

The United Worker

The United Worker is also available online at www.uiwunion.org

Volume 48, Number 2

April-June

2022

VP Harris Emphasizes 'Historic Commitment To Worker Organizing and Empowerment'

The Biden administration will continue working to be known not merely as pro-worker, but as the most pro-union administration in U.S. history.

Vice President Kamala Harris delivered that message April 12 during a gathering at a Sheet Metal Workers facility in Philadelphia. Attendees included U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh; U.S. Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pennsylvania); U.S. Rep. Mary Scanlon (D-Pennsylvania); U.S. Rep. Dwight Evans (D-Pennsylvania); Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf (D); Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney (D); and AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, who traveled with the vice president.

Harris described Shuler as a friend and "a fighter. She goes to work every day for the working people of our nation, and she is an essential partner to our administration."

The vice president's speech was titled, "The Administration's Historic Commitment to Worker Organizing and Empowerment." She detailed many of the steps that demonstrate the commitment, including cross-country travel with Walsh for visits to "job sites and training facilities and union halls."

After reflecting on Walsh's long background in organized labor (including growing up in a union household), Harris said that although their respective histories differ, they have much in common.

"My parents met while they were marching for civil rights," Harris stated. "They taught me that people can make a difference and that when we use our

collective voice, whether at a protest or a picket line, we can drive great change. And that belief in the power of solidarity has guided me, [Walsh], and all of us our entire lives. And it guides our administration.

"President Joe Biden and I are determined to lead the most pro-union administration in America's history," she continued. "We know, each and every day in ways big and small, unions change lives. Unions negotiate better wages and safer working conditions for millions of workers around our country."

Harris also pointed out, "Even if you are not a member of a union, you (should) thank unions for every benefit that you receive. Thank unions for the five-day workweek, for the weekend, for sick leave. We should all — anyone who works in America — know that you have benefited from the hard work, from the fight of the leaders in this movement. Our labor leaders, our unions train people to take on good jobs."

However, unions contribute more to society than just a skilled workforce, she said. The labor movement and the good jobs it helps create and maintain "provides community. It provides home. It provides a place that remembers that nobody should be made to fight alone. It is so fundamental in terms of the approach, which says that we all know we are stronger when we stand together. That is at the heart of the spirit behind this movement."

She continued, "Unions create stron-



Vice President Kamala Harris tells a Philadelphia audience that the administration remains solidly committed to workers and the labor movement. (Photo by Bastiaan Slabbers)

ger communities. They bring people together. And they, of course, protect workers from things like harassment and discrimination. They give workers

a voice. Put simply, unions move our nation forward. And the American peo-

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Federation Posts Annual 'Death on the Job' Report

The AFL-CIO on April 26 released its 31st annual report, "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect," a national and state-by-state profile of worker safety and health. The report features information on workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses, as well as workplace safety inspections, penalties, funding, staffing and public employee coverage under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act. It also includes information on the state of mine safety and health, and the state of worker safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During a video press conference which highlighted the report's release, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler outlined the findings of this year's narrative and stressed the federation's commitment to worker safety. She also expresses urgency in holding the Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Congress and employers everywhere accountable for stronger safety measures. Joining Shuler were AFL-CIO Safety and Health Director Rebecca Reindel; M.J. Burke, first executive vice president of the *American Federation of Government Employees* National VA Council; and Isaiah Thomas, an Amazon warehouse worker in Bessemer, Alabama.

Among other disturbing findings, this year's report reveals that in 2020:

- 340 working people died every day because of hazardous working conditions.
- More than 4,764 workers were killed on the job from injuries alone.
- An estimated 120,000 workers died from occupational diseases.
- The job fatality rate was 3.4 per 100,000 workers.

■ Latino and Black workers remain at greater risk of dying on the job than all workers.

■ Employers reported nearly 3.2 million work-related injuries and illnesses.

■ Musculoskeletal disorders continue to make up the largest portion (21%) of work-related injuries and illnesses.

■ Underreporting is widespread—the true toll of work-related injuries and illnesses is estimated at 5.4 million to 8.1 million each year.

"That's tens of thousands of families losing a parent, a child, a sibling, every single year," said Shuler. "Latino and Black workers specifically remain at greater risk of dying on the job than all workers. That is, frankly, unacceptable."

Despite these disturbing findings, OSHA still does not have the resources needed to hold employers accountable and enact lasting change, the federation reported. "Workers need more job safety and health protections, not less," the AFL-CIO said when announcing the report. "Last year, there were only 1,719 OSHA inspectors nationwide, 755 on the federal level and 965 on the state level. That's just one inspec-

tor for every 81,427 workers. Federal OSHA's budget amounts to \$4.37 to protect each worker, with no federal standards for protections against workplace violence and COVID-19."

Reindel emphasized how the AFL-CIO is calling on both OSHA and MSHA to enact stronger job safety and health protections, for Congress to increase resources for job safety agencies, and for workers to have a real voice on safety and health in our workplaces without the fear of retaliation or intimidation.

"Having regulations is important," said Burke during the call. "COVID-19 and the pandemic disproportionately impact minorities and Latinos, as well as women who are about to give birth. It's so important as we hear the voices of workers across America. I can tell you why I joined a union: It's about the safety and security of each other."

"Amazon loves to brag about how they have a safe work environment, and if there are any issues, the workers can bring them up to management," said Thomas. "However, we do not

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From the President

Union Yes

The recent win by workers who formed a union at an Amazon distribution center in New York is excellent news in its own right, but it also signals even greater potential for employees across the country.



Michael Sacco

For anyone who missed it, this was no April Fools' Day joke: On April 1, more than 2,500 individuals voted to join the Amazon Labor Union. They won the election by more than 500 votes, overcoming a massive anti-union campaign and securing the first such victory in the company's history. One prominent publication called it "one of the biggest wins for organized labor in a generation."

Whether an election happens at a large facility like the Amazon warehouse or at comparatively smaller ones like the various Starbucks locations that have recently unionized, it's always heartening to see workers pulling together and choosing union representation. It also demonstrates that even though our nation's labor laws remain severely outdated, workers can in fact beat the odds and win.

Labor unions have always served as the strongest employee advocate in any workplace. From factory floors to the federal government, union members have always counted on their organization to fight for their rights, wages, safety and health care. Through continual work and perseverance, unions will remain a cornerstone of the American workforce.

It would be even better news if wins like the one at Amazon were the rule rather than the exception. And I believe that'll be the case if the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act becomes law. This legislation, long overdue, would restore fairness to a process that gradually has become severely slanted in management's favor.

When workers want to form or join a union, they should be free to do so, without employer interference. The PRO Act would give them that chance. Meanwhile, kudos to the grassroots movement in New York that culminated in a spirit-lifting victory for workers.

Register and Vote

While some UIW members already have voted in this year's primaries, it's not too soon for others to double-check their voter registration status ahead of Election Day 2022 (Tuesday, November 8). Make sure you and your eligible family members are registered, and please support pro-maritime, pro-worker candidates.

Without question, there has been an awakening across the U.S. regarding workers' rights. In part, that's why the labor movement finds itself at a crossroads with the elections on the horizon. The combination of a labor-friendly administration and a rising interest in collective action has generated considerable momentum, but at the same time, the opponents of labor are as well-funded and determined to dismantle worker power as they have ever been. To make matters even more complicated, partisan gridlock has stalled progress on more than one item on the labor movement's agenda.

It's no secret that union membership across the country has declined over the years, but union households still play a major role in determining outcomes of many elections. This depends, though, on everyone from the movement exercising their constitutional right to vote. That the enemies of the working class have attempted so many times to interfere with that right only reveals how terrified they are of a unified labor movement making its voice heard.

This encouragement goes beyond presidential and congressional elections. Union families must vote the whole ballot from state legislatures to city hall to local school boards. Those who seek to swipe power away from America's working class operate best under the cover of darkness, funneling money into races and legislative manipulations that mostly escape the notice of national and even your local media.

That's why labor cannot leave any political stone unturned. Leadership must do its part to educate members on the issues, but ultimately the responsibility rests with each union member to cast her or his ballot strategically. Without concentrated political power at every level of government, the labor movement cannot achieve its goals. And make no mistake, those goals benefit not just America's working families, but all of America.

AFL-CIO President Shuler Outlines Findings of Death on the Job Report

Continued from Page 1

work in a safe work environment, and every time we bring these issues up to management, we are not heard, which is why we're fighting so hard for our union at Amazon."

The OSH Act went into effect some 51 years ago, promising every worker the right to a safe job. More than 647,000 workers now can say their lives have been saved since the passage of the OSH Act, the AFL-CIO reported. Since that time, workplace safety and health conditions have improved, the federation added. "But too many workers remain at serious risk of injury, illness or death as chemical plant explosions, major fires, construction collapses, infectious disease outbreaks, workplace assaults and other preventable workplace tragedies continue to occur," the AFL-CIO stated. "Workplace hazards kill and disable approximately 125,000 workers each year – 4,764 from traumatic injuries, and an estimated 120,000 from occupational diseases. Job injury and illness numbers continue to be severe undercounts of the real problem."

"Over the years, our progress has become more challenging as employers' opposition to workers' rights and protections has grown, and attacks on unions have intensified," the federation continued. "Big Business and many conservative politicians have launched aggressive assaults on worker protections. They are attempting to shift employers' responsibility to maintain a safe workplace to individual worker behavior, and undermine the core responsibilities of workplace safety agencies."

The federation also reported that the prior administration in Washington "rolled back progress, attacking longstanding workplace safety protections – targeting job safety rules on beryllium, mine safety examinations and injury reporting, and cutting agency budgets and staff – and attempted to dismantle the systems for future protections."

In the fall of 2019, OSHA began reducing the number of inspections involving significant cases and complex health hazards, a policy that is still in place today. In the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, OSHA was largely absent from workplaces where it has the authority and responsibility to enforce workplace safety laws, according to the federation. While the number of inspectors and inspections have improved in FY 2021, "there is much more progress to be made to meet



Elizabeth "Liz" Shuler
President
AFL-CIO

or exceed pre-pandemic levels," the AFL-CIO noted. "The COVID-19 pandemic also brought to light the weaknesses in federal oversight of state OSHA plans. Congress continues to fund job safety at stagnant levels, allowing an OSHA budget that still only amounts to \$4.37 to protect each worker covered by the OSH Act."

The federation concluded, "While progress is slow, the Biden administration has taken important steps to protect workers, prioritizing worker protections on its regulatory agenda, taking steps on targeted enforcement efforts on urgent hazards, and filling staff and leadership vacancies. It also launched broad efforts on worker empowerment and targeting workplace inequities. President Joe Biden has appointed and nominated strong candidates focused on worker protection to lead job safety and health agencies and labor agencies. Immediately upon taking office, he appointed a longtime United Steelworkers (USW) safety and health leader, James Frederick, as acting assistant secretary for occupational safety and health. In April 2021, the Senate confirmed Marty Walsh, the Boston mayor from the construction trades unions, as secretary of labor. In April 2021, Biden nominated Doug Parker to be assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health – the head of OSHA – and he was confirmed Oct. 25, 2021."

The "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect" report may be viewed in its entirety at aflcio.org/reports/death-job-toll-neglect-2022

Administration Invests in Workers

Continued from Page 1

ple know it. The American people know that when unions win, workers win, families win, communities win. When unions win, America wins, as evidenced by the fact that, today, unions have their highest approval rating since 1965."

Despite the favorable views of unions, it often remains an uphill climb to join one. The vice president said that's because, in part, "powerful forces in our country have been hard at work building barriers to stop workers from organizing. We've got to then take it on with a powerful counterforce, which is why our administration is working even harder to tear those barriers down."

She discussed the work of the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, which she and Walsh lead. "Last year, our task force proposed nearly 70 actions the executive branch of our government

can take to protect and expand the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain," Harris stated. "Our President, Joe Biden, accepted every single one."

Harris explained that the bipartisan infrastructure bill that recently became law "will put thousands of union workers, carpenters, and pipefitters, and plumbers, and, yes, sheet metal workers, to work across the country."

She concluded, "Every worker deserves a safe and a healthy workplace. Every worker deserves a job with good wages and fair benefits. Every worker in America deserves the choice to join a union. And the President and I will always stand with you to defend these sacred principles. Our administration will do everything in our power to ensure the workers of our nation can succeed and can thrive. Because when workers succeed and thrive, so does our nation."



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Vol. 48, No. 2

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UIW Members Approve Accord at Saltwater, Inc.

The UIW and Saltwater, Inc., recently concluded negotiations which resulted in a new three-year collective bargaining agreement. The new pact increases wages and other economic items including meal allowances, gear reimbursement, debriefing pay, newly added ROM pay and more.

Taking necessary COVID precautions, negotiating teams representing the union and the company held a pair of in-person meetings during which they hammered out the framework of the new pact. Face-to-face talks, which took place in Seattle in October 2021, lasted more than a dozen hours. Details were finalized over the telephone and via email following the holidays. The contract was unanimously ratified by members early in the new year with an effective date of January 10, 2022.

Member feedback on the new agreement was overwhelmingly positive. One observer, **D.J. McDonald**, remarked, “These new changes sound amazing!” Another, **Maria McNaughton**, said, “Thank you for working so hard throughout negotiations to help facilitate these changes.”

The negotiating team for the union consisted of UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, Assistant Vice President Joe Vincenzo, Port Agent Warren Asp and UIW/SIU



Taking a break from their tasks as union contract negotiators (from left) are: UIW Assistant Vice President Joe Vincenzo, Port Agent Warren Asp and UIW/SIU Legal Counsel Stan Dubin. The fourth member of the team, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, is not pictured.

Legal Counsel Stan Dubin.

“We had our work cut out for us this go around,” said Vincenzo. The pandemic was still looming and there was heightened interest in participation on the part of observers themselves who in my view are the true heroes of these negotiations. They enthusiastically returned to work in cramped spaces on fishing vessels

while many other workers around the country worked from the safety of their homes.”

“I am proud of the work our team has accomplished to secure this three-year agreement,” said Horton-Gennette. “We’d like to thank our UIW members at Saltwater for their hard work, dedication and participation.”

One of three observer companies under contract with the UIW, Saltwater is an industry leader in the design and implementation of electronic monitoring programs, and a long-established provider of fishery and marine mammal observers. Saltwater is also one of the few companies certified as a NOAA Pro-Tech fisheries contractor.

Contract Ratification at American Casting



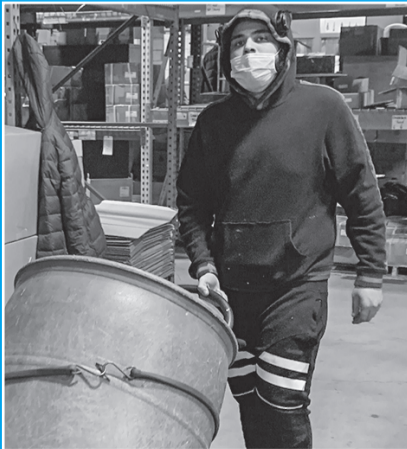
UIW members at union-contracted American Casting & Manufacturing Corp. in December 2021 completed the ratification of a new work agreement. While some features of the previous contract remains in place, the new accord features substantial wage increases. This agreement is effective from Oct.15, 2021 through Oct. 15, 2023. Pictured above are members of the union’s negotiation team. Included (from left) are: UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, Isabel Mangome, Shop Steward Juanita Lopez, Steven Thorschmidt, Rebeca Lopez and UIW Rep. Osvaldo Ramos. The remaining photos show four union members involved in their normal duties. Based in Plainview, New York, American Casting is a manufacturer of standard and custom tamper-evident security seals. Products include adjustable plastic strap seals, fixed length cargo seals, lead and wire seals, padlock seals, security tape, security labels, bolt seals, and adjustable cable seals.



Lilian Medrano
Machine Operator



Steve Thorschmidt
Tool & Dye Maker



Luis Vargas
Metal Department



German Escobar
Stock Man



UIW Members Play Key Role In Ohio Holiday Charity Event

Volunteers (photos above and immediately below) help family members load food baskets as they navigate their way through the St. Stephen's Community House parking lot.



UIW members in December played a significant role in the successful execution of an annual holiday community service program in the Columbus, Ohio, area.

Joining ranks with their brothers and sisters from other labor unions and Ohio labor-friendly service organizations, UIW members rounded out a contingent of some 1,000 volunteers who, from December 13-22, helped prepare and distribute more than 3,000 household food baskets to feed and sustain families in need during the holiday season. Besides the UIW, volunteers hailed from the St. Stephen's Community House, the AFL-CIO Central Ohio Labor Council and Columbus/Central Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council-affiliated unions. Also included were partners from the Central Ohio United Way, the Communications Workers of America, the United Food and Commercial Workers, Iron Workers and Postal Workers. Many of the volunteers also brought their children to participate as well.

Event Reaches 65-year Milestone

Dubbed Christmas Cares/Unions Share, the goodwill undertaking is now in its 65th year. It is the modern-day offspring of the Christmas Basket Program which was formed in 1954. In years past, the program traditionally served people who lived in eight designated ZIP codes in Franklin County, Ohio. However, because of the economic fallout that resulted from the COVID Pandemic and the financial burden which was placed on thousands of families, the program now serves all of Franklin County.

Donations for the event came from a host of sources. In addition to UIW-contracted Kroger, assorted food items and other components were donated by Meijer, Giant Eagle, Mid-Ohio Food Collective, Bellisio Foods, Sugar Creek Packing, Molina Healthcare of Ohio, Columbia Gas/NiSource Foundation, Columbus City Council, Big Lots Foundation and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Volunteers Take Centerstage

Once armed with food supplies, volunteers swung into action performing a number of vital tasks, all of which were essential toward making the undertaking a success. These assorted chores included sorting food, putting items into bags and placing them on pallets, loading shopping carts with boxes of staples and fresh produce and delivering the finished baskets to families as they drove through the St. Stephen's Community House parking lot.

Volunteers worked in two-hour shifts, with no more than 40 individuals on duty per shift. Each volunteer was required to pre-register and complete paperwork prior to performing any task. Each was also required to undergo temperature checks prior to starting their shifts and to wear masks at all times while indoors during their shifts.

Event planners and organizers went to great lengths formulating and implementing the logistics of the event. Specifically, all actions were divided into three phases: Prep Week ran from December 13-17; Distribution Weekend was scheduled for December 18-19; and Walk-In Distribution dates were observed from December 20-22.

As evidenced by the photos appearing on this page, "Christmas Cares/Unions Share 2021" was a huge success. The food drive originally was supposed to last three days, but because of overwhelming response from volunteers, all baskets were distributed in just two days. Because of this level of success, it should be no secret that the Christmas Cares/Unions Share Food Drive program now is one of the more popular programs at St. Stephen's Community House.



Union volunteers (photos above, at right and immediately below) unpack assorted food items and place them in baskets (grocery bags) for distribution to families



Once food baskets were prepared, they were staged on pallets inside the St. Stephen's Community House. (All photos courtesy of St. Stephen's House.)

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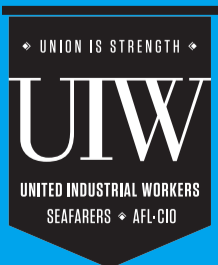
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Spotlight on Shop Stewards



Juan Carlos Guerrero
Shop Steward
Juanita's Foods



Alberto Ortiz
Shop Steward
Vornado, LLC



Ana Limon
Shop Steward
Refresco

The *United Worker* production staff is pleased to highlight three more of the Union's shop stewards in this edition: Juan Carlos Guerrero, Alberto Ortiz and Ana Limon. Guerrero serves as shop steward at Wilmington, California-based Juanita's Foods. A retort operator/lead, Guerrero has been with the company since 1979 and has served as a shop steward for some 20 years. A shop steward since 2018, Ortiz works at Vornado, LLC in Long Island, New York. He began his career with the company in 2015 as a building porter. Limon serves as shop steward at Refresco in San Bernardino, California, a position she has held for nearly one year. She works as a maintenance mechanic level 1.

Union Expands Fingerprint in Missouri



The UIW continues to expand its membership numbers at its most recently organized job site, Missouri-based Regency Enterprises Services. The union now represents some 20 members who work at the Wentzville, Missouri location as floor technicians. The UIW secured a three-year agreement when the location was organized. The photo above shows one of the UIW's newest members, Charmel Goodloe (right). She is pictured with her supervisor Greg Wiegand. Regency Enterprises Services LLC is headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri and is part of the Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services Industry.



Members Meet Ahead of Contract Negotiations

Union members at UIW-contracted Cruzan Rum in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands in late May held meetings to discuss items of interest ahead of their upcoming contract negotiations. Pictured in the photo above (back row, from left) are Joel Torren, Jose Velasquez, Regina Hurtault, Jason Fangman and Elvie Felleteau. In the front row are Gordon Holt, Joelfry Polanco, UIW VP Caribbean Region Jacqueline Dickenson and UIW Rep. Adellah Berry. Shown in the photo at right (from left) are: Shamir Heyliger, VP Dickenson, Joelfry Polanco, Alejandro Encarnacion, Union Rep. Berry and Joaquin Francis.



UIW Pensioners

Teresa Bess
American Benefit Plan
Administrators
Vancouver, Washington

Carmen Estrada
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Alvin Fanning
Franklin International
Columbus, Ohio

Jose Gonzalez
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Phyllis Jones
Sodexo Management-Quantico
Dumfries, Virginia

Kevin Kemp
Victory Refrigeration
Camden, New Jersey

Luz Quinones
Pralex Corporation
Kings Hill, U.S. Virgin Islands

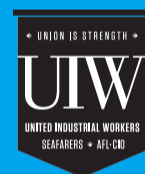
Jasna Rusich
Del Monte Corporation
San Pedro, California

William Thornton
Crown Cork & Seal
Abilene, Texas

Salvador Villaiba
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Ambrocio Vuelas
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Van Wagner
Crown Cork & Seal
Abilene, Texas



Gone But Not Forgotten

MICHAEL CARTER

Brother Michael Carter, 61, died October 12. Brother Carter signed on with the UIW in 1998, joining while working at Coastal Maritime. He made his home in Jacksonville, Florida, the state and city of his birth.

JERRY FRECK

Pensioner Jerry Freck, 61, passed away November 21. Born in Columbus, Ohio, Brother Freck joined the union in 2005 while working at Franklin International. He began receiving stipends for his retirement in 2005. Brother Freck was a resident of Groveport, Ohio.

CHARLES JONES

Pensioner Charles Jones, 74, died May 2. A native of Virginia, Brother Jones came under the union umbrella in 1967 while working at Colonnas Shipyard, Inc. He retired and went on

pension in 1985. Brother Jones made his home in his native state in the city of Chesapeake.

RONALD KLINE

Pensioner Ronald Kline, 85 passed away March 6. Born in Hudson, New York, Brother Kline was a U.S. military veteran. He joined the UIW in 1982 while working at Progressive Driver Services, Inc. Brother Kline retired and went on pension in 2001. He was a resident of Valatie Village, New York.

ROXANNE LEMASTER

Sister Roxanne Lemaster, 66, died January 25. She hailed from Springfield, Ohio and signed on with the UIW in 1973. Sister Lemaster worked at Church & Dwight for the duration of her career. She resided in her native state in the city of South Charleston.

WILLIAM MARKLEY SR.

Pensioner William Markley Sr., 82, passed away March 3. A military veteran, Brother Markley came under the union umbrella in 1979 while working at Victory Refrigeration. He started receiving retirement stipends in 1989. Brother Markley made his home in Fair Play, South Carolina.

ALLEN MUMMEY

Pensioner Allen Mummy, 94, died February 4. A native of Zion Grove, Pennsylvania, Brother Mummy joined the union in 1963 while working at A&E Products. He went on pension in 1963 and resided in North Union Township, Pennsylvania.

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ

Pensioner Robert Rodriguez, 78, passed away July 21. Brother Rodriguez became a UIW member in 1974 while working at Crown Cork

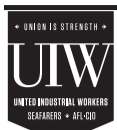
and Seal. Born in Junction, Texas, he began receiving stipends for his retirement in 1985. Brother Rodriguez lived in his native state in the city of Abilene.

PATRICIA RUDDEN

Pensioner Patricia Rudden, 83, died March 26. Born in Montclair, New Jersey, Sister Rudden came under the union umbrella in 1990 while working at A&E Products. She went on pension in 2001. Sister Rudden was a resident of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania.

FRANCISCO TORRES

Pensioner Francisco Torres, 74, passed away February 23. Brother Torres hailed from Puerto Rico. He joined the UIW in 1967 while working at Repco Products, Co. He began receiving pension stipends in 1983. Brother Torres lived in Philadelphia.



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Volume 48, Number 2

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**Union Members Support
Holiday Charity Event In Ohio
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CDC Okays COVID Vaccine For Ages Five and Older

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control, following a May 19 meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP), expanded eligibility of COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to everyone 5 years of age and older.

The agency now recommends that children ages 5 through 11 years should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series. Since the pandemic began, more than 4.8 million children ages 5 through 11 have been diagnosed with COVID-19, 15,000 have been hospitalized and, tragically, over 180 have died. As cases increase across the country, a booster dose will safely help restore and enhance protection against severe disease.

In addition, CDC has strengthened its recommendation that those 12 and older who are immunocompromised and those 50 and older should receive a second booster dose at least 4 months after their first. Over the past month agency officials have seen steady increases in cases, with a steep and substantial increase in hospitalizations for older Americans. While older Americans have the highest coverage of any age group of first booster doses, most older Americans received their last dose (either their primary series or their first booster dose) many months ago, leaving many who are vulnerable without the protection they may need to prevent severe disease, hospitalization, and death.

Whether it is your first booster, or your second, if you haven't had a vaccine dose since the beginning of December 2021 and you are eligible, now is the time to get one.

"Today, I endorsed ACIP's vote to expand eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine booster doses," said CDC Director, Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky. "Children 5 through 11 should receive a booster dose at least 5 months after their primary series."

"Vaccination with a primary series among this age group has lagged behind other age groups leaving them vulnerable to serious illness," she continued. "With over 18 million doses administered in this age group, we know that these vaccines are safe, and we must continue to increase the number of children who are protected."

"I encourage parents to keep their children up to date with CDC's COVID-19 vaccine recommendations," Walensky concluded.

With cases increasing, it is important that all

people have the protection they need, which is why, today, CDC has also strengthened another booster recommendation. Those 50 and older and those who

are 12 and older and immunocompromised should get a second booster dose."

Three-Year Contract at Plymkraft, Inc.



Negotiators representing the UIW and Plymkraft, Inc. recently completed consultations which led to the ratification of a new three-year collective bargaining agreement. Members of the union's negotiation team during talks (above, from left) included Shop Steward Lamont Davis, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, Shop Steward Anthony James and UIW Business Rep. Kayla Rodriguez. Plymkraft is located in Newport, News, Virginia and is part of the fiber, yarn and thread mills industry. The company is the leading U.S. manufacturer of cable fibers.

Union Sportsmen's Alliance Dinner



The 8th Annual Union Sportsmen's Alliance Ohio State Conservation Dinner was held March 25 at UA Local 189 Union Hall in Columbus, Ohio. Attending and representing the UIW (above, from left) were: VP Great Lakes Region Monte Burgett; Shop Steward Tony McDonald of Veritiv Corp., UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, Shop Steward Brian Watson from Armaly Brands, Shop Steward Mitch Levalley of Kroger, UIW Rep./Shop Steward Adam Cordle and Shop Steward Justin Baumgardner of Armaly Brands. The Union Sportsmen's Alliance is the fastest growing non-profit, conservation organization working to unite the union community through conservation to preserve North America's outdoor heritage while showcasing the good works of America's labor unions. The Ohio AFL-CIO is one of the many proud sponsors of this event.