Americans Mourn Loss of Economic Independence
Leo Gerard

Americans devoted Friday July 4th to celebrating independence. Flags and fireworks, picnics and pledges of allegiance abounded.

But there’s no liberty and justice for all if Americans aren’t economically independent. Low wages, debts and dim prospects all subjugate. This is the condition of a shocking number of Americans as income inequality rises. And their economic desperation and subordination occurred by design.

CEO’s and right-wing one percenters purchased legislation and court decisions that diverted the nation’s wealth to their penthouses. And despite their promises, not a dime trickles down to the workers whose labor created the wealth and whose productivity has risen even as their wages have not. The decision of the right-wing majority on the U.S. Supreme Court last week in the Harris v. Quinn case is another example of the one percent’s unrelenting erosion of the 99 percent’s economic independence.

This decision makes it harder for 28,000 home care workers in Illinois specifically, but others across the country as well, to collectively bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

That’s exactly what the one percent wanted. The harder it is for the 99 percent to collectively bargain, the easier it is for the one percent to take everything. In this particular case, the one percenters include some of the richest people in the world, the Koch brothers and the Walton family, who fund the National Right to Work (for less) Legal Defense Foundation (NRTW), which bankrolled the lawsuit.

Home care workers, whose lives are devoted to aiding disabled adults, were paid minimum wage in Illinois a decade ago. Job dissatisfaction was high, as was turnover. Shortages of these workers forced the state

⇒See MOURN Page 3.
Brothers and Sisters:

Why is the Steelworkers Rapid Response program so important? Let me try to answer that question. Anyone who has been receiving Rapid Response InfoAlerts and ActionCalls should have learned about China and South Korea’s unfair and illegal trade practices. Here is what I have learned.

America’s producers of the steel pipe used for the extraction of oil and natural gas – known as Oil Country Tubular Goods (OCTG) – have been under enormous threat from illegal foreign competition. There are thousands of Steelworkers, our Brothers and Sisters, using state-of-the-art technology to manufacture these products. They are critical for our nation’s quest to become energy independent.

Before 2008, China was coming after our OCTG products. These products were being sold in the U.S. at prices below fair value and in deceptive ways designed to circumvent international trade laws. This is often referred to as “dumping”. Winning a trade case against them effectively stopped the dumping. But, by July 2013, action was needed again. This time domestic steel producers filed a trade case against nine countries responsible for an alarming and rapid surge of OCTG imports. The most damage was coming from South Korea, where there is no domestic market for these goods. They’re made solely for export.

Recently the U.S. Department of Commerce issued a preliminary report that didn’t urge ANY duties on South Korea.

It was critical that our government fully investigate South Korea’s cheating. Thousands of American jobs – Steelworker jobs – have been on the line.

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced July 11th that it had found evidence that South Korean companies have been dumping steel pipe and tube into the American market.

This is good news for America’s steelworkers and steel producers, who joined together to ask department officials to stand up for domestic industry. Countries like South Korea have flooded the market with these pipes, which are priced below fair market value — and it has put jobs at risk.

The case has now headed over to the International Trade Commission (ITC), which held a hearing on July 15th to determine whether the steel producers and their workers have been injured or are threatened with injury because of the dumping. A ruling is expected by August 1st. Hopefully the ITC will come to the same, fact-based decision that the Commerce Department did.

While this case is vital for the jobs at stake, it is just as important for every Steelworker in an industry or community that could be vulnerable to illegal trade. In this case, we fought back with initial success only to see other countries manipulate that outcome for their own gain. It’s not right, and the same thing can happen in industry after industry unless we send a strong message through this case. We need our elected officials to ensure that our trade laws are enforced and that those who break the rules are held accountable.

That is why Rapid Response is so important. It allows us to become educated on issues like the OCTG dumping. It also gives us an avenue to take action on the issues to help protect Steelworker jobs as well as non-union jobs in the industry. The job we protect may be our own.

[Rapid Response is the Steelworkers' nonpartisan grassroots education, communication, and action program that provides the necessary structure to inform every USW member about pending legislation concerning labor and work-related issues. Rapid Response provides opportunity for all USW members to have a strong voice and an active part in the legislative activities that affect their daily lives and allows USW members to fight back on a daily basis on issues that affect them, their families, and their communities.]
to institutionalize infirm adults, a significantly more expensive and less satisfactory living arrangement.

Then in 2003, the state took steps that enabled home care workers to join the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and collectively bargain. Their wages rose to $12.25 an hour. They got health benefits and training. Turnover declined. The state estimates it has saved $632 million because fewer adults went to institutions.

The same was true in Washington state, where home care workers joined SEIU in 2002. Collective bargaining provided them with wage increases of 40 percent, health insurance, paid time off and mileage reimbursement. And like Illinois, Washington saved money because fewer disabled adults ended up in nursing homes.

This solution was great for the vast majority of everyone involved, taxpayers, workers and disabled adults. Here’s what one of those adults, Rahnee Patrick, told a National Public Radio reporter:

"I had a personal assistant come to me at 5 o’clock in the morning in my house. She rode an hour in the snow, from the North Side of Chicago. Why was she so dedicated? Not because I’m lovely, but because she gets a really good wage, and the wage came from the unions being able to collectively bargain. I can actually go to work, and it’s because of her being able to pay her own bills that I’m able to pay my bills.”

Workers say it was a godsend. Dorothy Glenn received $1 per hour when she began caring for her disabled sister in 1972 after taking her out of an Illinois institution where she’d been badly injured. Glenn got no health insurance and no training. She recounts that when she asked for a raise, the state told her that if she didn’t like the pay, she should put her sister back into the nursing home.

“I felt like my sister and I were living in the shadow, and we had no voices,” Glenn told Think Progress reporter Bryce Covert. She said she got a voice when she was able to join the SEIU. “It dramatically changed my life,” she said. The difference is 28,000 workers bargaining collectively with the state instead of one. “As long as we keep our numbers, we have the power,” she explained.

The pay increases and health insurance benefits secured by collective bargaining gave economic independence to tens of thousands of home care workers in Illinois and in states across the country. Their work provided them with sufficient income to pay their bills, support their children, buy an Independence Day picnic spread. Collective bargaining meant they no longer had to depend on the government for health insurance or on food banks for dinner.

Economically independent workers are less easily manipulated and mistreated. That is exactly the opposite of what right-wing one percenters want. What was good for tens of thousands of home health workers was bad for greedy one percenters. So they searched for a way to thwart the system that worked well for workers, invalid adults and the state.

They found it in a handful of home care workers who didn’t want to pay the fair share fee that was charged to those who benefitted from collective bargaining but declined to join the union.

The NRTW group volunteered to use Koch brothers and Walton family money to pay for a lawsuit seeking legal sanction for these workers to freeload, to reap the benefits of collective bargaining but shirk paying any part of its costs. That’s the genesis of the Harris v. Quinn case.

The NRTW scheme works like this: legalize freeloading to lower revenues available for collective bargaining, and thus diminish workers’ ability to secure better wages and benefits. This robs workers of economic independence.

The right-wing majority on the Supreme Court sided with right-wing one percenters. They ruled that a state can’t require home care workers to pay a fair share. They ruled for weaker collective bargaining and less economic independence.

And they ruled for higher income inequality. That is exactly how it has played out for the past century. As collective bargaining rose in the United States from 1918 to 1958, income inequality declined. And as collective bargaining declined from 1958 to 2008, income inequality skyrocketed.

Illinois home care worker Dorothy Glenn said there’s power in numbers. For many workers, only that power can achieve for them liberty and justice for all.
Former Steel Workers President Lynn Williams Dies at 89

Former Steel Workers President Lynn Williams, 89, who steered his union through wrenching change as steel makers shrank and the union turned to organizing non-steel workers and campaigning against unfair trade, died May 5 at his Toronto home.

Williams headed the union from November 1983 through the end of 1994, succeeding the late Lloyd McBride. Williams had been Secretary-Treasurer since 1977. He started with USW Local 2900 when he went to work at the Inglis plant in Ontario after World War II.

USW said that from 1981-85, the basic steel industry lost 350,000 U.S. jobs in the United States. In a later interview, Williams called it a “frightful time” which produced a wave of early retirements, threatened health benefits and shaky pensions.

“If you can imagine an old mattress out in the junkyard with the springs popping up, I was like a guy lying on the springs trying to hold them all down,” Williams said in 2010. “And I didn’t have enough body parts to put a hand on this one, a hand on that one and a knee on another one. I didn’t have enough body parts to hold them all down.”

Williams used concession bargaining to get steel makers to agree on innovations that helped workers and the industry: Seats on corporate boards, in management meetings and in sales discussions, for example. He also pioneered Voluntary Employee Benefit Agreements (VEBAs) to take on health care costs. And he got USW into unfair trade cases in a big way.

“Workers really have something to say,” Williams said at that time. “But it has to be done in a way where working people are recognized as important in the institutions where they work.” Williams also led USW to found its activist retiree organization, SOAR.

“Lynn Williams held this union together through the worst of times, the massive bankruptcies and consolidations in the U.S. steel industry,” said USW President Leo Gerard. “Lynn was a leader of great compassion and ingenuity, securing deals to help save as much of the industry as possible while at the same time preserving pensions and benefits for workers.”
7 Key Ways Labor Rights and Civil Rights are Forever Intertwined
Chuck Jones, President

As our nation marks the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, we recognize the long-standing relationship between labor and the civil rights movement in our efforts to fight for economic justice. Throughout history, labor unions have joined with the civil rights movement in fighting for equality for all. Here are seven key moments that helped forever intertwine the cause of civil rights with the labor movement.

1. When the AFL and the CIO merged in 1955, the new labor federation created a civil rights department to work with civil rights advocates to eliminate racial discrimination and dismantle segregation across our country. The AFL-CIO was instrumental in advocating passage of the landmark civil rights laws of the 1960s while helping to desegregate unions and create more equality within the union movement.

2. In 1955, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the nation’s first labor union to be led by African-Americans, helped organize the historic Montgomery Bus Boycott. The boycott, which galvanized tens of thousands, was, in part, the brainchild of E.D. Nixon, president of the union’s Alabama chapter and of the state chapter of the NAACP.

3. Speaking at the AFL-CIO national convention in December 1961, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. emphasized that unions protect workers of all races from exploitation. Highlighting the importance of an enduring alliance between the civil rights movement and labor unions, King famously declared, “If the Negro wins, labor wins.”

4. Labor unions were instrumental in organizing the 1964 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which called for an end to racial discrimination and the creation of new economic opportunities. The event was the brainchild of the president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, A. Philip Randolph, and of trade unionist Bayard Rustin. The United Auto Workers contributed significantly to fund the march and helped bring union members from across the country to join the massive crowd.

5. Tragically, King was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, where he was supporting a strike by AFSCME sanitation workers. Speaking to supporters of the striking workers, he delivered his well-known “I have been to the mountaintop” speech, in which he challenged the community to look out for each other through collective action and drove home the important message that “all labor has dignity.”

6. After partnering with civil rights advocates to successfully lobby Congress to create a national holiday honoring King, the labor federation began a partnership with the Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Atlanta to organize an annual observance. For more than 25 years, this observance has brought together hundreds of trade unionists to perform community service and honor King’s life and legacy.

7. When Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 and the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, they excluded domestic workers and agricultural workers, the majority of whom were people of color. Since their passage, the AFL-CIO has fought to extend basic labor rights to these industries through the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act in 1982 and the Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights in New York, California and Massachusetts. Efforts to help workers in these excluded sectors will continue until everyone receives basic protections and fair treatment at work.

As we look forward to another 50 years of progress on civil rights for all workers, the AFL-CIO is focused on advancing voting rights, ending mass incarceration, passing comprehensive immigration reform with a road

⇒See RIGHTS Page 9.
Steelworkers Strike in Illinois: ‘Us Today, Maybe You Tomorrow’

By Laura Anderson

FRANKLIN PARK, ILL. — Some 350 members of Steelworkers Local 7999 walked off the job at midnight May 18 at Sloan Valve here, west of Chicago. They had been working without a contract since Sept. 30. They are fighting for respect and against the company’s anti-union assault, including contract demands that would expand the use of lower paid temporary workers and raise the cost of health care.

Sloan Valve manufactures plumbing fixtures and valves. This veteran workforce on strike has an average of 20 years working for the company.

The 24-hour picket line is spirited, with a food tent and a grill. Strikers take turns chanting while cars drive by. Ernestine Triplett, a machine operator with 10 years at Sloan, told the Militant that this is her first strike. “Us today. Maybe you tomorrow!” she chanted, as she held a “Honk for support” sign. “If you don’t stand up for something you’ll fall for anything,” is one of her favorite sayings. “These kinds of attacks are hitting so many people,” Triplett said.

Machine operator Domingo Ramirez described the insulting conditions on the job. “There are cameras everywhere, we can’t talk on the line,” Ramirez said. “They asked a lady to open her mouth to see if she was eating during work time — it was a piece of gum.”

If Sloan Valve gets its way, workers said, bosses will replace their “no excuse” attendance program with an even harsher one that allows the company to fire workers after six “occurrences” in a year, instead of the current more flexible point system.

One respected co-worker was fired last year, said mill operator Valerie Green, after getting points for missing work because of two deaths in the family and a fire at his house. Green was recently given points for missing work to take care of a sick grandchild.

“UPS workers, postal workers, IAM representatives and others have dropped off water and joined the picket line in solidarity with the strikers,” said Chris Penge, 38, a tool and die maker and member of the local’s bargaining committee.

Sloan Valve did not respond to requests for comment.

“Staying united is key,” Penge said. The vote was 289 for going on strike, he said, and 7 against.

Penge said that Sloan Valve is going after working union officials. “If you take time off for union business,” he said, “the company wants to take it away from the annual vacation we won in past union contracts, instead of getting union time off.”

“Our members are standing strong, they’re united,” said Jerry Mastny, Local 7999 president, who has worked at the plant for 37 years. “We’ll be out here as long as it takes.”
STEELWORKERS ORGANIZATION
OF ACTIVE RETIREES
District 7 Chapter 30-10

SOAR & Golden Age Club

We would like to invite all United Steelworker Retirees to join us in a pitch in lunch and to discuss our Pensions, Healthcare and all other Benefits we have as Retirees...

We meet every 3rd Monday of the month
Time 11:45AM

AT

UNITED STEELWORKERS
Local 1999 Union Hall
218 S. Addison St. Indianapolis, IN

Please join us we can make a Difference...
Gerard to Lawmakers:
U.S. Must Put Top Priority on Trade Enforcement

The U.S. government must put top priority on enforcing trade pacts it's already signed with other nations, rather than inking new so-called “free trade” pacts, Steel Workers President Leo Gerard says.

But U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, obeying orders from Democratic President Barack Obama, is more interested in signing new trade pacts rather than enforcing provisions of existing ones, even if enforcement would save U.S. workers' jobs, Gerard adds.

And USTR has left trade enforcement in the hands of the private sector, relying on companies to bring complaints about unfair trade, rather than initiating its own probes, Gerard said. The Steel Workers, sometimes in tandem with steel companies, but often alone, have led the way among labor in bringing unfair trade complaints.

“There’s a reason that trade agreements and topics like fast track are viewed so negatively by the public. Trade isn’t working for them,” Gerard said.

Gerard presented his views in late June to the Senate Finance Committee, which handles trade legislation and oversees the USTR. The USTR is bargaining with 12 Pacific Rim nations on yet another controversial, NAFTA-like trade pact that lacks worker rights, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The next TPP bargaining is scheduled for Canada on July 3.

But enforcement is closely linked with the conditions any trade pacts – new or old - set, Gerard told senators.

One big problem, Gerard said, is that a company or union must show unfair trade hurt it and cost jobs before the government provides relief, such as tariffs. But trade cases take so long to compile, bring and try that by the time the feds impose the relief, the company or companies involved are hurting or ruined and the jobs are gone.

Another is that when the U.S. removes its retaliation for unfair trade practices, the other nations start cheating again. Once U.S. tariffs ended on subsidized Chinese tires – which compete with tires produced by Steel Workers – Chinese imports and market share doubled, to 50 million tires, Gerard pointed out. That costs U.S. workers jobs.

“The Steelworkers have taken action where we can and are proud that we have been the single-leading force in seeking to have trade rules properly enforced and that terms of

⇒See TRADE Page 9.
trade are fair,” Gerard declared. “Since 2000, we have filed or supported dozens of cases.”

They included the case in the GOP George W. Bush administration that imposed tariffs from 2004-06 on dumped imported steel and cases against dumped coated free sheet paper and another imposing tariffs on Chinese tires. USW also filed complaints about Chinese currency manipulation, Chinese workers’ rights violations, opposing “protectionist and predatory actions on green technology” and in auto parts. Most recently, USW and several steel companies filed a complaint against subsidized imported oil company tubular goods – the tubes that are used for pipes in fracking and in oil lines – from Korea.

“But we do not look at filing trade cases as a sign of success,” Gerard said. “Far from it. Under our trade laws, there has to be injury, often significant injury or threat of injury, before any relief might be offered. In essence, we win by losing.”

The paper case was “a perfect example,” he said. The first time the union filed it, to protect the paper industry and its Paperworkers members, the government ruled there was dumping, but its impact wasn’t significant enough to justify tariffs.

“Several years later, we filed essentially the same case but, by that time, more than 7,000 workers had lost their jobs, capacity was shut down and companies were on the brink. Relief was provided and many of the remaining workers have their jobs as a result. But a substantial portion of the industry will never come back. These cases are difficult to bring and expensive to pursue.

“And what are we doing to reduce the backlog of unfair trade barriers?” he asked. “That, to me, is a critical issue that Congress should make a priority. Some have suggested we...put a priority on addressing those actions that will make a real difference in promoting domestic production and employment. That should be the start, not the end, of the effort.

“When the Steelworkers work on developing new policies to address today’s current challenges facing the manufacturing sector, often the first question we’re asked by leaders here in Washington is: ‘Is it WTO (World Trade Organization) legal?’ I think that policymakers in many other countries ask the question: ‘How long can we get away with it?’

“Under today’s approach, the answer to that question is, all-too-often, a long, long time.”

New Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden, D-Ore., appeared to agree with Gerard. Its top Republican, Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, didn’t, even though Gerard specifically told Hatch former GOP President Ronald Reagan was great on enforcement against unfair trade.

“Without strong enforcement, no trade deal - old or new - is able to live up to its potential for jobs and economic growth,” Wyden said. “And it becomes extraordinarily difficult to build support for new agreements. Foreign nations will continue locking American goods and services out of their markets.” That will drive U.S. firms out of business and workers out of jobs, he added.

“The latest tactics used by foreign nations and companies to skirt our trade rules seem like they’re ripped from the pages of crime and spy novels. They hide paper trails to make it harder to build cases in trade courts,” Wyden said.

Hatch claimed “we have a trade system that works,” but said Obama should bring more trade cases against Russia. Hatch is also willing to leave enforcement to the WTO.

map to citizenship, protecting LGBT rights through the passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, expanding diversity within our unions, raising wages for every working family, and providing leadership development and training opportunities for underrepresented communities. Together, these important causes will help fulfill the vision we share.

This article was written by Sean Savett not by me, but I want our membership to read this and know that Our Union fights everyday for equality in the workplace and will continue to do so. When Unions are being attacked it affects all workers and the middle class. I can’t express the importance of voting for Labor friendly candidates. The only chance we have to repeal RTW in this state is to elect candidates that will work for us and not against us.
SHEET OF SHAME
The following have made the choice to be
FREE LOADERS
THEY ARE ALL SCABS

DAVID BAKER – A.S.C.
BOB BRATTAIN – CENVEO
STEVE PATTINGILL – CENVEO
GARY TACKETT – CENVEO
MARK HOLLAND – CENVEO
FREDDY COOK – CENVEO
STANLEY NIX – PEPSICO
JAMES GREEN – PEPSICO
KEVIN M. BRADSHAW – PEPSICO
JONAS A. STRONG – PEPSICO
LaSHONE HEWLETT – PEPSICO
BRIAN HACKERED – DIAM CHAIN
ALAN HICKS – DIAM CHAIN
DEREK JOHNSON – DIAM CHAIN
GARY MATTINGLY – DIAM CHAIN
LUIS ORTIZ – DIAM CHAIN
MATT TOWNSEND – DIAM CHAIN
STEVEN FITZPATRICK – DIAM CHAIN
JUSTIN VAN ARSDALL – DIAM CHAIN
ERNEST WATERMAN – DIAM CHAIN
TODD WAGONER – DIAM CHAIN
JUDITH A. ENGLAND – DIAM CHAIN
RALPH “GORDON” CUTSHAW-CARRIER
RICHARD “MIKE” HANCOCK – CARRIER
WALTER R. BIRELEY - CARRIER
PAM CUSTIS – CARRIER

NANCY MAYO-SKILES – CARRIER
CARL PARKER – CARRIER
JOHN A. CHILTON – CARRIER
STEPHEN V. SKILES – CARRIER
ORVILLE GANN – CARRIER
JANET S. WALLEN – CARRIER
CLAUDE SHYNE – CARRIER
DARRON CROWE – CARRIER
LAMONTE DUMAS – CARRIER
DVAUGHN PHILLIPS – CARRIER
LURENDA WILLIAMS – CARRIER
JASMINE McGEE – CARRIER
GREG NEAL – CARRIER
CHESTER BOHANNON – COLORS
LINDA BOHANNON – COLORS
KATIE GILLIN – COLORS
BYRON MONDAY – COLORS
SHARON SLAYTON – COLORS
JESSICA STEPHENS – COLORS
DAROL THOMAS – COLORS
JON TRUETT – COLORS
MONTE ERIC WALKER – COLORS
COREY BERNEIT – COLORS
MELISSA BERNSTEIN – COLORS
JAMIE CRUM – RSR QUEMETCO

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Wal-Mart Agrees to $21 Million Settlement in California Warehouse Wage Theft Case

Wal-Mart, the retail monster infamous for its low prices, low wages, no benefits and virulent labor law-breaking, has been caught robbing its workers, again, this time through its subcontractor at its warehouses in Riverside, Calif. Now the subcontractor must pay up: $21 million.

Wal-Mart and its largest import distribution subcontractor, Schneider Logistics, Inc., agreed to that settlement on May 14 for federal and state-level wage and hour violations committed at a Wal-Mart warehouse facility in western Riverside County.

Schneider will pay the entire $21 million in unpaid wages, interest and penalties for major wage and hour violations covering over a decade at the dedicated Wal-Mart warehouse. The settlement does not say whether Wal-Mart will contribute to the settlement behind the scenes. Both Wal-Mart and Schneider secured complete releases as part of the settlement.

More than 1,800 workers who worked between 2001 and 2013 at three 100-percent Wal-Mart dedicated Schneider Logistics distribution centers in Mira Loma, Calif., will get settlement money from the Carrillo vs Schneider Logistics case.

"When we raised these issues, we knew it would be a fight. Schneider tried to fire us. Wal-Mart tried to deny responsibility. But we knew the law was on our side, and that Wal-Mart was responsible for the conditions in the warehouse. This settlement vindicates us and our struggle for justice," said David Acosta, an affected worker active in the suit from its beginning.

The suit, by Warehouse Workers United, alleged Schneider committed major wage theft over 10 years against "lumpers" — workers who load and unload boxes by hand from shipping containers and into trailers for Wal-Mart. The workers were directly employed by loading/unloading companies Impact Logistics, Inc. and Rogers-Premier Loading and Unloading Services and/or Premier Warehousing Ventures.

They often worked double shifts—16 hours/day, seven days per week with no required breaks or overtime premiums, and often for less than minimum wage. The workers allege they were instead paid by an elaborate piece rate that was found to be illegal and changed quickly after the suit was filed in November 2011.

In January, U.S. District Judge Christina Snyder ruled that Wal-Mart must face trial as a potential joint employer, the first time any retailer would have to stand trial for the actions of its warehouse contractors. Wal-Mart maintained it had no control over the warehouse workers, but the workers’ lawyer argued that the presence of up to a dozen Wal-Mart managers on site and their daily control over the work at every level made Wal-Mart both aware of and liable for wage and hour violations at the warehouse. The judge agreed.

The Schneider warehouse workers previously beat the firm in October 2011 and December 2013. In the first of those cases, the California Labor Commissioner cited and fined the staffing agencies Rogers and Impact for over $1 million for illegal recordkeeping and pay records. That win banned Schneider from firing plaintiff workers, and it had to take its workers on as "employees" under labor law, with starting hourly wages of $12.50 per hour and benefits. Earlier this year, the two staffing agencies settled for $1.7 million.

In the second case, Schneider settled a separate suit filed by employees at the same warehouses in 2012 for $4.7 million. This suit alleged wage theft by Schneider of warehouse workers due to an illegal payment scheme.

Speaking for Warehouse Workers United, Sheheryar Kaoosji, director of its resource center, said, "Wal-Mart has denied its control of its subcontracted warehouses time and again, despite the existence of their own 'Standards for Suppliers' document that prohibits wage theft, health and safety violations, and retaliation. Whenever workers in Wal-Mart's supply chain have stood up, Wal-Mart attempted to deny responsibility. Only through a responsible contractor policy and by allowing workers to have a voice at work without retaliation will these cases be prevented, rather than repeatedly going through slow and costly litigation."
Next Generation is a program designed to get the younger members of our union more involved in the union. Its purpose is to train and educate the new generation of members on the history of the union and to train them on where to take the union in the future. We are the last district in the USW to start this program. We have already begun selecting coordinators in every plant in District 7. Since we are still in the planning process of this program, it may be a few months before members start seeing the program running.

Walter Jones has been chosen to be the lead man for Local 1999. He will be in charge of running the program in Local 1999. He has asked that everyone try to bring at least one member who is under the age of 45 to the next local meeting to try and get more people involved. We will reveal more information as the program begins to develop in the future.

We hope this program reaches the next generation of workers. We need bright new minds willing to step up and be a leader.

In Solidarity, Jason Campbell – Sub-District 3 Next Gen Coordinator

Next Generation Partners with 9 Year Old for Bike Donations

BRADDOCK, Pa. — A Plum Borough girl rallied together her community to make donations to a Braddock bike shop.

Kadence Simko, 9, wanted to help the Braddock community by providing its members with bicycles and bicycling supplies. With the help of her father, Mark Simko, and the United Steelworkers Union, she collected 75 bikes, 10 scooters and five skateboards. Helmets, pads and parts and tools were also donated.

On Saturday, the items collected were taken to the Red Lantern Bike Shop, a free store.

Mark Simko, a steelworker in Braddock, said, “We helped the free store another time with clothes, and we knew that they had a bike shop and the kids love riding bikes from the first day of the season until the last day of summer. They’re out there all day every day, and we just thought, what kid shouldn’t have a bike for the summer?”

The bike collection was part of the United Steelworkers Union’s Next Generation program.
Hello Union Brothers and Sisters;

Hope everyone had a good Fourth of July Holiday.

I wanted to get everybody updated on some things, still waiting on an answer on the Denny Parks arbitration, still got 3 other grievances slated for arbitration, still working with the company on getting some other grievances cleaned up.

I would like to take this time to welcome all the new employees; sorry I haven’t got around to meeting everybody, I also want to thank all the new hires for signing the union cards to be a member, Local 1999 takes great pride in being 100% union here at Rexnord.

If you have any questions or anything you need the department stewards can get in touch with me. By the time you get this news letter I should be done with our unit meetings for new hires in the cafeteria.

I would like to remind every one of the labor fest downtown in August, watch for the flier that will be out on the boards, this is a great time for everyone, and you don’t have to work here to go to the event.

Remember together we stand divided we fall, we are union.

In Solidarity,
Don Zering
Unit President

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

First of all I would like to congratulate all of my Brothers and Sisters who have completed their probationary period. Welcome to Local 1999.

There are some concerns that I have because of your completion after your 90 days. I know the Company sent out letters, but in the past we had worked together in an orientation group to inform every one of the do’s and don’ts. But it didn’t happen. So there are a couple of issues that I feel are important to all members.

First the points system is very important for everyone to watch for and if you have concerns please see your steward in the area and also the committee person that you see walking throughout the plant.

Second this is in regard to your medical benefits. Please everyone should reach out and have a primary care doctor, you are paying for this.

In Solidarity,
Vickie Burrus
Grievance Committee

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Dear brothers here at RSR our prayers & get well sentiments go out to Wayne Carlson & his family. Wayne was injured on July 3 when he fell from a platform at work. He is still hospitalized with leg and vertebrae fractures. He has underwent surgeries on his back and leg. I personally would like to thank all the USW members for coming together in support of brother Wayne. We work in & around all types of hazards. I’d like to remind everyone to stay vigilante & take every precaution that you need in order to perform your job safely.

In Solidarity,
Derrick Morris
Unit President

Hello Union Brothers and Sisters,

At this time we are still working lots of overtime which is a good thing. We also have seven new hires and are waiting on our company President to approve more hiring. Our current VP of operations has been removed and that has already made a big difference to our sisters and brothers having a lot less stress.

We as a Union body continue to push for solidarity in our work place.

In Solidarity,
Don Zering
Unit President

Brothers and sisters,

As this is the first time writing for the
UNION LEADERS HIT HIGH COURT RULINGS

Union leaders hard sharp words for the pro-business tilt of two U.S. Supreme Court rulings issued on the final day of the court’s year, June 30.

In Harris vs. Quinn, the justices said that “free riders” among home health care workers, if employed by both the state involved and the caregiver, did not have to pay even “fair share” fees to cover the costs the union representing them incurs to negotiate a contract or enforce it.

That ruling could let thousands of “free riders” in more than 20 states nationwide get away with being represented without having to pay for it. Dissenting Justice Elena Kagan predicted there could be a mass exodus of union members, too (see separate story).

In the Hobby Lobby case, the justices said a closely held private firm’s owners could invoke their “freedom of religion” to bar contraceptive coverage for female workers under the Affordable Care Act. That ruling, dissenting justices said, would strip thousands of women of coverage and make them second-class citizens in health care (see separate story).

And dissenting Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg warned that the ruling is not limited to a contraceptive ban. The justices, she said, opened the way for firms to invoke religious reasons to defy other laws, including minimum wage laws and equal pay laws.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka criticized Harris and said unions would nevertheless continue organizing home health care workers (see separate story). The Coalition of Labor Union Women blasted Harris, too, and called the Hobby Lobby ruling “discrimination against women and an attack on workers’ right to basic health coverage.”

Other union leaders offered similar comments:

TEAMSTERS: The court “delivers a bruise to unions, not a KO,” the Teamsters said of the Harris case. “A Koch-linked group brought the case before the court in an effort to take away collective bargaining rights for public sector employees. They failed.”

SERVICE EMPLOYEES: Union President Mary Kay Henry, whose union organized and represented the workers in the Harris case, said the ruling wouldn’t stop its organizing home health care workers nationwide.

“No court case is going to stand in the way of home care workers coming together to have a strong voice for good jobs and quality home care,” she said. “At a time when wages remain stagnant and income inequality is out of control, joining together in a union is the only proven way home care workers have of improving their lives and the lives of the people they care for.”

AFL-CIO: “The fate of workers cannot and will not be decided by one Supreme Court decision” in the Harris case, Trumka said. “The court upheld the right of public employees to have strong unions and workers will vigorously build on that foundation.”

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS: The union pointed out that its state employed home care workers in New Jersey, represented by Local 1037, have gone ahead and bargained a new contract that, among other benefits, provides additional pay for workers caring for children with special needs – regardless of the court’s ruling.

“This decision may affect hundreds of thousands of direct care workers from New York to California. The case was brought by the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, whose goal is to eliminate all bargaining rights for U.S. working women and men. That’s completely out of step with every other global democracy,” CWA said.

“It’s ironic. Two-thirds of all U.S. public workers currently have no collective bargaining rights. The public policy question we should be considering is ‘Why is the U.S. the only democracy in the world that is cutting workers’ rights?’

“Direct care workers will continue to work to join together, bargain collectively and improve their lives,” CWA concluded.

TEACHERS: AFT President Randi Weingarten said working women lost in both High Court rulings.

“More and more, it seems that the majority of the court better represents the interests of the Chamber of Commerce than it does the values and aspirations of working Americans,” she said of Hobby Lobby.

“Workers’ rights should not depend on whether their employer – while buying and selling to everyone regardless of religion – wants to limit their reproductive rights based on
More and more unions, community groups and other organizations are lining up with the Postal Workers (APWU) and backing the union’s boycott of Staples. You can join in, too. As the APWU says, “It’s that easy,” just don’t buy your office supplies at Staples.

In May the AFL-CIO endorsed APWU’s boycott of the office-supply giant in response to the U.S. Postal Service’s plan to privatize retail operations by contracting mail services to Staples, using “postal counters” staffed with low-wage, high-turnover Staples employees rather than postal employees.

The USPS began contracting out postal services to Staples in October. So far, 80 Staples stores are part of the pilot program. But the USPS plans to expand the scheme to 1,500 Staples locations nationwide at the same time the USPS is eliminating public post offices.

The union says that the no-bid sweetheart deal will compromise the quality, security and reliability that consumers expect and deserve in the handling of their mail. APWU President Mark Dimondstein says that an internal USPS document “makes clear that the goal of the program is to replace the good, living-wage jobs held by USPS employees with low-wage jobs in the private sector.”

Stop Staples

In Solidarity,
Richard Moon
Unit President

Brothers and sisters,

Cenveo is running strong with plenty of work. We recently just got approved for another machine which we will see the week of July 20th. This will put our facility at 23 machines capable of producing millions of envelopes on a daily basis. The new machine will take a few months to get up and running before we can began to hire personnel for our 3 shift operations.

See CENVEO Page 19.
privately held religious beliefs. That this decision, which disproportionately affects women, coincides with Harris vs. Quinn, which limits rights of home healthcare workers in Illinois – the vast majority of whom are women – is a throwback to another age.

Working families, especially working women, have lost here."

As for the Harris case, Weingarten said her union and others would go back to what brought them strength, despite the court: Organizing and advocacy.

"The Roberts court has consistently ruled in favor of corporate interests, while diminishing the rights of labor," she said. "This court has built a record of weakening the rights of both voters and working families; no one should be surprised by this decision.

"America's workers have gone through the crucible of tough times and adversity. That's why they formed America's labor movement. Workers did not start off with their rights being protected by government. We had to – and still must – organize ourselves, our families and others to secure good jobs, great public schools, prosperous communities and opportunity for all. While disappointed, AFT will do what we have always done: Redouble our efforts to empower and engage our members around the issues they care about and the work they do, and to serve as a strong voice for our communities, our democracy and opportunity for all."

AFSCME: President Lee Saunders said his union, which also includes tens of thousands of state and local home health care workers, would keep fighting for – and organizing – them, despite the Harris decision. Doing so is even more vital, he said, since the number of people needing care will rise sharply as the Baby Boom generation retires.

"Today's decision does not dampen the resolve of home care workers and child care providers to come together to have a strong voice for good jobs and to give care to millions of seniors, people with disabilities and children," Saunders explained.

"The ruling did not hand anti-worker extremists the victory they'd been hoping for because the court did not revoke collective bargaining rights for public service workers or care providers. It did not eliminate existing contracts. That would have been a fundamental gutting of the American Dream, but make no mistake – Justice Alito's opinion made clear that the relentless assault on workers' rights will not abate."

"AFSCME members nationwide will remain steadfast and fight for the simple rights and dignity that every working American deserves. A court ruling doesn't change our obligation as proud union workers and it doesn't negate our obligation to keep fighting to restore the American middle class."
OREGON CITY PAINTING CONTRACTOR TELLS NLRB HE WOULD RATHER CLOSE UP SHOP THAN GO UNION

It has to have been one of the more unusual hearings federal administrative law judge John McCarrick has ever presided over. Oregon City painting contractor Gene Edwards — accused of threatening, bribing, interrogating, discriminating against and firing pro-union workers — went without an attorney, and ended up being the prosecution’s best witness.

But Edwards’ “do-it-yourself” defense ran into problems well before the hearing began on May 6 in Portland.

Painters District Council 5 filed “unfair labor practice” charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in October accusing Edwards Painting of repeatedly violating federal labor law during the course of a union campaign that began in June 2013.

After the charges were filed, Edwards filed papers to remove his wife Connie and son Grant as co-owners of the business. Edwards later told the judge that he did it to shield them from liability in the case, adding his wife had been listed as the majority owner because at one point they considered getting certified as a woman-owned business.

When the NLRB investigated the allegations, Edwards told the federal agent he would sooner close his 45-year-old business than allow workers to unionize, which they have a right to do under federal law. In February, the NLRB issued a formal complaint and set May 6 as the date for a hearing to begin before McCarrick.

But the company failed to file a legal response by the deadline, failed to answer some of the charges before the hearing, failed to obey a subpoena request for documents, and even destroyed several of the requested documents. The NLRB could have treated the failure to respond as an admission of guilt, but instead the judge and the agency let Edwards respond to the charges during the hearing.

Edwards, with about 20 employees, does a good deal of work for several prominent Portland-area general contractors. Mostly, Edwards Painting works on commercial multi-family residential construction projects, including some federally funded projects.

Painters union organizer Scott Oldham says he targeted Edwards for a campaign because the company pays well below the union rate at that

➤ See PAINT Page 19.
time: $19.81 an hour, plus benefits. That enables Edwards to underbid unionized painting contractors, and win jobs that might otherwise pay the union rate. So Oldham and fellow Painters member Wyatt McMinn got jobs at Edwards, and started talking to their new co-workers about unionizing - a technique called “salting.” That’s when the owners began violating federal labor law.

According to the NLRB, Gene Edwards and his son Grant, a foreman, threatened to fire workers if they attended a union meeting, fired one worker for wearing a union T-shirt, fired other union supporters on fabricated pretexts, attempted to quell the union campaign by giving raises of up to several dollars an hour, and even put a question about union affiliation on its employee application form to screen out potential union supporters.

As the hearing on those charges began, Edwards was unprepared, telling the judge he hadn’t read through the law he was accused of violating, nor documents the NLRB submitted as evidence, nor even his own sworn affidavit.

McCarrick, flown up from San Francisco to judge the case, patiently explained rules of procedure to Edwards. But he had to intervene repeatedly – like when Grant Edwards interrupted to correct his dad’s testimony, or when Gene Edwards tried to rebut witness testimony during cross-examination, or when Oldham was on the witness stand and Gene Edwards, acting as his own lawyer, asked him to divulge which workers had been planning to attend a union meeting.

At one point, NLRB attorney Rachel Harvey asked Edwards what happened to the employee information form that asked - unlawfully - whether an applicant was a union member. Edwards said he put it in the shredder. “As soon as I did it I thought it was stupid, but I can’t undo it,” Edwards testified.

Given the facts that tumbled out during the 5-day trial, it’s hard to understand how Edwards Painting gets as much business as it does. After operating for 45 years, the firm has no office, but instead is run out of Edwards’ home in a residential area of Oregon City. Once a week, up to 20 employees come by to pick up paychecks left on a shelf outside the house.

The company maintains little or no personnel files beyond handwritten pay sheets and IRS forms. When Harvey asked why the company hadn’t complied with the subpoena request for I-9 forms, Edwards said he doesn’t have any, and doesn’t even know what an I-9 is. An I-9 is the form employers use to verify that an employee is legally entitled to work in the United States. Up to half of the company’s employees are foreign-born.

The company also has no real drug policy, written or otherwise. That featured in one of the stranger incidents in the trial. Pro-union worker Sean Carter complained to Edwards that a co-worker was using drugs on the job. Edwards told the accused co-worker, who then allegedly sent text messages to Carter threatening to kill him and harm his family, and to sic a biker gang on him.

Oldham helped Carter file a police report, and then Oldham and McMinn confronted Edwards about the situation. Edwards’ reply was the accused worker could take a drug test up to three days later. If he failed the test, he’d be fired; if he passed, Carter would be fired.

When Oldham and McMinn objected, Edwards told them to get a drug test too, though he didn’t follow through on that. In the trial, Gene Edwards denied he’d heard from Carter about drug use, contradicting what he’d said in the sworn affidavit with the NLRB agent. Carter, fired by the company in August 2013, failed to appear at the trial, ignoring a subpoena and attempts to contact him.

I would like to congratulate Jim Miller who just retired after 43 years of service. The union wishes him a safe and happy retirement. We have Several others who may be retiring in the next 6 months as well.

Our grievance load is slightly lower than it was at this time last year. We have a few arbitrations coming up in August and September.

Our contract is due to expire in April of next year 2015. We are planning on scheduling a unit meeting this fall to prepare for it and start a survey to see what the members want in this next negotiation period.

We hope everyone has a great summer and we will share more in the next issue of steel voice.

In Solidarity,
Jason Campbell
Unit President
Staples and the U.S. Postal Service have cut a deal that jeopardizes your mail service and your local post office. In fact, post offices across the country are at risk – along with thousands of good jobs.

The Staples deal will replace full-service U.S. Post Offices with knock-off post offices in Staples stores that are not staffed with U.S. Postal Service employees.

You have a right to post offices staffed by workers who are accountable to you and the American people. You have a right to postal services provided by highly trained, uniformed Postal Service employees, who are sworn to safeguard your mail – whether it’s at the Post Office or Staples.

The Staples deal is bad for consumers like you who will pay the same for less service. And if Staples and the USPS move forward with this deal, it could lead to the end of the Postal Service as we know it.

In the meantime, the Staples deal is replacing living-wage jobs that our community depends on with low-wage jobs that hurt our economy.

Text POSTAL to 91990 for more info or to get involved.

Mobile alerts from APWU. Periodic messages. Msg & data rates may apply. Text STOP to 91990 to stop receiving messages. Text HELP to 91990 for more information.