leaders said as the nation observed a holiday originated in 1894 to honor workers and their contributions.

“Corporate America takes as much as they can get,” said LoPresti, of Local 1-L. “We have to put our foot down. Enough is enough.”

Impatience with the lopsided nature of the American economy – and greed of the ultra-rich – is widespread.

“Hedge fund managers and tech moguls did not build this country or the American middle class,” said Jennifer Abruzzo, who was ousted from her post as NLRB general counsel by President Donald Trump. “It was technicians, engineers, installers, teachers, caregivers, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, ironworkers, painters, laborers, operators, mechanics, drivers, farmworkers, clerks, grocers and so many others.”



PHOTO COURTESY LOCAL 1-L

Huge New York parade was sign that labor movement continues a powerful force in American life and an essential guardian of middle-class values. Even as White House undercuts worker rights, public approval of unions grows. Representing Local 1-L at the event were, left-right, James Santangelo, secretary-treasurer; John Yoffredo, shop steward; John Zoccali, executive vice-president; Pat LoPresti, president; and Chris Sclafani, business agent and organizer.

In a Fox News opinion piece, Abruzzo noted the power of working people united in common purpose. “I’ve seen how powerful working people can be when they come together,” Abruzzo said. The bosses and billionaires see it, too – and it terrifies them.”

As workers celebrated Labor Day around the nation, surveys showed strong public support for organized labor and a recent AFL-CIO poll found approval of unions is greater than for political parties.

According to the AFL-CIO, trust in unions is 20 points higher than for Democrats or Republicans and three-quarters of voters worried about economic well-being “see unions as their best shot at a decent life” and secure retirement.

“Republicans aren’t going to save us,” said Liz Shuler, the AFL-CIO leader. “Democrats aren’t going to save us. Working people are going to save ourselves.” ■

High Costs Sinking Worker Morale

Nearly three-quarters of American workers are struggling to make ends meet and the stress is showing.

Research by Resume Now, an online firm offering services to job-seekers, found “growing dissatisfaction with salaries, rising living costs and the toll these challenges are taking on workplace morale.”

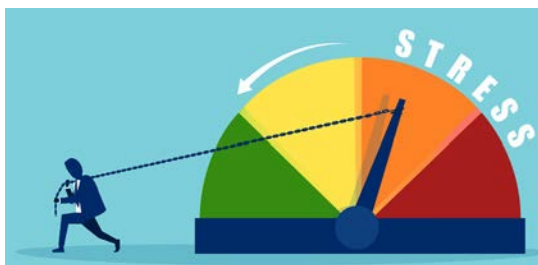
Union workers enjoy job security, good pay and regular salary increases but that is not the case for most American employees, according to Resume Now’s 2025 Wage Reality Report.

Seventy-three percent of workers responding to a Resume Now poll said they are barely getting by. Twelve percent said they cannot afford basic living expenses and nearly one-quarter reported difficulties covering essentials. One-third complained pay had not kept pace with inflation and one of three said living expenses had driven them into debt.

Related to the financial difficulties faced by most American workers is the rise of on-demand pay programs allowing access to wages before normal paydays, according to a CNBC report.

“When you’re living paycheck to paycheck, you’re making trade-offs,” said Stacy Greiner, CEO of an on-demand pay platform called DailyPay, according to CNBC. “Do I put gas in my car and get to work or do I buy groceries? Do I call in sick to work so I can go to my side gig and get paid today rather than wait for the next pay period?”

Robert Ferlmann, chief financial officer for a janitorial services firm, told CNBC half his employees use on-demand pay services. “It is, without question, the most popular benefit we offer employees,” Ferlmann said.



Manufacturing Revival? Unlikely

Will President Donald Trump’s tariffs bring back high-paying manufacturing jobs that ease income inequality?

“Probably not,” says New York Times economics writer Patricia Cohen.

In an analysis of administration-imposed tariffs, Patricia Cohen concludes that automation, the digital economy, online commerce – and, in some cases, the loss of union contracts – have had a profound effect on earning power that cannot easily be overcome.

For example, she notes, the amount of steel produced by 350,000 workers in 1970 requires only 86,000 now. Recalling a visit to a European steel plant, Cohen says: “I saw titanic machinery and control stations with computer screens, but hardly any workers on the floor.”

Other forces threaten wage progress.

Unions have lost a grip on many industries. Auto manufacturers have moved to right-to-work states to avoid collective bargaining. Elsewhere, unions increasingly are a fading presence. In one case, Cohen spoke to a worker at an Iowa meat packing plant whose job once was unionized but is no longer. The employee hadn’t received a raise in years.

Another important economic factor is the demand for cheap consumer goods, Cohen says.

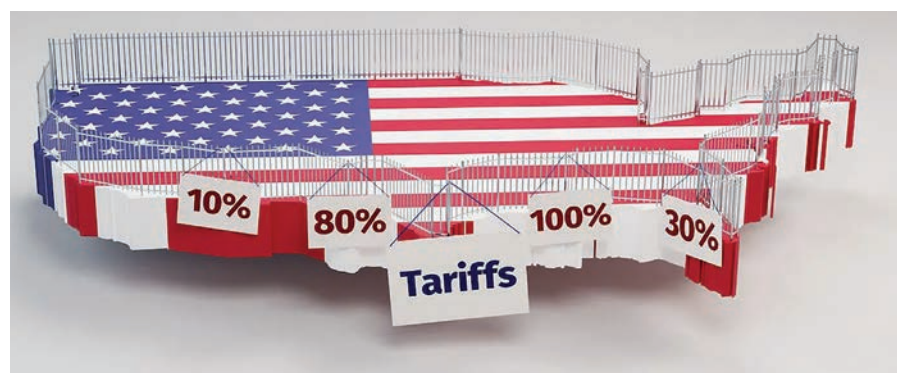
U.S. shoppers became accustomed to low-priced products – electronics, shoes, clothing – manufactured overseas by non-union workers earning a fraction of what Americans expect.

That’s not likely to change, the Times says.

“Today, the best paying manufacturing jobs require significant training and skills,” Cohen said. “Those that don’t, offer low wages.”

PPPWU President Steve Nobles said tariffs are not likely to end income inequality or bring a resurgence of good-paying factory jobs.

“That’s fantasy,” he said. “The only way to get a fair deal is through a union contract.”



Bezos’ Robots Not Union-Friendly

Robotics rule at Amazon.

The online shopping giant – unionized in only a few facilities – is about to put its millionth robot to work and expects human personnel in fulfillment centers to shrink further over the next few years.

According to CNBC, cutbacks already have begun as technology takes a toll. Amazon, founded by billionaire Jeff Bezos, axed more than 27,000 jobs in 2022 and 2023 with more to come, the business channel reported.

Amazon also is aggressively harnessing Artificial Intelligence – AI.

CEO Andy Jassy told CNBC that AI will result in “fewer people doing some of the jobs” that can be handled by automation.

Scott Dresser, vice president of Amazon Robotics, said the company’s “DeepFleet” robots would reduce the number of employees doing heavy lifting and “repetitive tasks” while affording workers “new opportunities.”

However, a recent British study shows that AI and robotics at Amazon warehouses lead to feelings of isolation and pose challenges to union organizing.

“If workers cannot easily communicate with one another, it becomes more difficult to unionize,” said researchers at Oxford University and the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, according to the digital news site 404 Media.

Attempts to organize Amazon in the United States have met with infrequent success.

Less than 1 percent of Amazon’s worldwide workforce is unionized.

‘Las Vegas Dream’ is Real at Last

The Venetian Resort and casino in Las Vegas finally bet on a winner.

For 25 years, the 7,000-room Venetian had resisted unionization but agreed to a first contract with the Culinary Workers Union following a change in ownership, according to the Associated Press.

At around the same time, workers at the newest casino, the Fontainebleau, finalized their first contract – a victory that signified union protection for employees at all major Vegas resorts.

Ted Pappageorge, Culinary Workers Union Local 226 secretary-treasurer, said the Venetian and Fontainebleau contracts – which provided workers a 32 percent pay increase over five years – helped achieve a “Las Vegas dream” of full coverage at major casinos.

“It’s always been our goal to make sure that this town is a union town,” he told the Associated Press.

New members say they are thrilled with union membership.

A 16-year Venetian housekeeper, Susana Pacheco, told the AP that union protection had changed her daily life for the better.

No more must she race “against the clock to clean an unmanageable number of hotel suites,” the news service said, “and she’s spending more quality time with her children because of the better pay and guaranteed days off.”

Pacheco said the union had given her what she – and other workers – long had been denied.

“Now with the union, we have a voice,” Pacheco said.

Local 226 and Bartenders Union Local 165, Nevada affiliates of UNITE HERE, represent 60,000 workers in Las Vegas and Reno, according to the 226 website.

Members work as guest room attendants, cocktail and food servers, porters, bellmen, cooks, bartenders, laundry and kitchen workers, the union said, and the workforce is diverse with members from nearly 180 countries speaking 40 languages.



CULINARY WORKERS UNION LOCAL 226 VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

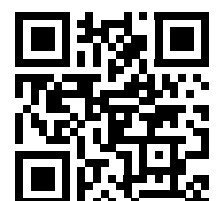
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PPPWU-WR-8-26-25

Deregulation Moves Called a Threat to Worker Safety

In a move denounced by union leaders and labor experts, the Trump administration is seeking to eliminate more than 60 safety regulations protecting blue- and white-collar workers while allowing employers to escape responsibility for catastrophic workplace accidents.

“This is an outrageous betrayal of workers and their families,” said PPPWU President Steve Nobles. “If anything, workplace standards should be tightened and protections increased. The Trump administration is doing exactly the opposite.”

Defending the White House initiative, Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer said eliminating “outdated” regulations was a priority of President Donald Trump.

“These historic actions will free Main Street, fuel economic growth and job creation, and give American workers the flexibility they need to build a better future,” Chavez-DeRemer said in a statement.

Labor experts rejected the secretary’s upbeat assessment.

Hayley Brown, a research associate at the Economic Policy Institute, said portraying deregulation as an effort to aid workers puts “an Orwellian spin on policies that make it easier for employers to endanger their employees and harder for workers to hold them accountable.”

Her “Orwellian” mention refers to George Orwell’s 1949 novel, “Nineteen Eighty-Four,”

in which a totalitarian government smothers individual rights and evades obvious truths. In similar fashion, Brown said, Trump’s deregulation move was not a pro-labor initiative but “clearly designed to cut costs for employers by shifting risk and harm onto workers.”

If Trump is successful, for instance, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration would not be able to punish employers for subjecting workers to “risky” activities under the “general duty clause,” companies would not have to provide adequate lighting at construction sites and disabled workers no longer would have Biden-era minimum wage protections.

Labor experts say the Trump deregulation initiative represents a threat to worker safety, already a concern. An AFL-CIO study showed that more 5,000 workers died on the job in the latest annual assessment.

“People are at very great risk of dying on the job already,” Rebecca Reindel, AFL-CIO occupational safety and health director, said. “This is something that is only going to make the problem worse.”

Researchers at The Century Foundation think tank reached a similar conclusion.

“Transparent, thoughtful rulemaking is a fundamental responsibility of government, one that seeks to balance the needs of employers and workers,” said a Century Foundation commentary. “Trump’s recently announced deregulatory agenda rejects this responsibility in its entirety and shows his true colors as an anti-worker president.”

NOTICE ON WORKER OBJECTIONS TO AGENCY FEES

Annual notice is hereby given of the policy on worker objections to agency fees which has been adopted by the General Board in response to the United States Supreme Court’s 1988 decision in *Beck v. CWA*. The policy sets forth a formal procedure by which an agency fee payer may file an objection to the payment of that portion of his or her dues which is attributable to expenditures for activities which are not germane to collective bargaining. The policy applies only to agency fee payers who work in the United States. The policy applies to the International, district councils, and local unions.

Agency fee payers (also referred to as “financial core members”) are those individuals covered by a union security agreement who meet their financial obligations by paying all dues, fees, and assessments, but elect not to become or remain actual members of the union. Agency fee payers may not exercise the rights of membership such as running for union office, electing union officers, ratifying contracts, and voting on strikes. They may be eligible to receive strike benefits if they are participants in the Emergency and Special Defense Fund, but they are not eligible to receive benefits from the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund whose benefits are for members only.

The policy adopted by the General Board includes the following elements:

1. The agency fee payable by objectors will be based on the expenditures of the International, district councils, or local unions for those activities or projects normally or reasonably undertaken by the union to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents. Among these “chargeable” expenditures are those for negotiating with employers, enforcing collective bargaining agreements, informal meetings with employer representatives, discussing work-related issues with employees, handling employees’ work-related problems through the grievance procedure, administrative agencies, or informal meetings, and union administration. Based upon an independent audit by the International’s auditors, it has been determined that seventy and twenty-one hundredths percent of the International’s expenditures for the year ending December 31, 2024 were for such activities. Because at least as great a proportion of district council and local union total expenditures are spent on “chargeable” activities as are spent by the International’s, in calculating the amount of

local union dues to be paid by objectors, district councils and local unions may exercise the option of presuming that the International’s percentage of chargeable activities applies to the district council or local union also. Alternatively, district councils or local unions may calculate their own percentage of chargeable activities.

2. Objectors will be given an explanation of the basis for the fee charged to them. That explanation will include a more detailed list of categories of expenditures deemed to be “chargeable” and those deemed to be “nonchargeable” and the accountants’ report showing the International’s expenditures on which the fee is based. Objectors will have the option of appealing the union’s calculation of the fee, and a portion of the objector’s fee shall be held in escrow while he or she pursues that appeal. Details on the method of making such a challenge and the rights accorded to those who do so will be provided to objectors with the explanation of the fees calculation.

3. Objections for the year 2026 must be filed on or before December 31, 2025 for current agency fee payers unless a prior objection was filed on a continuing basis. Timely objections are for one year and will expire on December 31, 2026 unless they are filed on a continuing basis. Objections filed on a continuing basis will be honored until they are revoked. If an employee is not an agency fee payer, the employee must assume non-member status and file an objection to be eligible for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with the timely receipt of the objection. New employees who wish to object must not obtain member status and must file an objection within thirty days of first receiving notice of this policy for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with receipt of a timely objection.

Objections should be sent to the attention of the Agency Fee Administrator, Office of the Secretary-Treasurer, Printing Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America, 12301 Old Columbia Pike, Suite 310, Silver Spring, MD 20904-1637. The objection should be signed and contain the objector’s current home address, place of employment, and district council and/or local union number. Copies of the full text of the procedures for worker objections to agency fees are available upon request from the Agency Fee Administrator.

‘PASSING OF THE TORCH’

continued from PAGE 9

“We are doing our due diligence at the general board,” said Israel Castro, who was appointed PPPWU secretary-treasurer after Clark Ritchey’s death. “We are going to make sure we take care of our members.”

Nobles said the union must be a “lean, mean fighting machine” as it continues to contend with IBT mischief and the challenges of technology.

Eddie Williams, president of Local 527-M, which served as host for the Solidarity Conference, said the union’s future is in its own hands. “We’ve got a lot of work to do but if we stick together we’ll get it done.”

That sense of purpose and assuredness was evident throughout the Solidarity event and in the commitment of a leadership team voted into office by acclamation.

Serving two-year terms will be:

Jim Longerbone, Local 1-M, St. Paul, president; Janice Bort, 72-C, Washington, D.C. secretary-treasurer; Mike LaSpina, 406-C, Long Island, executive vice president; Deborah Morris, 406-C, recording secretary; Dave Billinger, 100-M, Toronto, Canadian vice president; Harry Selnow, 612-M, West Caldwell, New Jersey, Atlantic Region vice president; Eddie Williams, 527-M, Southern Region vice president; Enrico Lee, 507-S, Kalamazoo, Michigan, Central Region vice president; Marty Hallberg, 1-B, Twin Cities, Minnesota, Mountain Region vice president; Robert Loreda, 388-M, Los Angeles, Pacific Region vice president.

From opening session to last, delegates and leaders said the Solidarity idea was a winner.

The new conference brings together four PPPWU units – Newspaper, Specialty, Eastern, Midwest – that previously met independently.

For economic and practical reasons, joining forces made sense. The turnout was large and afforded delegates the opportunity to meet colleagues from around the nation.

“This is a great idea,” said Nick Caruso.

“I loved being with my labor family,” said Pat LoPresti.

“Beyond expectations,” said Castro, who noted a significant number of younger delegates. “This was a passing of the torch to the next generation,” he said.

Response was so enthusiastic that Eddie Williams had to several times contact the Hilton Garden Inn to arrange for more rooms. “Awesome,” Williams said.

Sharing ideas, making contact with other leaders, gaining insights – those in attendance said the three days had been energizing and instructive.

“I will walk out of here with way more knowledge than when I walked in,” said Gary Adams, president of Local 6505-M, St. Louis.

As delegates sang a final chorus of “Solidarity Forever,” it was clear that faith in the labor movement and the PPPWU had been renewed.

Steve Nobles said the union had showed admirable strength despite challenges over the last few years and that the Solidarity Conference demonstrated that the future of the PPPWU was secure.

“We’ve been here 140 years and will be here 140 years going forward,” Nobles said. ■