



Graphic Communicator



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Father and Son Say Thanks To Frontline Local Heroes



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TOP STORY

As Virus Threat Disrupts Nation, Union Officials Promise Vigilance: 'Not Out of This Yet'



PHOTO BY KIM MOATES/CEDARSTREAM

By Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC IS FAR FROM OVER – EXPERTS CAUTION OF A possible second wave in fall or winter – but as the country opens for business and the first signs of recovery emerge, GCC/IBT leaders pledge to remain focused on worker safety, job security and public health priorities.

“We’re not out of this yet – not by any means,” said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman. “But our union is strong and we continue our pledge to protect members and their families. This is a time when solidarity matters most.”

Freeman said that while some union workers faced furlough or job loss, 80-85 percent

of GCC/IBT members stayed on the job in essential industries.

GCC members worked overtime to produce boxes essential to the shipment of vital medical supplies, food and consumer items ordered through the booming online marketplace.

They turned out packaging for pharmaceuticals, manufactured face masks and protective shields and printed the U.S. currency and Congressional Record.

“Making these face masks for different unions and organizations across North America is very satisfying work,” said Martin Prevost, Local 555-M, Montreal. “I feel like we are doing our part during this crisis to help our society in offering these masks.”

Teamster workers across the country also were on the job – emergency room personnel,

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Officers Take Oath But Keep Safe Social Distance



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Trump Performance During Crisis Calls for New Leadership in Fall

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
2020

WHERE I STAND

KURT FREEMAN GCC/IBT PRESIDENT

In These Difficult Times Unions Show 'Solidarity' More than Just a Slogan

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "SOLIDARITY?"

The word sometimes is thrown around too easily and loses meaning.

Not anymore.

Not in the time of coronavirus.

The spirit of unionism has never been more important. Our most fundamental principle is repeated widely these days: "We're all in this together."



INEQUALITY.ORG VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

As our country fights the epidemic, union leaders and members are showing that "solidarity" is not just a slogan but a call to service and social commitment.

Around the United States and in Canada, GCC/IBT members are on the front lines.

They are making plastic face shields in Sacramento, printing educational materials for remote learning in the state of Washington and turning out washable facemasks in Wisconsin and Quebec.

In Washington, D.C., GCC/IBT members print the nation's currency and Congressional Record. At the International Paper plant in Beaverton, Oregon, union folks pushed hard to get 15,000 boxes – donated by the company – to the Salvation Army for food aid.

At the same time, our Teamster brothers and sisters in a wide range

of important jobs – nurses, respiratory therapists, package handlers, waste control workers, to name only a few – show up for every shift despite the threat of Covid-19.

General President James Hoffa called union workers "American heroes" who steadfastly meet their obligations and, in off-hours, give personal time to their communities as volunteers.

It is an inspiring demonstration of civic duty.

"Teamsters are working hard every day to make sure America keeps rolling," Hoffa said. "We always have – from world wars to September 11 to Hurricane Katrina, Teamsters stand strong."

At the administrative level, GCC/IBT officers and their Teamster counterparts have been busy, too.

We have been negotiating with employers for "hero" pay premiums and upgraded safety precautions. We want workplaces sanitized and employees screened for temperature spikes before starting work.

There must be adequate personal protective equipment – PPE – and

social distancing. When an employer at a shop in Pennsylvania failed to provide protective masks, we ordered our own – with the GCC/IBT logo. We sent a message, and kept our members safe.

At the outset of the epidemic we moved quickly to distribute a coronavirus guide with vital information about the epidemic. We circulated an advisory on how to conduct union business by phone and internet. For weeks, our Washington office staff has been work-

ing from home and with their usual efficiency and dedication. We remain on duty and ready to help.

On the political level, we have joined the Teamsters in demanding that government give displaced workers ready access to unemployment insurance and free Covid-19 testing. If infected on the job, employees must be eligible for workers compensation benefits – and quickly. No one who calls in sick should be subject to punitive action.

These are tough times – and we are meeting the challenge.

We must take care of our families, friends, communities – and ourselves. For the common good, we must observe safety precautions, remain optimistic and put aside political differences.

Union members know best what solidarity demands. We're all in this together. ■

OUTLOOK

JAMES P. HOFFA TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT

We Need More Protection for Essential Workers

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC CONTINUES to affect hardworking Americans. Despite a plateauing of new cases, the toll this scourge is enacting on the public is immense. That's why the Teamsters are pushing even harder now to protect our way of life.

We need lawmakers to take additional steps to make workplaces safer, protect the hard-earned pensions of workers and retirees and ensure state and local governments have the funds they need to pay their employees so they can keep serving their constituents.

More than a million Teamsters are deemed essential workers, working in health care, transportation, grocery, food processing, warehouse, sanitation and corrections, just to name a few. These members and others like them need to be protected with comprehensive and enforceable safety standards in the next stimulus bill that comes to a vote on Capitol Hill.

Any legislation must require the Occupational Safety and Health



Administration (OSHA) to issue a temporary emergency standard that covers all workers, including public sector employees in states that have not opted into OSHA coverage, as well as transportation workers not covered by another federal safety agency.

Meanwhile, the Covid-19 pandemic has the potential to wreak havoc with multiemployer pension plans that are already in critical and declining status. Worker layoffs and furloughs will adversely affect contributions to these plans and jeopardize the retirement benefits that active workers and retirees have earned.

The next stimulus package should protect retiree benefits, do no harm to healthy plans and provide the financial stability that multiemployer plans need.

Additionally, state and local government jobs must be protected. Some 200,000 Teamsters work in the public sector. The CARES Act approved in late March provided considerable state and local aid, but governments need much more assistance.

At a time when some in big business are taking advantage of federal funding meant to help workers and small businesses, elected officials must move quickly and make sure future legislative fixes put people first. ■



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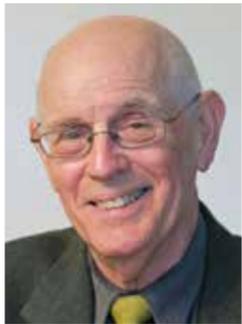
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Safeguarding Health and Standing Up for Equal Justice

THESE ARE REMARKABLE TIMES FOR GCC/IBT members – and Americans in all walks of life – struggling to cope with the coronavirus epidemic and issues of social equality that demand long-overdue attention.



Six months into the Covid-19 crisis, millions of workers struggle with job loss and dislocation. As President Kurt Freeman notes in this edition (Pages 1-2), most GCC/IBT members are doing far better than others – and their union status helps.



More than 80 percent of GCC workers remained on the job, though some with reduced or modified schedules. Print industry employees in essential sectors are helping to safeguard public health by manufacturing face shields, masks and other protective material, as Dawn Hobbs reports in our special coronavirus center section (Pages 8-10).

A union shop that once printed manuals and restaurant menus shifted gears and began turning out plastic shields. “If they ran out on the front lines, medical workers would be at risk,” GCC/IBT member Ken Roberts of Local 577-M, Milwaukee-Madison, told Hobbs. “It needed to get done.”

No one is immune from the epidemic. Some union members tested positive – a shop in Salt Lake City was particularly hard-hit with nearly three dozen cases – and union officials saw a spike in the deaths of GCC/IBT retirees that almost surely is tied to the virus. (Page 10).

As the virus threat deepened, union leaders responded.

Monthly organizing meetings – by conference call – resumed after a brief suspension. Freeman lent his voice to a Teamsters coronavirus podcast and GCC/IBT president emeritus George Tedeschi administered the oath of obligation to officers and general board members on the telephone. (Page 5)

At the same time, union officials kept close watch on plant safety, won premium pay for some GCC/IBT essential workers and rescheduled contract talks stalled by the epidemic.

They also kept pace with national political news in this crucial election year. A story by Zachary Dowdy (Page 5) gauges the growing impatience of union leaders with Trump administration policies that neglect working people and tilt toward big business. In more ways than one, they said,

President Donald Trump has let down working families. November is coming. Enough is enough.

Finally, in two stories (Page 4), we note the tragic deaths of two black men – Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and George Floyd in Minneapolis. Arbery was killed by a white civilian. Floyd perished after an encounter with police that prompted outrage and demonstrations in the United States and worldwide.

GCC/IBT and Teamster leaders denounced the treatment of Arbery and Floyd and joined millions of other Americans demanding equal justice and racial equality.

Kurt Freeman said organized labor is built on principles of fair play and color-blind solidarity. “We must redouble our efforts to make our country, and our movement, meet those ideals – every day, and without exception,” Freeman said.

Nothing less will do. ■

COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

Epidemic Not the Only Reason For Collapse of U.S. Economy

In this horrible time of economic collapse, it is truly touching to see so many corporate chieftains reaching out in solidarity with the hard-hit working class.

We know they're doing this because they keep telling us they are – practically every brand name giant has been spending millions of dollars on PR campaigns in recent weeks asserting that they're standing with us and declaring “We're all in this together.”

Except, of course, they're really not standing anywhere near us.

While we're waiting in endless lines at food banks and unemployment offices, the elites sit in posh executive suites, still getting fat paychecks, total health care, platinum-level pampering – and multibillion-dollar bailouts for their corporations. They'll even get a tax subsidy to pay for those “all-in-this-together” ads.

The gross disparity of our country's present economic collapse is not simply caused by a sudden viral outbreak but a severe, decades-long plutocratic policy of intentionally maximizing profits for the rich and minimizing everyone else's wellbeing. As the eminent economist Joseph Stiglitz rightly put it, “We built an economy with no shock absorbers.”

Decent, full-time employment – once the measure of a

family's economic security – have shriveled to low-wage “gig” or contract jobs untethered to a fair share (or any share) of the new wealth that workers create. Today's executives and financiers are focused solely on themselves, with no concern even for the long-term condition of their own corporate entity, much less for the common good.

They've abandoned any pretense that a corporation is a civilized community of interdependent interests. While top executives are richly covered, they're washing their hands of any responsibility for the health, retirement, and other essential needs of their own workforce.

Rely on food stamps, Obamacare, and other publicly funded programs, they say, even as their lobbyists and for-sale lawmakers slash those safety net provisions in the name of helping rich shareholders and speculators take evermore profit.

The forces of American greed have forced millions of our families to live on the economic edge – and all it takes is a virus to push them over.

In addition to exposing the gaping wealth divide in America, the Covid-19 crisis is spotlighting an ugly ethical divide. On the one hand, the pandemic has brought out the best in the American people – the selflessness of front-



line nurses and doctors, for example, as well as the generous community spirit of local food businesses. On the other, it has amplified one of the worst character flaws in our society – the “me-first” greed of corporate chieftains.

In a major PR splash last year, the CEOs of 181 big-name giants signed a public pledge that they would run their corporations not solely to increase shareholder profits but also to benefit workers, communities, and other “stakeholders” in our economy.

Then – BOOM! – the coronavirus hit, profits dropped and the new magnanimous spirit of togetherness vanished from those corporate board rooms. Immediately, masses of workers were shoved out the door and health benefits were terminated just when needed most.

With revenues drying up, all promises are negated.

In CorporateWorld the more things change the more they stay the same. That's why the corporate system will only be fixed when we outsiders impose real change on these incurably greedy insiders.

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. Sign up at HightowerLowdown.org.



AFL-CIO VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

Rallying Around Cause of Social Justice: ‘Must Live Up to Our Ideals Every Day’

By Dawn Hobbs
Special to the Communicator

Working with local labor organizations, Atlanta GCC/IBT leaders are helping to raise money for the family of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old black jogger shot to death by two white men in southern Georgia.

Responding to a case that gave new urgency to the nation’s discussion of race and law enforcement, Eddie Williams, president of Local 527-S, the AFL-CIO and the Atlanta-North Georgia Labor Council are coordinating efforts on behalf of Arbery’s survivors.

“When you see his mother and she’s reaching out and upset and crying – it’s just really sad,” said Williams, who is on the executive board of the labor council. “She is just absolutely devastated.”

The labor group, which includes the Teamsters, UAW and United Food and Commercial Workers, has been meeting via Zoom to discuss fund raising and how best to organize protest actions that meet virus-related social distance guidelines.

Arbery was shot to death on Feb. 23 – the eve of his 26th birthday – as he ran through the community of Satilla Shores near Brunswick, Georgia, approximately 300 miles south of Atlanta.

Local authorities made no arrests until a video of the shooting – recorded by a third individual, William “Roddie” Bryan – emerged in May and drew national media attention

Within 48 hours, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation took into custody Travis McMichael, 34, and his father, Greg McMichael, 64, a former county police officer and investigator for the prosecutor’s office.

The McMichaels were charged with murder and aggravated assault and have pleaded innocent.

Two weeks later, the GBI arrested Bryan, 50, in connection with the shooting. Through his lawyer, Bryan has insisted he took no part in the killing.

The McMichaels originally told police they spotted Arbery walking through a home construction site and thought he may have been connected to burglaries in the community.

However, news reports later established there was no police record of recent break-ins and a surveillance video showed Arbery merely looking around the location. An attorney for the homeowner said Arbery may have been intending only to take a drink of water from one of the sources at the site.

Williams said race clearly was a powerful factor in the decision of local law enforcement not to immediately make arrests and accept the McMichaels’ claim that they were attempting a legitimate citizen’s arrest.

“He was jogging through a neighborhood in broad daylight and wasn’t a threat to anyone,” Williams said. “I mean, come on. . . . If it weren’t for that video surfacing, this just would have been another black man who got killed and that would have been the end of it.”

In part, Williams said he holds the Trump administration responsible because of the President’s frequent divisive remarks that play to a far-right, white nationalist portion of his base.

“If we all worked together and respected each other, things like this would never happen,” Williams said. ■



After the shooting of Ahmaud Arbery in southern Georgia, a coalition of labor leaders, including officials of Local 527-S, Atlanta, raised funds for the victim’s family and took a stand against racism.

By Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

Leaders of the GCC/IBT and Teamsters joined top U.S. labor officials in condemning the death of George Floyd whose treatment by Minneapolis police officers prompted days of nationwide protests, civil unrest and demands for law enforcement reform.

“Organized labor is built on a commitment to equality, justice and fair play,” said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman. “We must redouble our efforts to make our country, and our movement, meet those ideals – every day, and without exception. What happened to George Floyd was disgraceful. We must make certain he did not lose his life in vain.”

Teamster General President James Hoffa and Marcus King, director of the IBT Human Rights and Diversity Commission, denounced the “unwarranted police killing of an unarmed black man” and, in a joint statement, said “equal justice under the law” still “is not a reality for all Americans.”

Adding his voice to the nationwide chorus of outrage was George Miranda, president of the IBT National Hispanic Caucus and Teamsters Joint Council 16. Miranda said it was the obligation of union members “to fight institutional racism head-on, in our workplaces and in our neighborhoods, in urban communities and rural towns, along the border and in the heartland.”

After Floyd’s death, Ralph Meers, secretary-treasurer of Local 527-S, Atlanta, attended a civil rights rally in Powder Springs, Georgia, sponsored by local Democrats and said one sign captured his thoughts: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you are part of the problem.”

Officials recalled that it was only four years ago that Philando Castile, a 32-year-old school cafeteria worker and member of IBT Local 320 was shot to death during a traffic stop by police officer Jeronimo Yanez outside St. Paul, Minnesota. Yanez was charged with second-degree manslaughter and acquitted in 2017.

Police conduct in the case of Floyd prompted widespread anger when video footage showed a Minneapolis officer kept a knee on his neck for nearly nine minutes during a May 25 arrest despite Floyd’s complaint that he could not breathe.

The officer, Derek Chauvin, was fired and subsequently charged second-degree murder. Three other officers on the scene also lost their jobs and face charges of aiding and abetting.

Protesters took to the streets, coast-to-coast.

Demonstrations were overwhelmingly non-violent but small groups bent on vandalism set fires and destroyed property in several cities, including Washington, D.C. IBT headquarters on Capitol Hill were damaged and windows broken at GCC/IBT offices on the ground floor of the Teamsters building.

After Floyd’s death, union officials around the country called for reform.

“I watched the video of George Floyd pleading for his life under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer,” said Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO. “No person of conscience can hear Floyd’s cries for help and not understand that something is deeply wrong in America.”

Sounding a similar theme was Rome Aloise, an IBT international vice president and principal officer of Local 853, Oakland.

Aloise recalled that James R. Hoffa, former IBT general president and father of the current union leader, stood with Martin Luther King to support Memphis, Tennessee, garbage workers in 1968 and that the union long has fought for equal treatment of all Americans. “This is where the Teamsters gain their strength,” he said.

He noted that Minneapolis has a “special” place in Teamsters history because of the historic IBT truckers’ strike of 1934. “Anti-union forces screamed that we were violent communists made up of out-of-town radicals, immigrants and criminals... but we prevailed.”

Now, he said, union members must rally around the cause of equal justice again. Incidents like the one ending with the death of George Floyd must stop. “This is America,” Aloise said. “What are we doing?” ■



Ralph Meers, right, secretary-treasurer of Local 527-S, Atlanta, joined Ernest Morris, local Democratic Party committee member, for a civil rights event in Powder Springs, Georgia. ‘If you are neutral in face of injustice, you are part of the problem.’

'Bungled' Crisis Calls for New Leadership

By Zachary Dowdy
Special to the Communicator

To Israel Castro, president of GCC/IBT Local 546-M in Cleveland, Ohio, the rapid spread of Covid-19 – and the devastating economic damage, job loss and blow to small business caused by the epidemic – exposed glaring weaknesses in national leadership and the need for union members to work for change in November.

"I can't think of a thing he's done right," said Castro, referring to President Donald Trump – a sentiment shared by GCC/IBT leaders at the local and international levels. Of particular concern, they said, was the continued favoritism shown corporate America by the White House at the expense of working people in the middle of a public health crisis.

Even the much-heralded "Paycheck Protection Program" – designed to help small businesses retain workers – was "bungled," Castro said. Funds quickly were exhausted with large corporations benefiting disproportionately.

"A lot of people who needed it didn't get it," he said. "A lot of our smaller print shops are closed. The money dried up." Trump and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin geared their efforts toward the corporate sector, Castro said. "They didn't do it in an efficient way for those who needed it most."

Michael Mitchem, president of Local 235-M, Kansas City, Missouri, said Trump took too lax an approach to what United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the "greatest public health crisis of a generation."

More than 120,000 people in the United States had died of the disease by late June and as many as 40 million filed claims for unemployment insurance.

"Trump handled it poorly," Mitchem said. "His lack of knowledge early on and his failure to warn people and follow the experts' advice with social distancing and basically not shutting things down, cost a lot of lives. That really bothered me."

Thankfully, Mitchem said, only a handful of his members lost jobs since the outbreak. In fact, he said, one shop that does food container packaging is "swamped with work."

As the November election approaches, union leaders are urging members to assess the performance of the Trump administration – over the past four years and especially during the coronavirus crisis and nationwide protests following the death of an unarmed man, George Floyd, at the hands of Minneapolis police officers.

In New York, Patrick LoPresti, president of Local 1-L, said poor planning and policy mistakes by the White House during a time of crisis jeopardized the lives of millions.

"It was terrible to find out that he could have done more to protect the public before the end of last year in stopping the spread of the virus," he said. "He could have got the ball in motion and he didn't do it."

Oscar Lopez, president of Local 4535-M in Houston, said he could find little to praise in the President's performance. Like Castro, he called the Paycheck Protection Program a bureaucratic disaster – indicative of the Trump administration's undisciplined approach and neglect of working Americans.



Labor leaders around the country know that many union members helped Trump win four years ago but warn a second term would give Trump an opportunity to do more damage to organized labor and worker rights.

And, they say, voters have a clear alternative in Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic Party nominee and a reliable friend of labor.

"He's qualified to lead a country – a thousand times better than the man in office now,"

Lopez said.

Mitchem and LoPresti also hailed Biden, who launched his campaign for the presidency in a Teamster union hall in Pennsylvania.

"Give Biden a shot," LoPresti said. "We need someone not as devastatingly destructive as Trump."

With a change in the White House, Castro said, there would be reason for hope despite the difficult days that surely await.

"The pandemic has refocused the average American worker on unions being a good thing," Castro said. "Shops with unions in them were safer. They were able to bargain and fight for paid pandemic sick time, testing and needed safety equipment."

And, he noted, public approval of unions continues to increase and there is a surge of interest in organizing.

"We're pushing for it," he said.

Zachary Dowdy is a Newsday reporter and the editorial unit vice president of Local 406-C, Long Island.

FREEMAN FORESEES A 'BRIGHT' FUTURE IN 'TEAMSTER NATION' PODCAST DEBUT

GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman knows it is vital to stay in touch and spread the word.

Facts count and communication is key, Freeman says – especially in turbulent times.

When the IBT podcast, "Teamster Nation," asked him to participate, Freeman gladly accepted.

Interviewed by Ted Gotsch of the IBT communications department, Freeman discussed innovative organizing methods, print industry performance during the coronavirus crisis and what he considers the "bright" prospects for GCC/IBT workers in the near future.

"The 'Teamster Nation' podcast is one of the many ways the IBT communicates labor news and the views of labor leaders and rank and file members," Freeman said. "I was more than happy to talk about the GCC's experience dealing with the coronavirus."

Freeman said that Secretary-Treasurer/Vice President Steve Nobles and he would continue "to share what the GCC is doing in the labor community."

To hear Freeman on "Teamster Nation," go to: <https://teamster.org/news/2020/05/episode-195-coronavirus-update-10>

SWEARING IN – AT A SOCIAL DISTANCE

GCC/IBT officers were sworn in from a safe social distance – very safe.

Exercising caution because of the pandemic, GCC/IBT president emeritus George Tedeschi administered the obligation of office by conference call.

"I insisted everyone wear a suit and tie, anyway," Tedeschi joked.

Ordinarily, officers attend a ceremony at GCC/IBT offices in Washington, D.C. but circumstances did not allow.

"Let's hope medical research conquers the virus and we can be together again," Tedeschi said.

On the conference call, Kurt Freeman was installed as GCC/IBT president and Steve Nobles, secretary-treasurer/vice president.

These general board members also were sworn in:

Atlantic Region: Patrick LoPresti, Local 1-L, New York and Stephen Sullivan, Local 3-N, Boston; Central: Michael Consolino, Local 458-M, Chicago and Israel Castro, Local 25-M, Detroit; Southern: Eddie Williams, Local 527-S, Atlanta; Mountain: Marty Hallberg, Local 1-B, Twin Cities; Pacific: Clark Ritchey, Local 747-M, Seattle; Canadian: Denis Fournier, Local 555-M, Montreal.

"This is a wonderful board and I am pleased to see everyone working together," said Tedeschi. "Terrific."



TEAMSTER NATION
PODCAST

Erratic White House May be More Worry Than the Epidemic

It's been six months since the coronavirus hit and devastated the U.S. job market.

Whatever the official jobless numbers, experts know the real unemployment rate is 20 percent, or worse.

How's the GCC/IBT doing?

Though a number of workers have been furloughed, our members are doing better than might have been expected.

Union officials estimate 80-85 percent are still working. There even has been growth in some sectors.

GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman said on a "Teamster Nation News" podcast that workers are busy in shops producing corrugated boxes and plastic bags. Members are turning out face masks and other personal protective equipment.



Union workers at newspapers help get vital information to the public. GCC/IBT members are printing U.S. currency, the Congressional Record and government identification cards.

The boom in online shopping, alone, means the packaging industry should do well, Freeman said – good news for union workers in that part of the economy.

At the moment, the print industry is hanging tough.

But the future is unsettled – and the outlook often alarming.

Even if a vaccine is developed at "warp speed" – a long shot, in the opinion of many medical professionals -- it will be many months before broad-scale immunity is achieved.

And while the country is opening for business again, consumers are understandably apprehensive.

The number of virus-related deaths is staggering. People are sobered by heartbreaking accounts of suffering and separation. Heroic workers on the frontlines must worry about their own health and safety of their families.

White House response has been erratic to say the least – and that may be the biggest concern of all.

President Trump brags endlessly about the great job his administration is doing but has few answers as to why the government acted so slowly to ramp up testing, begin a vigorous program of contact tracing and send a strong signal that social distancing was essential.

He has hawked a questionable medication, urged governors to open their states for commerce before meeting safety standards, and, incredibly, even managed to politicize face masks. Now some Trump backers skip wear protective gear in a gesture of anger at local authorities and support for the President.

As the death toll soared past 100,000, Trump played golf in Florida, peddled a crazy conspiracy theory suggesting MSNBC news host Joe Scarborough had murdered a member of his staff when in Congress 20 years ago, and got into a brawl with Twitter when the networking service called two of the President's "potentially misleading."

There isn't much mystery about Trump's motives – he's trying to distract voters from a shaky economy that likely will not recover anytime soon.

Despite it all, GCC/IBT members in general have been able to ride out the worst of these difficult times.

No one can predict the future but we can be sure of one thing: It will be worse if Donald Trump wins a second term. Focus on November. We can't allow this President four more years. ■



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Point of View BY ROBERT REICH

Rush to Reopen Endangers Public But Trump Won't Face the Facts

Donald Trump is getting nervous. Internal polls show him losing in November unless the economy comes roaring back. So what is Trump's reelection strategy? Ignore public health experts and reopen the economy at all costs. Here's his lethal 4-part plan:

Step 1: Remove income support, so people have no choice but to return to work.

Trump's Labor Department has decided that furloughed employees "must accept" an employer's offer to return to work and forfeit unemployment benefits, regardless of the risk of returning to work.

Forcing people to choose between contracting a potentially deadly virus or losing their livelihood is inhumane. It's also nonsensical. Our collective health depends on as many workers as possible staying home.

Step 2: Hide the facts.

It's impossible to fight the virus without adequate data. Anthony Fauci, the administration's leading infectious disease expert, warns that reopening poses "a really significant risk" without a huge ramp up in testing.

Trump fired Health and Human Services Inspector General Christi Grimm after she released a report detailing widespread shortages of testing and protective gear and ousted Rick Bright, a top government vaccine specialist.

Bright lost his job after filing a whistleblower's report warning of critical supply shortages and refusing to adopt scientifically unproven treatments.

Step 3: Push a false narrative about "freedom" and "liberation."

Weeks ago, Trump called on citizens to "LIBERATE" states like Michigan, whose Democratic governor, Gretchen Whitmer, imposed strict stay-at-home rules.

Meanwhile, Attorney General William Barr has directed the Justice Department to take legal action against any state or local authorities imposing lockdown measures that

could be "violating" civil liberties.

Making this about "freedom" is absurd. Freedom is meaningless for people who have no choice but to accept a job that puts their life at risk.

Step 4: Shield businesses against lawsuits for spreading the infection.

Trump is pushing to protect businesses with a "liability shield" against legal action by workers or customers who get infected and GOP Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell insists that the next stimulus bill include legal immunity for corporations.

But how can the economy safely reopen if companies don't have an incentive to keep people safe? It can't, and it won't.

Which leads me to my final point:

The biggest obstacle to reopening the economy is the pandemic itself.

Any rush to reopen without adequate testing and tracing will cause even more deaths and a longer economic crisis.

The first responsibility of a president is to keep the public safe. But Donald Trump couldn't care less.

He's trying to force the economy to reopen to boost his electoral chances, and he's selling out Americans' health to seal the deal. No matter the cost, Donald Trump's chief concern is and will always be himself.

Robert B. Reich is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and senior fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies. He served as Secretary of Labor in the Clinton administration and was named one of the 10 most effective cabinet secretaries of the 20th Century by Time magazine. He has written 15 books, including his most recent, "The Common Good." He is a founding editor of the American Prospect magazine and chairman of Common Cause. Reich is co-creator of the original documentary, "Saving Capitalism," streaming on Netflix.

Save a Little for Emergencies



It's been almost six months since we were told to shelter in place, get masked and gloved and not go to work. More than 40 million people have filed for unemployment. Downtowns have been deserted, small business clobbered.

The Covid-19 virus has infected nearly 2 million Americans, killed more than 120,000 by late June – and we don't know when it will end. Families have been separated. Our health care system has proven inadequate despite the devotion of medical professionals and support staff. It's been a tough time.

So how are you doing?

GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman reports that 80-85 percent of GCC/IBT members kept their jobs, though some with reduced or modified work schedules. That's terrific but a rare bit of good news.

A recent Federal Reserve study showed 37 percent of Americans would have difficulty getting \$400 together for an emergency. Lesson: Whatever it takes, build up an emergency fund.

Another good idea is to check your credit scores. You can go to AnnualCreditReport.com to get free reports from Experian, Equifax and TransUnion. If you think there are errors, say so.

Good credit is based on paying bills in timely manner. Banks, car loan companies and other lenders have been offering deferred payments for those laid off or working fewer hours because of the virus.

But you have to contact the bank to get con-

sideration. Check the bank's website. If branches are open, you might consider a personal visit – keeping social distance, of course. Car loans? Same thing. Tell the finance company payments are a problem. See if they'll work something out.

Consumers using credit cards to survive should be certain at least to make the minimum monthly payment. Yes, sending only the least allowed will stretch out payments and pile up interest. But these are difficult days. Millions of Americans don't have any spare dollars. So until we're out of this crisis, minimum payments may make sense.

Another savvy move is to call your auto insurance company and ask about reduced rates because you are driving less. Many insurers have been advertising rebates. Take every break you can get.

Oddly, this also is a good time for big ticket purchases if you are fortunate enough to have some economic wiggle room.

Home mortgage rates are ridiculously low – and refinancing might be worth considering, too. Car companies are offering zero interest rates for as long as six years and deferring first payments for months. Just be aware that they will probably be tacking those delayed payments onto the end of the loan. Check the details.

Above all, stay safe. ■

Guest Spot

BY MARTIN PREVOST

Back at Work, Doing Our Part

The Covid-19 crisis has changed everyone's life, mine included.

When we were forced to close the MVP Design factory outside Montreal on March 15th, I found myself without a job – and at home with my 12-year-old son, Gabriel.

It wasn't long before Gabriel discovered being stuck at home with dad, day-in, day-out, was a lot less fun than either of us had hoped. And I was learning – quickly – how challenging my role would be.

As a single parent, I served as full-time teacher – schools were closed, of course – and playmate. We painted and tried all kinds of new activities but I could see Gabriel needed more than just Dad. He wanted to see friends and burn off all the energy that 12-year-old boys have in excess.

Home life was become a challenge for both of us.

Gabe wanted to be a normal kid. I missed the job and co-workers at MVP.

Being out of work after 12 years of full-time employment and not knowing when I would be able to work again was becoming difficult to handle.

When my boss got in touch to ask if I would participate in a special project making face masks, I was ecstatic.

Getting that call was music to my ears. I would be back in the work world – and, on top of that, making a product that would help others during this pandemic.

The rest of my team had the same reaction

when they got the news.

My department is made up of a staff of five and we were able to get all back to work within two weeks of being closed.

We even ran a night shift to keep up with the demand which added seven more employees to our team.

I was able to bring Gabriel to work with me so he could see how his father was able to contribute during the crisis. We have distributed more than 250,000 face masks across the United States and Canada and production is still going strong.

Under normal circumstances, we are a manufacturer and distributor of union-made promotional products and apparel. Making protective equipment for various unions and labor organizations across North America is very satisfying work.

I feel like we are doing our part during this crisis to help out and feel it's also setting a good example for my son. It's great being employed again. I'm pretty sure Gabriel is happy I'm back at work, too. ■

Martin Prevost, a member of Local 555-M, Montreal, is printing department director at MVP Design, a division of Universal Promotions and the single parent of a 12-year-old son, Gabriel.



PHOTO BY DENIS FORTIN/LOCAL 555-M

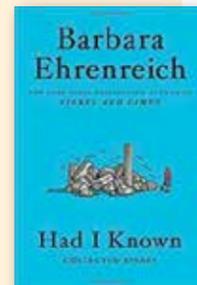
All the Best

Print

Had I Known: Collected Essays

Barbara Ehrenreich

Barbara Ehrenreich is relentless – and that's a good thing. For more than 30 years, she has been writing about some of the most vexing personal and social issues – from the rigors of illness (she is a breast cancer survivor) to issues of war, peace and environmental crisis. Her classic 2011 book, "Nickel and Dimed," revealed the everyday hardships endured by low-income workers – the waitresses, maids, cashiers, health care aides who keep the country running and lately have emerged as true heroes during the coronavirus epidemic. "Had I Known" offers a selection of some of Ehrenreich's most telling work – all of it urgent and important. In her introduction, Ehrenreich, 78, says she wants no part of retirement and intends to keep writing "about things that inflame my curiosity and fill me with moral outrage." In these astounding times, there will be plenty to keep her busy. **Hachette Book Group, \$28**



Video/Streaming

After Life

Ricky Gervais

There is nothing funny about loss, melancholy, despair, loneliness or self-destructive urges so how does Ricky Gervais make "After Life" one of the most charming, hilarious and, ultimately, uplifting series to be found on the streaming channels? Gervais, a British comedian who wrote, produced and directed the two-season Netflix series, plays Tony Johnson, a reporter at a free community newspaper that specializes in oddball feature stories. Tony is haunted by the memory of his wife, who recently has died, and spreads his misery everywhere. But he's a good guy deep down and decides – after a couple close calls – that survival beats the alternative. The Baltimore Sun said the show is especially meaningful in these uncertain days. "It speaks like almost nothing else in popular culture to the Covid-19 moment," said the Sun. Like every essential worker, Gervais deserves our thanks.



Music

Gaslighter

The Chicks

The first release from the Chicks – once the Dixie Chicks – in 14 years had been scheduled for May 1 but the coronavirus pushed off distribution until the middle of this month. Since opposing George W. Bush's 2003 invasion of Iraq, the group has drawn plenty of grief from the right but never relented. Their name change – in deference to the nationwide push for racial equality that followed protests this spring – coincides with the gutsy spirit of the new album. "Gaslighter" refers to an incorrigible liar who bends the facts for his own purposes. Supporters of the truth-challenged fellow in the Oval Office are sure to take offense but the Chicks are ready to speak truth to power – again. **Columbia Records**



Internet

Worldometer

worldometers.info

Facts count – even the most disturbing. As the pandemic ebbs and flows around the globe, a beleaguered public struggles to stay informed and keep perspective. This authoritative website provides essential statistics on the number of cases worldwide and a state-by-state U.S. tally. Run by an international team of researchers and developers, Worldometer also tallies global population in real time, government expenditures – even the number of books published and worldwide newspaper circulation. Reliable information without the spin: Sometimes alarming, always essential.



GCC Workers Proving to be 'Essential'

By Dawn Hobbs
Special to the Communicator

KEN ROBERTS

When his wife showed symptoms of the coronavirus, Ken Roberts, a shop steward at The Marek Group in Waukesha, Wisconsin, self-quarantined for two weeks but wondered if his job would be waiting when he was ready to return.

Plants were closing because of the pandemic and the future of Marek seemed uncertain.

But by the time his wife, Julie, recovered – she had pneumonia, not Covid-19 – Roberts found co-workers making face shields for medical facilities instead of printing manuals, promotional material and restaurant menus.

“We have a machine that has a computer controlled razor blade that cuts things out of plastic, so we just re-programmed it to cut face shield designs,” said Roberts, a member of Local 577-M, Milwaukee-Madison, and journeyman bookbinder with 30 years at Marek.

Other shops began cutting headbands and foam pieces, Roberts said. “Then it comes to us and we put it all together into kits.”

Marek was busy at the start of the pandemic because workers were in the middle of printing invitations for early April events. But then everything came to a screeching halt.

“Making the face shields kept everyone coming in and working their regular hours,” Roberts said. “Otherwise, there would have been a complete drop off.”

Besides saving jobs, making PPE’s was the right thing to do, Roberts said.

“If they ran out on the front lines, then the medical workers would be at risk – and that’s not good” Roberts said. “It needed to get done.”

Perry Kettner, president Local 577-M and secretary-treasurer District Council 1, agreed: “With shortages of PPE throughout the country, we are helping to keep people safe with the goal of saving lives and making sure the economy can get restarted in a safe manner.”

MARTIN PREVOST

As a single father, Martin Prevost found his life turned upside down when the Canadian government determined his employer, MVP Design of Boucherville, Quebec, was a non-essential business and shut it down because of the pandemic.

“When we were forced to close the factory on March 23, I found myself without a job and confined at home with my 12-year-old son,” said Prevost, printing director for MVP, a division of Universal Promotions, and a member of Local 555-M, Montreal.

“Being out of work after 12 years of full-time employment and not knowing when I would be able to work again was very difficult for me to handle.”

It was also traumatic for Frederic Mimeault, president of Universal, the parent company of MVP which produces silkscreen t-shirts and union promotional products.

“I’ll remember March 23, 2020, all my life,” Mimeault said. “It’s the day I had to gather all



Ken Roberts



Martin Prevost with 12-year-old son, Gabriel

of my workers to announce we would be shutting down the company as per government regulations.”

Mimeault worried about his employees.

“Many of our workers have been with us for more than 20 years,” he said. “We’ve built this business together. It was a very painful moment.”

From then on, Mimeault focused on getting his crew back to work. Before long, he had a plan.

Mimeault decided to use the cutting, sewing and screen printing departments to make face masks. Workers returned to their jobs and seven additional were hired. More than a quarter-million masks have been sold to customers across Canada and the United States.

“Getting that call to go back to work was music to my ears,” Prevost said. “On top of it, I was going back to make a product that will help others during this pandemic.”

Because Universal quickly adjusted to circumstances, workers were spared unemployment and the company could make a contribution during a public health crisis.

“Making these face masks for different unions and organizations across North America is very satisfying work,” Prevost said. “I feel like we are doing our part during this crisis to help our society in offering these masks.”

JEFF COLEMAN

Jeff Coleman was less concerned about catching the coronavirus than he was about losing his job as lead press operator at the Cedarstream Co., a silk screen t-shirt shop outside Atlanta.

A member of Local 527-S, Coleman survived the first wave of layoffs, but not the second.

The loss hit him hard, Coleman said. “I was worried about whether there was even going to be work to come back to.”

At the same time, company officials were seeking alternatives and asking clients how to assist in a time of virus fears and economic disruption.

“And we went from printing thousands of t-shirts to thousands of face coverings,” said Wade Robinson, production manager. “Our team adapted quickly and responded well.”

After two months, Coleman was called back to Cedarstream as an essential worker and quickly adjusted to the company’s new operation.

“A mask is much thinner than the average t-shirt and harder to pick up, load and put on the press,” said Coleman. To increase efficiency, Coleman dabs glue on his fingers so that he can easily handle masks during the production process.

Coleman, who also trains new team members, said he is thrilled to have gained additional skills – and proud to be in an important job.

“I’m happy that I’ve been able to contribute to helping to protect people, especially the vulnerable ones, until there is a vaccine.”



Jeff Coleman

Stories in centerfold and on Page 10 were reported and written by Dawn Hobbs and are special to the *Graphic Communicator*.

VOLUNTEER SPIRIT: ‘UNION TEACHES YOU THAT EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO THE SAME LIFE’

In response to economic hardship caused by the coronavirus pandemic, GCC/IBT locals are helping those in need.

From feeding families at food banks to supporting domestic abuse shelters, locals are making a difference in people’s lives.

By donating cash or volunteer hours, union members are showing community spirit and a sense of commitment in troubled times, GCC/IBT leaders say.

“Giving back is the union way and demonstrates that together we can make positive changes,” said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman.

At District Council 3, civic engagement is always important – and an even greater priority now, officials say.

Leaders donated \$10,000 to HAVEN, a comprehensive program for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault outside Detroit, when they learned the facility was having difficulty meeting increased demand.

Unemployment, stay-at-home orders and financial stress



Gail Wilson, a member of Local 527-S, Atlanta, (blue shirt, background), joined volunteers at a local food bank. ‘We don’t turn anyone away,’ said Precious Hunter, 527-S recording secretary.

caused by repercussions of Covid-19 brought a spike in abuse cases.

“Their need increased tremendously, so we decided to see if we could help some of the women and kids escape the violence,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of District Council 3.

Castro and others met with HAVEN staff and toured the facility.

“We learned a lot about the mentality of a person in a bad relationship,” Castro said. “Now was the time to help.”

Officials at HAVEN said the \$10,000 – raised through DC3’s annual William Browning Golf Scramble – provided vital support

“It was a true blessing for us,” said MiVida Burrus, director of development, who anticipates an even greater demand for services as the public health crisis continues.

DC3’s donation will provide transportation, clothing and food for the shelter’s residents for at least the next three months, Burrus said. “We are just so grateful.”

Leaders Advice: 'Make Smart Choices'

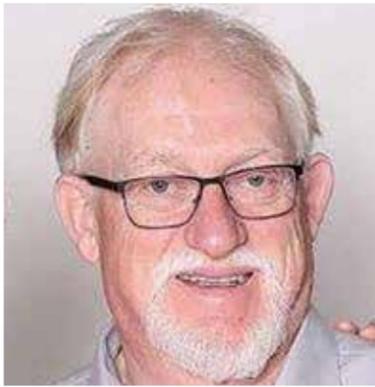
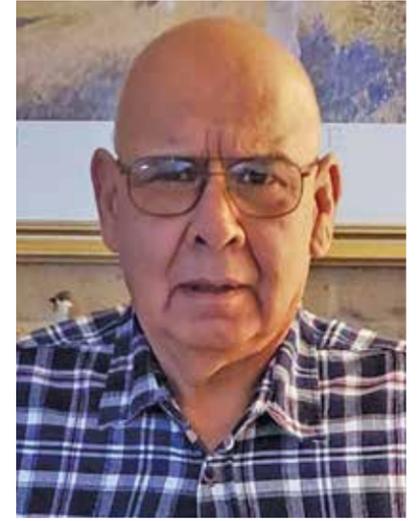
"Exercise, work on the 'honey-do' list and stay in touch with everyone through social media to see how they are doing."

- Cesar Calderon, shop steward and past president, Local 140-N, Los Angeles



"The way I have survived the Covid-19 virus so far is by social distancing and staying at home when I had no need to be out and about. Too many people in my state are not following basic precautions - maybe for political reasons. Makes no sense. Stay safe, everyone."

- Oscar Lopez, president Local 4535-M, Houston



"Since my days working in a pressroom, I have always been big on hand washing - ink color pigment is hard to remove. So, wash hands often, social distance, wear a mask in public, and no hands to the face!"

- Perry Kettner, president, Local 577-M, Milwaukee-Madison

"Do your research and don't listen to everything you hear. Make your own smart choices."

- Stephen Ooton, vice president, Local 58-M, Phoenix



"The quote I live my life by is from Fred Rogers - the famous Mr. Rogers of TV. 'Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else.' I believe when this pandemic is over that our members will see employers place a stronger emphasis on cleanliness and safety."

- Kurt Reissenweber, vice-president Local 458-M, Chicago



"Listen to the science experts. Be smart and follow the guidelines."

- John Potts, secretary-treasurer, Local 14-M, Philadelphia

"The best way to survive is safety first but then also just being positive and humorous. Even though this is getting everyone down, you still have to try to lighten up at the end of the day."

- Gary Wood, president, Local 705-S, Battle Creek



THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS



Job loss and delayed or insufficient government benefits have forced many Americans to seek aid at food bank lines.

"There's just so many people who lost their jobs and so many union people out of work," said Gary Wood, president of GCC/IBT Local 705-S, Battle Creek, Michigan, also part of District Council 3.

The local donated \$1,000 to the South Michigan Food Bank using funds raised through vending machine sales at union shops.

"We had the money so we figured we'd donate it for the people who need it," Wood said. "For every dollar donated, they can buy five meals."

Members at GCC/IBT Local 527-S, Atlanta, also focused on food relief.

They volunteered for weekend food bank distribution in a combined effort with United Way and various churches throughout north Georgia.

"There's just so much the government is going to do and it's hard to see some of our brothers and sisters without food," said Precious Hunter, recording secretary for Local 527-S.

"The union teaches you that everyone is entitled to the same life," Hunter said. "Since some of us are still working or blessed to be retired, it's our duty during the covid to help others out."

Some recipients are so thankful they break down in tears, Precious Hunter said. "It does your heart good to see how we can help people who really need it."

Union volunteers are committed to serving all those in need - and vow to continue



Aware that cases of domestic abuse increased during the epidemic, District Council 3 donated \$10,000 to HAVEN, an agency outside Detroit providing aid to victims. Visiting the HAVEN facility were DC3 representatives James Corbit, Israel Castro, left, and Dan Courtney, far right. They met with MiVida Burrus, director of development, who said she anticipates an even greater demand as the crisis continues.

PHOTO BY JASMINE VALENTINE

aiding hard-pressed families throughout the crisis.

"We provide food for anyone who walks up," Hunter said. "We don't turn anyone away."

George Tedeschi, GCC/IBT president emeritus, hailed the community service work of union members.

He has supported a number of food banks for years, Tedeschi said, and continues to donate during the epidemic. "The need is great," he said. "This is the time for all of us to be as generous as possible."

Locals Fear Spike In Retiree Deaths

Older Americans have died in disproportionately high numbers during the coronavirus epidemic and retired GCC/IBT members are among the victims.

“We have had an uptick in the number of people applying for survivor death benefits through the Benevolent Trust Fund,” said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman. “We don’t know the cause of death in each case but suspect the increase is covid-related.”

At one New York local, the situation has been particularly stark.

Leaders of Local 1-L said they noticed an unusually high number of retiree deaths during the height of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Numerous family members called 1-L president Pat LoPresti and his staff to say relatives had been infected and did not survive.

LoPresti said only eight 1-L retiree deaths were reported in January. In March, 27 were reported and 40 in April.

“At the peak of the crisis, our deaths were doubling each month,” LoPresti said. “We have certainly been hit hard and our condolences go out to all the 1-L families who have lost relatives.”

LoPresti recalled dinners held each year in honor of 1-L retirees and said he was saddened by their loss.

“I feel that each time we lose a retiree, we should remember their invaluable contributions to our profession as craftsmen and to our lives in general,” LoPresti said. “So many of them were mentors to new union members who will pass on their knowledge, experience and insight to the generations that follow.”

The troubling news at Local 1-L reflects a nationwide situation.

Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of District Council 2, said the virus likely has claimed the lives of many West Coast retirees



“We don’t have accurate numbers available yet but we do believe there have been significant losses with our retirees because Los Angeles has been one of the nation’s hotbeds,” said Clark Ritchey.

At one point, the Centers for Disease Control reported that nearly 80 percent of coronavirus fatalities were above the age of 65.

No region of the country has been spared.

Ralph Meers, secretary-treasurer of 527-S, Atlanta, said a cherished friend and ally, Preston Kendrick, lost his life to the virus.

Kendrick, 83, who died April 21, was known for his dedication to workers’ rights and had been instrumental in helping to establish a local defense fund, credit union and welfare trust fund, Meers said.

“When we were being tested by some of the companies we had under contract, he would tell me ‘Don’t worry about the threats. Focus on what’s best for the members, and I will always have your back.’ And, man, did he ever.”

THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS



‘Our job now is to make sure as best we can that they stay in compliance and that we hold companies accountable. We have to make sure that everyone is safe.’

– Clark Ritchey, District Council 2 secretary-treasurer

Assuring that Workplace Safety is Priority

As the country braces for what medical experts warn could be a second wave of the coronavirus epidemic, GCC/IBT leaders continue efforts to make certain employers observe essential safety measures.

When companies don’t follow Covid-19 safety guidelines, union officers quickly deal with the fallout.

“All of our employers put in protocols to comply with the Centers for Disease Control, but some aren’t enforcing it as well as others,” said District Council 2 secretary-treasurer Clark Ritchey. “Our job now is to make sure as best we can that they stay in compliance and that we hold companies accountable. We have to make sure that everyone is safe.”

Union leaders acted aggressively to protect workers at Mondi Bags USA in Salt Lake City, where there were 38 confirmed cases of coronavirus in early June.

“The company only started following the CDC guidelines after I, my shop stewards and my committee raised hell about it,” said Demecio “Danny” Vigil, president GCC/IBT Local 541-S.

Mondi was not sanitizing the shop or enforcing social distancing requirements, Vigil said. “We only got face masks three weeks ago,” he said. “And we had to force them to put hand sanitizers on the machines.”

Vigil said the issue of plant safety was of particular importance to him because his wife has pre-existing conditions that would make her especially vulnerable should she contract the virus.

“She’s high risk,” Vigil said. “And alot of people are that way at my job. They all have someone – kids, older parents, someone who is high risk. We can’t be putting other people’s lives in danger.”

What started as one case in mid-May at Mondi Bags grew to 24 confirmed cases by the end of May.

“Someone came into work not feeling good – he had a fever and took Tylenol and they let him work,” Vigil said. “We told them to send him home, but they made him work. He was around other people at work and then they had a barbeque and it spread like wildfire.”

CDC guidelines require that a worker with virus symptoms be sent home and the shop sanitized. If the individual tests positive, contact tracing and testing of other workers is mandatory but not always observed, Ritchey said.

After receiving numerous employee complaints, the Salt Lake County Health Department came out to the shop on May 29 and tested 106 out of 150 employees.

As head of the largest district council in the GCC/IBT, Ritchey has spent the last two months working with local staff and union officers who are monitoring employer safety compliance.

“Some companies still chose to do the product runs and sweep the guidelines under the carpet,” Ritchey said. “Some just weren’t taking it seriously. But we think local management wasn’t getting good direction

from the corporate offices at some of our shops. It took us to nudge them to send everyone on some shifts home until they can contact trace and test.”

A majority of members from District Council 2 work in the corrugated box industry – deemed essential because the product is needed to ship medical supplies, and food and beverages.

By mid-March, Ritchey said, union officials sent letters to all employers regarding pandemic safety measures. In addition, the union delivered nearly 800 face masks to members where companies said they didn’t have any, Ritchey said.

DC2 had reported only 10 cases in early May. Six were in the San Francisco Bay Area, two in Southern California and two in Oregon. That number grew to 25 by mid-May and now has reached 49 with the Mondi outbreak.

One of the original cases in the San Francisco area involved a member of Local 388-M who was on a ventilator for 30 days. It is not known if the person will be able to return to work, Ritchey said. In Boston, a member of Local 3-N, also was hospitalized but recovered.

The threat posed by the virus continues, Ritchey said, and standards must not be relaxed.

“It’s imperative that as essential workers, which they’ve been deemed, that they have a safe work environment to the point that we follow the CDC guidelines to the fullest extent so they are safe going to work.”

DELAYED CONFERENCES WILL FOCUS ON CRISIS

Working and organizing during a pandemic will be a challenge for the foreseeable future – an urgent message GCC/IBT leaders say they will deliver at three important conference meetings.

“We’ll be looking at safety precautions, furloughs, layoffs and how to reach out and talk to people without endangering your own health,” said Ralph Meers, secretary-treasurer of Local 527-S, Atlanta, and former president of the Specialty Conference, which is planning a September meeting in the Georgia capital.

Strategies for the U.S. presidential election during the coronavirus crisis also will be highlighted.

“We will additionally be discussing strategies to push for mail-in ballots for the fall presidential election and about the importance of labor reform – and how with a swipe of a pen, a mockery can be made of labor agreements and safety measures,” Meers said.

Similar timely topics will also highlight the North American Newspaper Conference and the Eastern Conference.

Below are the dates and locations of upcoming conferences. All are subject to change as demanded by public health concerns.

- Eastern Conference: Originally scheduled for April 26, the conference now will be held Sept. 9-11, with registration the first day. The new venue will be



Caesars Atlantic City Hotel and Casino on the boardwalk. Invitations will be sent in July once it is confirmed the casinos will be open.

- North American Newspaper Conference: This conference was originally scheduled for June 1-3. It has been rescheduled for Sept. 28-30 with registration on Sept. 27. The discounted hotel rate at the Embassy Suites in Scottsdale, Arizona, of \$118 will be offered from Sept. 23 to Oct. 3.

- Specialty Conference: The meeting remains scheduled for Sept. 17-19 in Atlanta. Locals will be notified by the first week in July if a change must be made.

MASKED MARVELS

What’s one of the best ways to demonstrate union solidarity during a pandemic?

Wear face masks that bear the GCC/IBT logo.

And that’s exactly what members at Quad in Chalfont, Pennsylvania, did recently to show union solidarity.



PHOTO COURTESY IBT LOCAL 107

During a two-day rally supporting the GCC/IBT in a decertification drive at the plant, Teamsters Local 107, Philadelphia, parked its big tractor trailer – emblazoned with the IBT logo -- outside the shop that employs about 400. Workers showed up wearing GCC facemasks and holding signs demanding strict safety precautions. In June, employees voted 159-39 to keep the union – a victory that GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman called “tremendous.”

Face masks became a point of contention when the company claimed its order for masks was delayed. Freeman stepped in and bought masks for the entire plant from a union shop. “We protected our members – and took a stand,” Freeman said.

According to Joe Inemer, president of Local 16-N, Philadelphia, the rally irritated the company so much that it sent a letter to workers falsely claiming their dues had been wasted by paying for the Teamster truck.

That was a phony claim, Inemer said, because Local 107 owns the truck and parked it outside the plant as a gesture of solidarity after delivering food to persons struggling during the pandemic.

The Teamster presence, Inemer said, was “very well received” by workers.

‘THEIR WORK IS VALUED’

In a show of appreciation, Fort Dearborn Co. paid GCC/IBT members a premium for overtime hours worked during the Covid-19 crisis.

While numerous shops lost work, Fort Dearborn got super busy because the company does beverage and food packaging.

“A lot of other people got laid off, but our members at Fort Dearborn were working more and the company was demanding more from our folks,” said Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer DC3. “So we ended up making overtime hours double as a way to let them know their work was valued.”

GCC/IBT leaders negotiated a four-part agreement among Fort Dearborn and District Councils 3 and 4 and Local 6505-M, St. Louis, for the increase in overtime pay from April through May.

“The company actually wanted to do the right thing here,” Castro said.

DC3 has 17 members at a Fort Dearborn plant in Strongsville, Ohio. In Niles, Illinois, 110 members affiliated with DC4 work at a company facility. Local 6505-M has 52 members at Fort Dearborn in St. Louis.

Fort Dearborn was also very “proactive” by screening workers for temperature spikes and providing masks, Castro said. “We had an agreement that if anyone tested positive for covid and sent home that they’d receive at least 75 percent of their pay to stay home for 14 days.”

Originally set only for April, the pay increase was continued through May. Leaders are discussing the possibility of another extension, Castro said.



FORT DEARBORN COMPANY



PHOTO BY JUSTIN AND SAMANTHA TEDESCHI

Local 406-C member John Tedeschi thanked essential workers with a hand-crafted sign outside his Long Island home. His father, GCC/IBT president emeritus George Tedeschi, liked the idea and designed a placard for the lawn of his house in Maryland.



LIKE SON, LIKE FATHER

John Tedeschi wanted to honor essential workers – including his wife, Wendy, a Long Island, New York, emergency room nurse on the front lines of the fight against Covid-19.

“I wanted my wife to know every time she came home from work that she was loved and appreciated and how proud and thankful our family was for her and all other health care professionals,” said Tedeschi, a former paper handler at Newsday where his father, George Tedeschi, served for years as president of Local 406-C.

He posted a 3’ x 6’ sign – painted with the help of daughter, Samantha – outside his home in Bohemia, New York, saying, “THANK YOU” to workers putting their welfare at risk in the spirit of community service.

John sent a photo to his father, who retired last year as GCC/IBT president and now serves as the union’s first president emeritus. Next thing you know, Dad, a resident of Rockville, Maryland, was following the lead of his son.

The elder Tedeschi designed a poster in consultation with GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman, who also was eager to show support for those serving courageously during the epidemic.

Printed by the Kelly Companies, a union shop in Cheverly, Maryland, the signs have bold lettering on the background of an American flag: “Thank you all health care personnel & other essential workers.”

Tedeschi and Freeman bought signs and distributed them to colleagues, family and neighbors. And, of course, each planted one in his front lawn.

“I am in awe of the great things people – including many union members – are doing at this time of national crisis,” Tedeschi said. “I wanted to show appreciation to all of these brave individuals. It was my son’s idea. I’ll let others decide which sign is best.”

John Tedeschi said his wife would come home daily with heartbreaking stories from the hospital.

“Tears were shed constantly,” he said. “The only reason our health care workers made it through this was they are such professionals. They had each other and there was no one else to do it. They often would sit with dying patients and hold their hands as they took their last breath. No one should die alone.”

When Newsday outsourced its press room operation to the New York Times in 2018, John Tedeschi was among more than 200 Local union members displaced. But he rallied and earlier this year began work as an American Airlines flight attendant.

Tedeschi has continued his membership with Local 406-C – just in case. “Dad suggested I keep my affiliation going,” he said.

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

Un changement s'impose en novembre après quatre années « destructrices »

Par Zachary Dowdy
Collaboration spéciale au Communicator

Pour Israel Castro, président de la section locale 546-M de la CCG-FIT à Cleveland, en Ohio, la propagation fulgurante de la Covid-19 – et les dégâts économiques, les pertes d'emplois et les ravages pour les PME parfaitement dévastateurs causés par l'épidémie – ont exposé d'une manière flagrante les faiblesses du leadership national et le besoin pour les membres syndiqués d'agir pour qu'il y ait un changement en novembre.

« Il n'a absolument rien fait de bien, a déclaré I. Castro à propos du président Donald Trump, un sentiment partagé par les dirigeants de la CCG-FIT au niveau tant local qu'international. Le favoritisme constant de la Maison-Blanche à l'égard du milieu des affaires américain au détriment des travailleurs en pleine crise de santé publique est particulièrement inquiétant.

Même le « programme de protection des salariés » tant acclamé – qui visait à aider les petites entreprises à garder leurs employés – a été « bousillé », a indiqué I. Castro. Les fonds ont été rapidement épuisés, les grandes entreprises en ayant bénéficié d'une manière disproportionnée.

« Beaucoup de personnes qui avaient besoin de cet argent ne l'ont pas obtenu, a précisé I. Castro. Bon nombre de nos petits ateliers d'imprimerie sont fermés. L'argent a tari. » Trump et le secrétaire-trésorier

Steve Mnuchin ont porté leur attention sur le secteur des affaires. « Ils n'ont pas agi efficacement pour ceux qui en avaient le plus besoin. »

Selon Michael Mitchem, président de la section locale 235-M de Kansas City, au Missouri, Trump a abordé d'une façon trop laxiste ce que le secrétaire général des Nations Unies Antonio Guterres a qualifié de « plus grave crise sanitaire de notre génération ».

Aux États-Unis, plus de 100 000 personnes avaient succombé à la maladie en date du début juin et 40 millions ont fait une demande d'assurance emploi.

« Trump a traité la situation d'une manière déplorable, a dit M. Mitchem. Sa méconnaissance initiale et le fait qu'il n'a pas mis les gens en garde ni suivi l'avis des experts qui recommandaient de pratiquer la distanciation sociale et essentiellement de fermer les choses ont coûté bien des vies. Cela m'a vraiment dérangé. »

M. Mitchem s'estime chanceux que seule une poignée de ses membres aient perdu leur emploi depuis l'écllosion de la pandémie. En fait, un atelier qui fabrique des emballages de contenants alimentaires « déborde de travail ».

À l'approche de l'élection de novembre, les chefs syndicaux exhortent leurs membres à évaluer le rendement de l'administration Trump – pendant les quatre dernières années et tout particulièrement la crise du coronavirus et les

manifestations dont le pays tout entier est le théâtre depuis que George Floyd, un homme non armé, est mort alors qu'il était entre les mains d'agents de la police de Minneapolis.

À New York, Patrick LoPresti, président de la section locale 1-L, a dit que la planification déplorable et les erreurs politiques de la Maison-Blanche en ces temps de crise ont mis en péril des millions de vies.

« Cela a été un choc de découvrir qu'il aurait pu faire davantage pour protéger le public avant la fin de l'an dernier en arrêtant la propagation du virus. Il aurait pu mettre la machine en marche, mais ne l'a pas fait. »

Oscar Lopez, président de la section locale 4535-M à Houston, n'avait guère d'éloges à faire en ce qui concerne la performance du président. Tout comme I. Castro, il a qualifié le programme de protection des salariés de désastre bureaucratique – une indication de l'approche indisciplinée de l'administration Trump et de son mépris pour les travailleurs américains.

Partout au pays, les leaders syndicaux savent que beaucoup de syndiqués ont aidé Trump à gagner il y a quatre ans, mais ils préviennent qu'un deuxième mandat lui permettrait de nuire encore plus aux travailleurs syndiqués et à leurs droits.

Et ils affirment que les électeurs ont une alternative claire en la personne de

Joe Biden, le candidat présumé du parti démocrate et un ami fidèle des travailleurs.

« Il est qualifié pour diriger un pays – mille fois plus que celui qui est en poste en ce moment », a déclaré O. Lopez.

M. Mitchem et P. LoPresti ont aussi louangé Biden, qui a lancé sa campagne pour la présidence dans une salle des Teamsters en Pennsylvanie.

« Donnons une chance à Biden, a dit P. LoPresti. Il nous faut quelqu'un qui n'est pas aussi destructeur que Trump.

Selon I. Castro, un changement à la Maison-Blanche apportera de l'espoir en dépit des jours difficiles qui vont venir à coup sûr.

« La pandémie a amené le travailleur américain moyen à penser de nouveau que les syndicats ont du bon. Les ateliers syndiqués étaient plus sûrs. Ils ont pu négocier et se battre pour obtenir des congés de maladie payés, des tests et du matériel de protection nécessaire pendant la pandémie.

Et comme il l'a fait remarquer, les syndicats ont de plus en plus la faveur du public et il y a un regain d'intérêt pour l'organisation.

« Nous agissons en ce sens », a-t-il déclaré.

Zachary Dowdy est journaliste à Newsday et vice-président de l'unité de rédaction de la section locale 406-C à Long Island.

Cuatro años “destructivos” exigen cambio de liderazgo en la Casa Blanca

Por Zachary Dowdy
Especial para The Communicator

Para Israel Castro, presidente de la Local 546-M de GCC/IBT en Cleveland, Ohio, la rápida propagación del Covid-19, y los demoleadores efectos sobre la economía, el empleo y la pequeña empresa ocasionados por la epidemia, han puesto en evidencia la debilidad del liderazgo de la nación y la necesidad de que los trabajadores sindicalizados se esfuercen por conseguir un cambio en noviembre.

“No puedo pensar en nada que haya hecho bien”, dijo Castro refiriéndose al presidente Donald Trump, y esta opinión la comparten los líderes de GCC/IBT tanto a nivel local como internacional. Nos preocupa especialmente, han dicho, el continuo favoritismo que la Casa Blanca ha demostrado hacia el mundo empresarial, a expensas de la clase trabajadora en plena crisis de salud pública.

Incluso el tan aclamado “Programa de protección de salarios”, concebido para ayudar a las pequeñas empresas a retener a sus trabajadores, ha sido un “descalabro”, dijo Castro. Los fondos se agotaron rápidamente y las grandes empresas se beneficiaron desproporcionadamente.

“Mucha gente que lo necesitaba no lo recibió”, dijo. “Un buen número de pequeños talleres de imprenta ha tenido que cerrar. El dinero se acabó”. Trump y el secretario del Tesoro Steve Mnuchin se concentraron en el sector corporativo,

dijo Castro. “No actuaron de manera eficaz para los que más lo necesitaban.”

Michael Mitchem, presidente de la Local 235-M en Kansas City, Misuri, dijo que Trump adoptó una actitud demasiado floja ante lo que el secretario general de las Naciones Unidas, Antonio Guterres, calificó de “la mayor crisis de salud pública de una generación”.

Para principios de junio, más de 100.000 personas habían muerto de esta enfermedad en Estados Unidos, y hasta 40 millones habían solicitado beneficios del seguro de desempleo.

“Trump lo hizo muy mal”, dijo Mitchem. “Por su falta de conocimiento en los momentos iniciales, por no haber advertido a la población ni haber seguido los consejos de los expertos en cuanto al distanciamiento social y, esencialmente, por no haber cerrado las cosas, se han perdido muchas vidas. Esto para mí es muy preocupante”.

Afortunadamente, Mitchem dijo que solo un puñado de sus miembros habían perdido su trabajo desde el brote de la epidemia. De hecho, indicó que una empresa que fabrica embalajes para envases de productos alimenticios se había visto “desbordada de trabajo”.

A medida que se aproximan las elecciones de noviembre, los líderes sindicales están aconsejando a sus miembros que evalúen la actuación de la administración Trump durante los últimos cuatro años, especialmente durante la crisis del coro-

navirus, y las protestas en todo el país tras la muerte de George Floyd, un hombre que no llevaba armas, a manos de policías de Mineápolis.

En Nueva York, Patrick LoPresti, presidente de la Local 1-L, dijo que la falta de planificación y los errores de las políticas de la Casa Blanca en momentos de crisis habían puesto en peligro las vidas de millones de personas.

“Fue un horrible choque al darnos cuenta de que podía haber hecho más para proteger al público y detener el contagio del virus ya antes de finales del año pasado”, dijo. “Podía haber puesto las cosas en marcha, pero no lo hizo”.

Oscar Lopez, presidente de la Local 4535-M en Houston, dijo que encontraba poco que alabar en el comportamiento del presidente. Al igual que Castro, dijo que el Programa de protección de salarios había sido un desastre burocrático que revelaba la actitud indisciplinada de la administración de Trump y su abandono de los trabajadores de Estados Unidos.

Los líderes sindicales de todo el país saben que muchos miembros ayudaron a Trump a ganar hace cuatro años, pero advierten que un segundo mandato le daría la oportunidad de seguir perjudicando a los sindicatos y a los derechos de los trabajadores.

Y también hacen notar que los votantes tienen una alternativa clara en Joe Biden, el presunto candidato del

Partido Demócrata que es un amigo fiel de los trabajadores.

“Tiene las cualidades necesarias para liderar un país, mil veces más que el ocupante actual del cargo”, declaró Lopez.

Mitchem y LoPresti elogiaron también a Biden, que inició su campaña presidencial en una sala del sindicato de los Teamsters en Pensilvania.

“Démosle a Biden la oportunidad”, dijo LoPresti. “Necesitamos alguien que no sea tan pernicioso y destructivo como Trump.”

Si hubiera un cambio en la Casa Blanca, dijo Castro, podríamos tener esperanza a pesar de los tiempos difíciles que sin duda nos aguardan.

“La pandemia ha hecho que el trabajador medio del país vuelva a darse cuenta de que los sindicatos son algo bueno”, dijo Castro. “En las empresas donde había sindicatos había más seguridad. Estaban en posición de negociar y luchar por la licencia por enfermedad debida la pandemia, la administración de pruebas y los equipos de seguridad necesarios.”

Observó asimismo que la actitud del público es cada vez más favorable a los sindicatos y que ha aumentado el interés por la sindicalización.

“Nosotros nos esforzamos por que así siga”, indicó.

Zachary Dowdy es reportero de Newsday y vicepresidente de la unidad editorial de la Local 406-C, Long Island.

In Memoriam

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

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
Death Benefit Claims Paid November 2017			
625S William J Reilly	09-20-17	100M Russell F Smith	10-20-17
705S Jeffery L Skinner	08-30-11	119B Margaret E Burgess	09-03-06
747M Ellis Dean Ingram	09-20-17	119B Manuel Soto, Sr	11-02-17
853T Catherine T Damon	09-08-17	119B Jaime Villanueva	09-16-17
853T Ronald A Giambastiani	01-13-16	241M Jennie E Fiorenza	11-08-17
853T Fred W Schill	10-15-17	241M John Halchak	06-08-14
999ML Robert E Arnold	10-01-17	285M James L Ross	03-31-03
999ML Ernest L Frost Sr	06-15-14	458M Arturo Carvajal	11-04-17
999ML Shirley L Hall	11-14-14	458M Dennis F Gorka	10-11-17
999ML Carl H Larson	02-07-05	458M Marcus A Hedger	11-20-17
2289M Leon A Crowell	08-26-17	458M William B Lehman	11-03-17
2289M Joseph B Hemmen	09-29-17	458M Donald A Minkley	11-14-17
2289M Daniel C Miller	09-19-17	458M Robert E Schoop	06-25-15
2289M Bernardino Pettinaro	09-19-03	458M Walter J Wilgosiewicz	10-29-17
2289M Patricia A Sabine	10-21-17	458M Yvonne Worlds	11-13-17
4535M Josephine E Hunt	07-27-17	503M Michael P Dinsmore, Sr	11-02-17
4535M Samuel N Majors	04-10-15	503M Katherine Metz	06-04-14
Death Benefit Claims Paid December 2017			
1B Scott K Reinke	11-03-17	503M Bernard S Pittner	05-30-16
1C William F Von Nessen, J	10-03-15	503M Edward J Poplawski	01-24-16
1L James A Donaldson	10-02-17	503M David W Przesucha	07-17-15
1L Jerome Heine	08-20-17	514M Eileen J Holmes	10-24-17
1L Jaime R Martinez	09-05-17	518M Kathrine M Bailey	12-30-16
2N Sabino Benvenuto	12-18-14	518M Connie L Koval	11-12-17
2N Gustav H Mangelsdorf	11-06-17	546M William A Clark	08-19-15
2N Thomas Moore	03-20-17	546M Robert G Hintze	07-09-17
3N Edward J Helpa	10-25-17	546M Jack E Lemke	06-13-16
4B August Earl Bailey	09-16-14	546M Julian J Oleniacz	07-05-17
8N Frank Angelacci	10-11-17	546M Robert R Oravec	10-28-17
8N Steven A Soriano, Sr	11-16-17	546M Bernard Veninshek	08-14-17
13N Dennis W McClellan	10-26-17	550M Gordon D Siggins	11-05-17
14M Charles H Brown	12-31-14	555M Leslie Brookes	10-26-17
14M Ronald J Crosby	11-13-17	555M Jacques Garipey	11-08-17
14M Alexander T Irvine Jr	09-10-17	555M Robert Lamalice	10-14-17
14M Melvin Znamirovski, Sr	06-04-15	555M Claude R Petit	10-09-17
16N Richard F Caswell, Sr	10-24-17	572T Margaret Bond Beck	10-05-17
16N Thomas R Dugger, Jr	09-02-17	572T Mary L Mata	03-02-17
16N Michael R McCauley	11-27-17	572T Jewel Rodden	11-11-15
24M John Jumba	11-23-17	572T Russell N Sheffler III	07-31-15
58M Alvin R Naile	09-24-17	612M Francis M Minervini	04-23-16
77P Rodger C Larson	11-06-17	735S Michael S Oster	07-06-11
77P Clifford J Nyman	11-13-17	735S Ignatius B Tychinski	10-13-14
77P Lester R Quick	11-02-17	853T Thomas F Noll	07-13-14
		999ML Arthur Arensman	12-04-16
		999ML Joan W Dixon	08-28-15
		999ML Myrna L Fosburgh	11-21-16
		999ML Kenneth J Harris	10-22-17
		999ML Pauline M Kirkpatrick	10-28-17
		999ML Sylvester N Mangini	11-08-17

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
999ML Roger J Riege	11-14-17	1B Marilyn P Dybwad	12-03-17
999ML Paul L Wilkins, Sr	10-03-15	1B Alice M Juelich	11-18-17
999ML Edgar Wilson	10-02-17	1B Arvel O Matson	03-03-14
2289M Willie E Dixon	10-20-16	1L Charles A Lotito	12-02-17
4535M Mertile M Prosper	08-10-17	1L Emilio D Macchio	01-17-16
6505M Jesse F Pickering, Sr	10-18-17	1L Lawrence F Orton	04-23-16
Death Benefit Claims Paid January 2018			
		1L Leo V Plantier	06-16-15
		1M Harold M Lang	09-15-17
		1M Robert L Wentzel	11-18-17
		3N Claire P Isabelle	07-18-17
		4C Lytle G Lefever	10-08-17
		8N Elmer A Arose	10-28-17
		8N Joseph Rizzo Jr	12-10-17
		14M John M Butterworth	10-18-17
		14M Leo E Dillinger Jr	12-01-17
		14M Monty B Labour	02-01-16
		16C Billy J Phillips	10-19-17
		17M Elmer P Davis	12-06-17
		24M Charles W Cratsley Jr	08-03-17
		24M James L Heeter	11-18-17
		24M Walter R Wadsworth	11-14-17
		77P Robert C Hodge	11-27-17
		77P Delores Van Drunen	11-19-17
		137C Lawrence Febish	08-19-17
		137C Nelson C Shirk	11-29-17
		197M Richard S Keilman	12-10-17
		197M Raymond Scott Mccoy	11-03-17
		458M Joseph C Gugliuzza	10-26-17
		458M William Kalebich	11-18-17
		458M Kenneth D Kaleta	11-26-17
		493M Rita J Kennedy	12-01-17
		503M Larrie J Monnin	11-02-17
		508M Ronald W Oakman, Sr	12-14-17
		518M Elmer F Lievens Jr	12-06-17
		527S Mary C Barnes	09-29-17
		546M Joseph S Higdon	03-26-17
		546M David E Johnston	12-06-17
		546M William S Palmer	11-07-17
		555M Alida Beauchamp	11-13-17
		555M Jean-Paul Papillon	07-06-15
		555M Frank Robert Smith	05-15-16
		555M Charles A Wall	11-14-17
		568M Donald J Hoebing	11-29-17
		577M Vincent C Mulvey	10-23-17
		577M Thomas J Schneider	11-15-17
		577M Harold R Schulze	07-28-17
		612M Anthony Barone	12-05-17
		761S Robert E Schroeder	11-03-14
		853T Carlos E Jauregui	05-30-17
		853T Roy Dominic Petri	11-26-17

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
999ML John H Evans	10-29-17	1B Bridget E Buck	12-19-17
999ML Dan T Fuller	02-24-17	1B Lucinda A Crooks	12-06-17
2289M Joseph M Boucher	08-19-17	1B Evelyn C Kissell	10-14-17
2289M Ronald W Byers	11-13-17	1B Imogene O Lesetmoe	12-25-17
2289M Stanley W Paavola	12-05-17	1B Marcella M Pietrzak	01-15-18
6505M Lawrence B Kramer	12-19-17	1B Lance C Thomas	12-13-17
Death Benefit Claims Paid February 2018			
		1L Robert B Boettcher	12-16-17
		1L William V Fairbrother	12-22-17
		1L Henry Harris	12-10-17
		1L Marilyn K Kleek	12-11-17
		1L David Terzian	12-29-17
		1L Vernon C Ullrich	12-26-17
		1L Rosemary C Wrobel	01-16-18
		1M Frank S Arieta	12-04-17
		1M John K Frost	12-26-17
		1M John P Martin	02-18-17
		1M Alexander H Mclean	01-11-18
		1M Walter J Schwendig	06-13-17
		1M John J Sullivan	12-26-17
		2N Edward J O'Leary	12-15-17
		2N Patty Sileno	12-19-17
		3N George F Fallon	02-21-16
		3N Paul R Holms	09-13-16
		3N Howard A Lacey	12-20-17
		3N Gilbert H Moussette	12-07-17
		3N Katheryn Grant Payne	12-25-17
		3N Edwin J Sears	12-27-17
		3N Ruth Snyder	01-06-18
		3N Donald E Vokes	01-09-18
		4B Bobbie L Jefferson	06-10-17
		13N Chester C Hacias	12-19-17
		14M Elmer W Fluharty	01-14-18
		14M Joseph J Gazzara	01-03-18
		14M John Heisler	11-19-17
		14M Richard W Zaengle	01-11-18
		16C Ruth M Severt	11-04-17
		16N James C Pauley, Sr	12-30-17
		17M Irene Summers	11-06-17
		23N Francis P Birmingham	12-27-16
		24M Carl T Boehm Jr	01-02-18
		28N Robert W Leiter	12-15-17
		58M Jack A Addison	01-01-18
		58M Kenneth L Stednitz	06-25-09
		72C Jean E Burtz	12-17-17
		77P James A Meyer	12-12-17
		100M Harold A Harvey	11-27-17
		100M Frank C Rucchetto	10-26-17
		119B Rafaela Arana	11-15-17
		119B Carmen Buccino	01-11-18
		119B Morris Cohen	12-08-17

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
119B Cecil Wiley	12-06-17	455T John C Dixon	08-26-17
197M Danny E Berry	07-07-17	458M Gilbert W Bergner	01-09-18
197M Hilton Bowen	12-02-14	458M Charles F Doll	12-24-17
197M Robert Wayne Foy	12-11-17	458M Jerry N Frohling	12-28-17
235M Katherine Maxine Crook	12-25-17	458M Richard J Jansen	12-14-17
285M Daniel H Voss	01-09-18	458M Stanley T Klosowski	01-09-18
388M John D Viale, Sr	04-01-04	458M Richard J Kooyenga	12-28-17
388M Robert B Viale	12-22-17	458M Robert J Lamantia	12-30-17
432M Jerry E Dick	11-13-17	458M Gayle Edward Ostrowski	12-24-17
455T John C Dixon	08-26-17	458M Anthony P Raimondo	12-17-17
458M Gilbert W Bergner	01-09-18	458M Robert W Ries	12-07-17
458M Charles F Doll	12-24-17	503M Edward J Mattice, Sr	12-08-17
458M Jerry N Frohling	12-28-17	508M Carl A Brinker	05-12-17
458M Richard J Jansen	12-14-17	508M Leonard P Dill	12-07-17
458M Stanley T Klosowski	01-09-18	508M Richard G Hunt	12-20-17
458M Richard J Kooyenga	12-28-17	508M Karla S Judd	07-05-14
458M Robert J Lamantia	12-30-17	514M Oscar M Enger	07-23-14
458M Gayle Edward Ostrowski	12-24-17	518M James R Free	12-11-17
458M Anthony P Raimondo	12-17-17	527S Jessie L Troup	12-26-17
458M Robert W Ries	12-07-17	543M Frank Dolincheck Iii	10-05-17
503M Edward J Mattice, Sr	12-08-17	543M Bernard D O'Doherty	05-15-17
508M Carl A Brinker	05-12-17	543M Frederick H Vogt	01-14-18
508M Leonard P Dill	12-07-17	546M Robert D O'Boyle	11-25-17
508M Richard G Hunt	12-20-17	555M Raymond Caisse	01-06-18
508M Karla S Judd	07-05-14	555M Martin Curran	09-03-17
514M Oscar M Enger	07-23-14	555M Jeanne Desautels	11-26-17
518M James R Free	12-11-17	555M Therese Goulet	12-03-17
527S Jessie L Troup	12-26-17	555M Andre Labreche	01-13-18
543M Frank Dolincheck Iii	10-05-17	555M Marcel Laliberte	01-03-18
543M Bernard D O'Doherty	05-15-17	555M Yvon Pelletier	12-19-17
543M Frederick H Vogt	01-14-18	555M Yvon F Petit	11-28-17
546M Robert D O'Boyle	11-25-17	555M Nicole St-Jean	11-09-17
555M Raymond Caisse	01-06-18	572T Dale Edward Drum	12-02-17
555M Martin Curran	09-03-17	612M Frederick M Breustedt	12-19-17
555M Jeanne Desautels	11-26-17	612M Emilia J Campos	01-16-18
555M Therese Goulet	12-03-17	612M Frank W Holz Jr	05-11-17
555M Andre Labreche	01-13-18	625S Arthur R Thulson, Jr	09-02-13
555M Marcel Laliberte	01-03-18	747M Arthur J Judd	06-08-14
555M Yvon Pelletier	12-19-17	853T Stuart N Smith	07-01-17
555M Yvon F Petit	11-28-17	853T Willy A Wahlin	12-06-17
555M Nicole St-Jean	11-09-17	999ML Ethel L Baker	12-12-96
572T Dale Edward Drum	12-02-17	999ML Russell D Campbell	12-25-17
612M Frederick M Breustedt	12-19-17	999ML Clyde R Hudson	12-24-17
612M Emilia J Campos	01-16-18	999ML David R Klyczek	06-23-12
612M Frank W Holz Jr	05-11-17	999ML Bruce H Lavigne	12-02-17
625S Arthur R Thulson, Jr	09-02-13	999ML Lee D Madere	12-17-17
747M Arthur J Judd	06-08-14	999ML Stanley J Monahan	01-23-18
853T Stuart N Smith	07-01-17	999ML Lorraine E Wolniewicz	12-09-15
853T Willy A Wahlin	12-06-17	2289M William M Lehr	12-22-17
999ML Ethel L Baker	12-12-96	6505M James Haley	12-11-17
999ML Russell D Campbell	12-25-17		
999ML Clyde R Hudson	12-24-17		
999ML David R Klyczek	06-23-12		
999ML Bruce H Lavigne	12-02-17		
999ML Lee D Madere	12-17-17		
999ML Stanley J Monahan	01-23-18		
999ML Lorraine E Wolniewicz	12-09-15		
2289M William M Lehr	12-22-17		
6505M James Haley	12-11-17		

George Carlsen, GCIU Leader Who Mastered 'Art of Negotiating'

By Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

George J. Carlsen, a former U.S. Army paratrooper and GCIU general board member who was a passionate advocate for worker rights and believed unions could "equalize" the balance of power between management and employees, died April 29. He was 84.

His daughter, Rita MacKinnon, said Carlsen contended with a number of health issues but died peacefully of "old age" at home in Burlington, Massachusetts.

Carlsen studied printing at Don Bosco Technical High School in East Boston and, after discharge from the Army, went to work in the print industry as a bookbinder. He kept his ties to the military as a member of the American Legion for many years.

In 1965, he joined Local 600-M, Revere, Massachusetts, of what then was the Graphic Arts International Union, and after several years became president. Carlsen served in that office until he retired at age 72 and, at that point, was named president emeritus. He was succeeded by his son, George Christopher Carlsen, now retired.

Skilled at the bargaining table, George J. Carlsen said the "art of negotiating" depended on a having a realistic sense of achievable goals and respect for the management position.

"He would say always give the company an 'out,' MacKinnon recalled. "Don't pin them in a corner." Give and take was essential, Carlsen knew. "It was a dance."

GOP Still Stalling on Butch Lewis

GCC/IBT to Senate Republicans: Stop stalling.

Union officials and the GCC/IBT National Pension Fund is demanding action on the Butch Lewis reform act stilled for nearly a year by the GOP.

“It is extremely important for many plan participants, employers and labor unions to contact their Republican and Democratic senators and urge them to support” the Lewis Act, pension fund officials said.

Democrats in the House of Representatives passed a version of the Lewis initiative last July but it was shelved in the Senate by GOP Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

Named after an Ohio Teamster activist whose death in 2015 is attributed by family members to stress related to fighting pension cuts, the measure would provide loans to troubled pension plans through a government agency.

GCC/IBT fund authorities blasted a Republican attempt in the U.S. Senate to undercut the Lewis bill with a “misguided” substitute measure advanced by senators Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Lamar Alexander of Tennessee.

The Grassley-Alexander alternative “would ultimately destroy, rather than fix, multiemployer pension plans,” National Pension Fund officials said.

Kurt Freeman, GCC/IBT president, a strong advocate of the Lewis act, called on union members to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill. “Call your senators – now,” Freeman said.

The National Pension Fund has a Lewis pension “kit” available at <http://gccibtnpf.homestead.com/legislativetools.html>. Information also is available at the Teamsters Pension Protection hotline: 888-979-9806.

Action is needed “now more than ever,” fund officials said.



Trump’s Stamp Act – Some Joke

Donald Trump’s latest idea for making America great? Privatize the postal service.

The president thinks the beloved USPS – begun in 1775 with Ben Franklin as first postmaster general – should turn a profit and threatened to withhold a \$10 billion line of credit approved by Congress during the pandemic emergency.

Americans – Republican and Democrat – say the proposal makes about as much sense as Trump’s belief that injecting household disinfectant protects against the coronavirus.

A poll commissioned by the National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO) showed 94 percent of Americans (and 92 percent of GOP supporters) think it “important” or “very important” the postal service be preserved.

Trump claims the USPS is a “joke” because it struggles financially. But he’s the guy who wants to deny emergency funding. What a laugh.

Union Approval Rating Way Up

Is organized labor having a moment?

Recent polls show Americans – and particularly young people – favor unions.

A Gallup survey gave unions a 64 percent approval rating, up 16 points in a decade and higher than at any time since 1970.

Difficulties faced by employees during the coronavirus epidemic also may boost interest in union organizing as a means of addressing workplace concerns.

Across the country, workers in essential sectors – grocery stores, warehouses, meatpacking plants – are demanding plant safety and, in some cases, staging job actions.

“The crisis has laid bare the effects of income inequality and conditions of low-wage workers,” Ken Jacobs, chair of UC Berkeley’s Center for Labor Research and Education, told the Los Angeles Times. “We are seeing an upsurge of worker actions. Unions are playing a leadership role. Their members’ lives are at stake.”

Two innovative online, pro-labor sites may aid organizing efforts.

Coworker.org helps launch workplace campaigns for employee issues as varied as pay increases and the right to facial hair on the job, according to In These Times, a progressive news publication.

The other site, Unit.work, makes it possible for employees to form independent unions “in the nooks and crannies that organizers often don’t have the time or resources to reach,” In These Times reported.

In another development, the New York Times reported a “frenzy of organizing” at online publications and chain newspapers as energetic, young activists assume leadership roles once held by older colleagues.

“The new leaders had come of age in the great recession and had been battered by layoffs...” wrote the Times media columnist Ben Smith. “Their sensibility was shaped not only by social media but by the progressive political movement.”

Despite hopeful signs, organized labor – representing little more than 10 percent of the American work force – still has significant challenges to overcome.

Michelle Miller, a former SEIU leader and cofounder of the Coworker website, told In These Times innovative organizing techniques are essential. “Workers need all the help they can get,” she said.



Yes, There Will be an Election

What will happen if the virus persists to Election Day, Nov. 3?

Here are the basics, as reported by the AARP Bulletin.

No matter what you hear, there will be an election. The U.S. Constitution says voting must take place “the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November.” We’ll vote. Count on it.

Is President Trump able to cancel balloting as some fear? Nope. “The President has no direct power over elections,” Larry Norden, director of the Election Reform Program at the non-partisan Brennan Center for Justice told AARP.

To vote safely, more Americans will cast ballots by mail. Absentee voting will be made easier, the AARP says, and early voting expanded.

Where there is in-person balloting, polling booths will be farther apart and fewer older Americans – particularly vulnerable to the virus – may be working at election sites and health and safety precautions will be a top priority.

An estimated 230 million Americans are expected to vote. Make sure you’re one of them.



Biden Iowa Workers Organize

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has campaign workers covering Iowa.

And the IBT is covering the workers.

The Biden operation and Teamsters Local 238, Cedar Rapids, agreed to terms protecting 100 field organizers, according to the Chief-Leader, a newspaper focusing on politics and labor issues.

It’s a significant development, said Jesse Case, secretary-treasurer/principal officer for Local 238, told the Chief-Leader.

“For the first time in history, the campaign staff for a presumptive nominee of a major political party will be covered under a union agreement.”





UNION PLUS CAN HELP

COVID-19 has impacted all of us. **Union Plus can help.**

Our Union Plus program partners have accommodations for members struggling during this public health crisis. Participants in our Union Plus Mortgage, Credit Card, Personal Loan, or Supplemental Insurance programs may be eligible for additional hardship assistance through the Union Plus Mortgage Assistance Program and Union Plus Hardship Help.

Visit **unionplus.org** and follow Union Plus on Facebook at **facebook.com/unionplus** for ongoing program updates and resources.

Be well and stay healthy,

The Union Plus team

Learn more
at unionplus.org



COVER STORY

'We're Not Out of This Yet'

continued from PAGE 1

package deliverers, waste management workers, among many others – as the virus threat deepened.

“While millions of Americans transitioned to telework to avoid exposure, most Teamsters didn't have that option,” said IBT General President James Hoffa. “Their boots have been needed on the ground each and every day.”

Freeman noted that Teamsters working for United Parcel Service often were delivering goods in cartons made by GCC/IBT members. “We have a kind of tag team going on,” Freeman said.

Ernie Soehl, director of the IBT freight division, cheered workers for their dedication.

“Teamsters are performing a critical duty just by doing their jobs,” he said.

Despite ongoing worries about the virus and its economic impact, union leaders assessed the print trade optimistically.

Officials anticipated a surge in direct mail material during the presidential campaign, for instance, because there is likely to be less door-to-door canvassing.

“My guess is that the print industry will probably be pretty strong, at least through this election,” Freeman said.

Joe Inemer, president of Local 16-N, Philadelphia, agreed. “This is a political year and a lot of printing will get done up to Election Day, Nov. 3,” he said.

Health issues remain a priority.

The union closed its Washington offices early in the epidemic with only essential staff occasionally on site to handle vital administrative tasks. Other employees mostly worked from home.

Leaders re-scheduled meetings. A number of expiring contracts – covering more than 1,000 GCC/IBT members – were temporarily extended and negotiations postponed. Even the swearing-in of GCC/IBT general board members was handled by conference call.

George Tedeschi, president emeritus, handled the ceremony. “We will take every precaution to keep our people safe – but we also will make certain the union keeps serving its members,” Tedeschi said.

Ken Hall, IBT general secretary-treasurer, sounded a similar theme.

“I would like to salute the work of the hundreds of union representatives and officers of Teamster local unions who have worked nonstop to continue representation,” Hall said. “I'm proud to see how Teamsters across the board have gone over and beyond the call of duty during the crisis.”

Around the country, GCC/IBT officials on local and district levels kept the focus on workplace safety.

“It's imperative that as essential workers, which they've been deemed, that they have a safe work environment to the point that we follow Centers for Disease Control guidelines to the fullest extent so they are safe going to work,” said Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of GCC/IBT District Council 2.

At one GCC/IBT shop in Salt Lake City, more than 20 workers were infected.

“The company only started following the CDC guidelines after I, my shop stewards and my committee raised hell about it,” said Demecio “Danny” Vigil, president GCC/IBT Local 541-S.

Massive outbreaks in non-union sectors demonstrated what can happen when employees are not protected by a collective bargaining agreement, leaders said.

“I think those people would want to get organized,” said Eddie Williams, president Local 527-S, Atlanta. “Companies are getting away with a lot of things that are unsafe and unsanitary and that they couldn't do if the plants were unionized. These places are certainly a huge concern.”

When workers are on their own, employers too often show little regard for health and welfare, officials said.

“Unlike non-union workers, our members had a say in plant safety,” said Israel Castro, District Council 3 secretary-treasurer. “No one wanted to get sick and take this virus home to the family. I think this whole thing will make people refocus on the benefits of unions.”

With the strength of union representation apparent during the epidemic, organizing is especially vital now, officials said.

Leaders in Washington continue to hold monthly organizing conference calls and there is added emphasis on the local level to take advantage of an extraordinary moment.

“Our No. 1 priority this year is organizing,” said Inemer of Local 16-N. “We feel there are workers out there looking for representation. We have to go out there, find those shops, put our heads together and come up with a plan.”

Though GCC/IBT members did not suffer massive unemployment that left millions of American workers scrambling to make ends meet, some union employees were furloughed.

However, union leaders said most of those jobs likely would survive as business resumes. And because of strong union contracts, seniority will be protected so that returning workers do not lose rank – a guarantee rarely extended in non-union shops.

But the best way to save jobs was to make sure plants kept running.

CCL Industries in Strongsville, Ohio, was a typical success story.

The label-making plant was facing certain shut down as a non-essential business.

More than 100 GCC/IBT members, represented by Local 25-M, Detroit, were threatened by layoffs. Quickly, the shop was modified and GCC/IBT workers began turning out face shields – vital for the protection of health care personnel.

“Without the switch, the entire facility would have closed because CCL did a lot of work for the auto industry which was shut down at the time,” said Castro.

Another union shop, Cedarstream Co. outside Atlanta, switched from making t-shirts to



PHOTO BY JOHNNY MANGAN

CCL Industries in Strongsville, Ohio, was facing shutdown when GCC members like, left-right, Lee McGough, Connie Duncan, Brendette Robinson, John Eszovics, Ray Sheets and Dave Rydzinski switched from making labels to fabricating face shields and joined the ranks of essential workers.



PHOTO BY KIM MCAYES/CEDARSTREAM

Union workers at Cedarstream Co. outside Atlanta made t-shirts before the coronavirus outbreak but now supply the public with needed facemasks. ‘I'm happy to contribute,’ said Local 527-S member Jeff Coleman.

face masks – again saving jobs and helping fight the health crisis. “I'm happy I've been able to contribute,” said Local 527-S member Jeff Coleman.

Aside from assuring that plants stayed open, the GCC/IBT made certain essential workers were adequately rewarded for their service. An agreement with Fort Dearborn Co. provided premium overtime pay for GCC/IBT packaging workers in three of the company's Midwestern locations. “The company actually wanted to do the right thing here,” Castro said.

Though the coronavirus became a national preoccupation, it wasn't the only issue facing union members and the country.

GCC/IBT and Teamster leaders denounced the killing of two black men – Ahmaud Arbery at the hands of white men in Georgia and George Floyd by police in Minneapolis – and joined the chorus of Americans demanding equal justice.

“If we all worked together and respected each other, things like this would never happen,” said Williams of 527-S, who is helping raise fund for the Arbery family with other Atlanta labor officials.

Not least significant was the approach of the fall presidential election.

Donald Trump advertised himself in 2016 as a friend of working people – picking up thousands of union votes in the process – but consistently has favored powerful interests and big business instead, union leaders say.

They are urging members to assess Trump's record carefully – particularly in regard to worker rights, race relations and handling of the coronavirus outbreak – and vote accordingly.

“It was terrible to find out that he could have done more to protect the public before the end of last year in stopping the spread of the virus,” said Pat LoPresti, president of Local 1-L, New York. “He could have got the ball in motion and he didn't do it.”

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has pledged to halt the divisive tactics Trump favors and return civility to the national political discourse. Biden also has released a robust labor agenda that includes checking the abuse of corporate power, streamlining the organizing process and enhancing workplace protections.

“Give Biden a shot,” LoPresti said. “We need someone not as devastatingly destructive as Trump.”

Like all Americans, union members must contend with an historic epidemic, profound social concerns and a pivotal fall election.

But, says GCC/IBT president Freeman, this is when solidarity counts the most. “These are tough times,” he said. “But we will meet the challenge.”