

IN MEMORY

Give them rest with the devout and the just, in the place of the pasture of rest and refreshment, of waters in the paradise of delight; whence grief and pain and sighing have fled away.

In early May, **Jeremy Wheeler**, OSU Medical Center, Doan Hall, lost his Mother, *Gail Wheeler*. And early May saw the loss of **Julius Barfield**, OSU Medical Center retiree. And early July saw the loss of OSU Medical Center retiree **John Anderson**. And Lead Chief Steward **Mericle Long** lost her beloved cousin, *Denise Johnson*. August saw two losses at the Secretary of State. **Shirley Burton** lost her sister *Pamela Smith* and **Dametta (Stamps) Clark** lost her husband *Michael Clark*. And University Hospital Environmental Services in Doan Hall was hit hard. In late August, **Kenneth Cook**, lost his brother *Lawrence James Bryant Jr.* And early September saw the loss of Prince Jallah, son of **Martha Jallah**.

Prayer for the grieved: "May the LORD bless you and keep you; May the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; may the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

Special Report: 50 years fighting for a living wage

It isn't often mentioned when people discuss the 1963 March on Washington, but after Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke Bayard Rustin took to the stage to read a list of eight demands being delivered to the government. One of those demands spoke directly to an issue grabbing headlines today as thousands of retail and fast food workers across the country walk off the job demanding better wages. [Rustin]: We demand that there be an increase in the national minimum wage so men can live in dignity. In 1963 the minimum wage was \$1.25 per hour or \$9.52 per hour when adjusted for inflation. Today the federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour, below where it was 50 years ago. At the march the demand was for a wage of

\$2 per hour which would be the equivalent of \$14.80 per hour when adjusted for inflation. The workers in strike today are calling for an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour, nearly the same amount that was demanded in 1963. NAACP president Julian Bond referenced the walkout in his speech and called on those attending to not sit on the sidelines as dreamers, but instead to be doers: [Bond]: As we go home today let us remember that the dreamer was also a doer. As we turn on our TVs tomorrow and see people walking out at places where they're forced to survive on \$7.25, by the thousands, let us commit to join them in fighting to lift up the bottom. As the top of that lad-

der has extended the tethers at the bottom need to be unleashed. Many of the speakers called for a new commitment to the fight for a living wage. Service Employees International union president Mary Kay Henry: [Henry]: Joining together to create good jobs by supporting workers all across this country who've had the guts to stand up and join together and demand a living wage from their employers. AFSCME President Lee Saunders said the guiding principle should be that everyone share equally in the prosperity of the nation. [Saunders]: We must uphold the principle that everyone who contributes to the prosperity of this nation should share in the prosperity of our nation.

SECOND LEVEL GRIEVANCE/RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES ROSTER

DEPT	STEWARD	ARTICLE / ISSUE	HRNG	DECISION	CWA ACTION
FOD	Lacey	Air contaminants, asbestos and mold that management did not warn workers about	7/30/13	DENIED See next o.u.c.h.	ARB*

*CONSIDERING FOR ARBITRATION **NO FURTHER ACTION ***RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES #SEE O.U.C.H. & SEE NEXT O.U.C.H.

Communications Workers of America



Local 4501 Communicator

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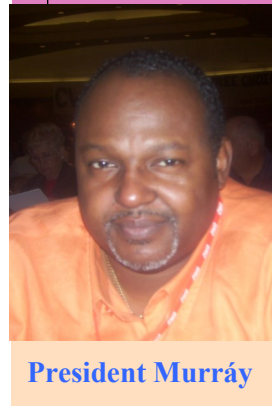
Local 4501 Communicator

Michael Secrest msecrest@cwa4501.org Editor/Contributor. Writes all articles not specifically attributed to others. President **Richard Murráy** contributes a quarterly message and oversight **Sheila Collins** keeps our Facebook current and serves with **Lolita Thomas, Lee Paul** and **Michael Secrest** on the Communications Committee. **Cynthia Stewart** cstewart@cwa4501.org writes voter empowerment articles, and more

What will we answer when our grandchildren ask....

By Michael Secrest

Why is it that I only make \$5 an hour and workers in America used to make a whole lot more?



President Murráy

I read that workers had organizations called unions that held workers together in a cohesive force to communicate their needs and negotiate contracts that spelled out what was expected from the workers as well as the companies they worked for. Were you around back then? What happened? Where did all that go? Please tell me why my pay and my spouse's pay and our teenage children's pay is barely enough for us to live on and why our working conditions are so shameful. Did you have anything to do with this mess we're living in?

I know that unions just sorta dissolved away; that many thought that unions had served their purposes; that businesses had learned their lessons and labor could trust them to do the right thing and we could just

sit back and watch the good times roll. Many reasoned that unions could not get them anything better than they were getting without paying union dues. We wouldn't have to get involved in our own futures and we wouldn't have to pay one nickel in dues. It seems to me that WE are paying dearly for every nickel YOU saved. Aren't the conditions we are living in now proof that unions quite obviously had not outlived their usefulness and that you needed to fight like hell to be sure they didn't disappear? Did you fight like hell, grandpa? As you looked around and saw unions slipping away, did you even notice what else was slipping away?

Union members have written time and time again about what we believe is going to disappear when unions disappear. We have written about how our middle class (that includes us and houses us and feeds us and comforts us, the middle class that we built with our own hands and minds and backs) is quickly disappearing. And the establishments we work for, along with the conservatives (who appeal not to our intellects and our minds, but to our guts and our fears) are

convincing us that our unions are at fault. And way too many of us are sitting and watching it go, and blaming not the establishments that we work for but the unions that work for us. Yes, we do pay them, but we pay them to work for us. And they do work damned hard for us. But, like with anything else in this life, if we don't work damned hard for it, we won't get it and if we already have it, we won't keep it. But I am going to work damned hard to turn this around, and I thank those who are working with us and pray for those who are not, because we are all going to lose equally, and lose nearly everything. But my most urgent reasons for fighting are selfish ones. One: I may not change the world but I hope to keep the world from changing me. Two, when my grandchildren ask: Did you fight like hell, grandpa? I want to be able to answer "Child, I participated in as many events as I could; I documented and I wrote article after article. I begged, borrowed and stole any words I could find to try to stimulate people into fighting to keep the working class viable. But, for your sake, I wish I had done more."

Meet one another with kindness and the working class will survive

LATE SUMMER: WHEN THINGS HEAT UP



Wisconsin Congressman Mark Pocan Urges Action To Raise Minimum Wage Amid Historic U.S. Income Inequality

Posted: July 30, 2013 by laborradio

Congress is starting to wake up to the movement of low wage workers demanding an increase to the federal minimum wage. Wisconsin Rep. Mark Pocan is one of the legislators who is leading the campaign in the House of Representatives. Jesse Russell reports. Pocan said one of the greatest issues facing the country is the growing income inequality gap:

Pocan] "In the last 40 years adjusted wages, 90 percent of Americans have seen an increase of \$59, the top 1 percent of the top 1 percent has seen an increase of about \$18 million. Measured out that's like one inch versus five

miles of a difference."

Pocan said in addition to raising the minimum wage he believes giving workers more tools for organizing as a union are fundamental to turning around the economy.

[Pocan]: "If we can get people back into an economically sustainable position it overall helps the economy. It's growing the economy from the middle out and bottom up which has always been the most sustainable way."

He said the increase should be to be between \$9 and \$11 per hour.

[Pocan] "Around the \$10 figure seems to be where we should mathematically

be and where we can probably provide the best bump to lift people out of poverty and make the increase still in a range where most people are paid anyway."

However, Pocan has his doubts that the current Republican-controlled House would be willing to embrace raising the federal minimum.

[Pocan] "There's no way this Congress, we couldn't even pass the farm bill, we've been so unable to do anything, but I think it certainly doesn't mean you don't fight for it and talk about it. People just need to keep agitating."

Productivity up; wage growth stagnant

Posted to Worker's Independent News: August 21, 2013

Productivity is up, but wage growth has been flat for decades. Jesse Russell reports:

A new report from the Economic Policy Institute finds that wages in the United States have remained flat for a full decade. The report, titled A Decade of Flat Wages: The key barrier to Shared Prosperity and a Rising Middle Class, found the lack of wage growth was consistent across occupations, ethnicity, and

education levels. The report also details while productivity grew by 7.7 percent between 2007 and 2013 wages fell for the bottom 70 percent of wage earners. Going back even farther the report says that since 1979 wage growth has been weak with the average worker only seeing an increase of 5 percent. The report cites a number of reasons for the weak wage growth of the last 3 decades including globalization,

deregulation and weaker unions. It suggests fiscal expansion as a way to turn wage growth around by investing in infrastructure and the creation of jobs and suggesting that continued deficit reduction will only slow the job growth needed to jump start wages. Finally, the report calls for increasing the minimum wage and reestablishing the right to collectively bargain in the workplace.

Union History, the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire

The Trial, the Justice???? The Indignation

Be thankful for those who died for your rights. And remember: "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it"

from the Cornell University School of International Labor Relations

Justice?

On December 27, twenty-three days after the trial had started, a jury acquitted Blanck and Harris of any wrong doing. The task of the jurors had been to determine whether the owners knew that the doors were locked at the time of the fire. Customarily, the only way out for workers at quitting time was through an opening on the Green Street side, where all pocketbooks were inspected to prevent stealing. Worker after worker testified to their inability to open the doors to their only viable escape route, the stairs to the Washington Place exit, because the Greene Street stairs were completely engulfed by fire. More testimony supported this fact. Yet the brilliant de-

fense attorney Max Steuer planted enough doubt in the jurors' minds to win a not-guilty verdict. Grieving families and much of the public felt that justice had not been done.

"Justice!" they cried. "Where is justice?"

Twenty-three individual civil suits were brought against the owners of the Asch building. On March 11, 1914, three years after the fire, Harris and Blanck settled. They paid 75 dollars per life lost.

Harris and Blanck were to continue their defiant attitude toward the authorities. Just a few days after the fire, the new premises of their factory had been found not to be fireproof, without fire escapes, and without adequate exits.

In August of 1913, Max Blanck was charged with locking one of the doors of his factory during working hours. Brought to court, he was fined twenty dollars, and the judge apologized to him for the imposition.

In December of 1913, the interior of his factory was found to be littered with rubbish piled six feet high, with scraps kept in non-regulation, flammable wicker baskets. This time, instead of a court appearance and a fine, he was served a stern warning. The Triangle Waist Company was to cease operations in 1918, but the owners maintained throughout that their factory was a "model of cleanliness and sanitary conditions," and that it was "second to none in the country."

Ohio's newest SB 5

And there is something new in Ohio that will tip the scales of economic justice. Just like HB5, it is an attempt by conservatives to destroy the protections of all of Ohio's working people.

The "So Called" right to work law is the newest shark in working folk's waters. Look for information so start coming out within the week.

Stewards We need you to come into the office to help distribute this and other information. We will let you know when it is ready.