

# THE SPOTLIGHT

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## JUNE 2002

### Congratulations June Winners

**Winners from  
Local 286 in the  
Nebraska State  
AFL-CIO  
Calendar Raffle  
for the month of  
June are:**

**Jim & Sharon  
Eichelberger**

## Fast Track Wins, Worker Lose with Senate Trade Vote

After defeating several amendments aimed at easing the economic and job loss impact Fast Track trading authority for President George W. Bush is expected to have on workers, the Senate approved the controversial package 66-30 May 22. The vote came after almost two weeks of intense debate and efforts to assist U.S. workers displaced by trade deals and to strengthen the workers' rights and environmental provisions in the trade package, most of which failed. "This bill will guarantee that future trade deals perpetuate the flaws of NAFTA by costing Americans jobs, hurting the environment and protecting investor rights over those of citizens and states," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. Fast Track grants the president special authority to negotiate trade deals and forbids Congress any opportunity to correct flaws, including lack of worker or environmental protection.

Along with granting Fast Track authority to Bush, the Senate bill includes an expanded Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The TAA proposal includes a partial subsidy for workers who lose their jobs due to trade to maintain their health insurance coverage. It also somewhat expands the number of workers who are eligible for

TAA. However, the expansion ignores a large segment of trade-affected workers, such as some Teamsters members, who had been included in an earlier version of the bill.

The Senate bill now goes to a conference to iron out differences between it and the House bill that narrowly passed, 215-214,

in December. The House version of the bill does not contain TM language and is considered even weaker on workers' rights and environmental protection than the Senate bill.

In the past year, U.S. workers lost 1.2 million manufacturing jobs, and unemployment stands at 6 percent, the highest figure since 1994. With Fast Track authority, Bush is expected to negotiate trade deals similar to the North America Free Trade Agreement—which has cost hundreds of thousands of jobs since its implementation in 1994.

Along with threatening workers' jobs, Fast Track would allow Bush to negotiate agreements that, like NAFTA, give corporations huge powers; supersede national, state and local laws; and prevent Congress from amending trade pacts to address workers' rights and environmental protections.

## July 2002

**Su M Tu W Th Fri Sa**

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7	8	<b>NEXT REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b>				
		<b>July 14, 2002</b>				
		<b>2:00 p.m.</b>				
		<b>Union Hall</b>				
		<b>5724 Seward</b>				

**Ucinda Sims, Editor**  
**Hugh Bowen, President**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

**Hugh Bowen**

I attended a meeting in Akron, Ohio, along with International Vice President Lefty Palm, Ron Hoover, and Terral Smith. We went over our proposal with representatives of the company. As I reported at the June membership meeting, I believe that the meeting went pretty well, but it was the first time that corporate management was able to look at the proposal. They now want some time to go through it and discuss it with other management in Akron. We may have another meeting with them in Pittsburgh in the near future, unless the company turns us down. As I have said

before, if the company turns our proposal down, we will not have anything to vote on. If we do get a tentative agreement, it will be brought to our membership for a vote and then it would go the International Policy committee for approval of any part of it that deals with the Master Agreement. If they do so, then it would have to be voted on and approved by a majority of the locals representing the majority of the members. As you can see, a lot of things would have to happen even if we do, in fact, get an agreement with the company. When I know more about what is happening with hose and this proposal, I will put a notice out in the plant.

As many of you know, as of June 4th, the sub fund went back to being updated weekly when it dropped to 8.86%. We currently have 173 people on layoff. Current updates are available by calling extension 8822.



### **Buy Books and Support Union Business**

When purchasing publications, don't forget to check online first with Powell's Bookstore, the nation's largest unionized bookstore, where employees are members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 5. Go to [www.powellsunion.com](http://www.powellsunion.com) and click on "books". This transfers you to the [Powells.com](http://Powells.com) website - and 10 percent of the purchase price goes to a 'workers' profit-sharing plan.

**In The Garden...** Farm Workers members have teamed up with California flower grower Bear Creek Corp. to develop a rose dedicated to the memory of UFW founder Cesar Chavez. Ten percent of the proceeds from the sale of the lustrous red rose go to the Cesar Chavez Foundation, which educates young people about the union leaders legacy. To order call 800-292-4769 or visit [www.jacksonperkins.com](http://www.jacksonperkins.com).

**I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped at the Havelock Street Dance. I know that the organizers of this event are always appreciative of our help and involvement. On July 27 we will be helping with July Jamm. If you wish to volunteer and help us out, please just let me know. Our day to man the State Fair booth will be Sunday, August 25. We need 24 people all together, manning the booth in one hour shifts. Please team up with someone and plan to ride together as we are very limited on our parking passes this year. I will have the list with me at all times, so see me or call at ext. 8564 or ext. 8710.**

**Thanks again for all your help.**

**Milt Schmidt**  
**Chairman, Community Services Committee**

## IN THE EDITOR'S OPINION

Ucinda Sims

*Courage...doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, I will try again tomorrow."*

I keep this raggedy, old, torn out of a magazine, scrap of paper because of the message and use it as a reminder of... well... just about everything.

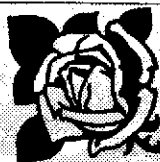
Great feats of courage will normally make headlines, front page stories with pictures, or top story status on the 6 o'clock evening news with "film at 10." But we see courage everyday, all around us, many times so subtle and so disguised that it is barely visible or recognizable. It may be the person working with pain. Or it may be your coworker who is desperately trying to keep up. Or they may be living with some incredible pain and heartache but are still always cheerful and helpful. Is that not courage? There is the guy who works daily overtime so his wife can be at home with the kids. There is the woman down the line who works

because she is a single parent and no one else will put the food on the table. There is that guy across the hall who is just grateful for good insurance to help with the medical bills of a sick child. What about the even smaller acts of courage? The smile and the hello when everything is tumbling down around us. The continued army of workers that are in each day with good attendance and the people who continue to fill the vacancies, working daily overtime when constantly barraged by negative responses and accusations that "no one will work the overtime and nobody shows up when we need them." Sometimes, just doing the right thing, although it is the difficult thing and the unpopular thing is an act of courage.

We all witness courage in our daily lives. We may just not recognize it.

So, each of you should celebrate and congratulate yourselves. For the little acts of courage that make us who we are. And for the big acts of courage that may be waiting down the road.

And combining all our courage is nothing short of true solidarity.



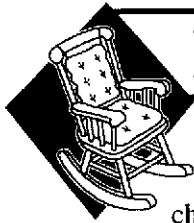
*May 5th marked the first meeting of the newly formed Local 286 Women of Steel committee. Members of the committee are Sally Edwards, Sharon Bowen, Terry Hawthorne, Sandra Schaff, Judy Joslin, Pam Folsom and Gayla Jakoubek. The committee members chose Gayla Jakoubek as their chairperson and Sharon Bowen as their recorder.*

I would first like to thank Sally Edwards for her time and effort in getting this committee together and helping us with ideas and guidance for getting started. On May 18th the Women of Steel committee members were asked to attend the Labor History class held at the Lincoln Central Labor Temple. The class was presented by John Kreschmar of the Labor Studies Institute. I appreciated the time given by the other members, Sharon Bowen, Sandra Schaff, and Terry Hawthorne to attend this one day class with me.

I'll be attending a meeting in Kansas City, Missouri with the Missouri/Kansas (MOKAN) Women of Steel council. I hope to bring back more information about what the other committees are doing.

Gayla Jakoubek

Chairperson, Women of Steel Committee



## Retiree's Corner

### Rx Express Rolls Across the Border

America's seniors are crossing the Canadian border to buy drugs—prescription drugs that are substantially cheaper in Canada than the United States. To dramatize the exploding cost seniors must pay for prescriptions drugs and the need for a Medicare prescription drug benefit, the Alliance for Retired Americans is sponsoring more than a dozen a "Rx Express" bus trips from U.S. border cities to Canada in May and June.

Alliance members will visit doctors and purchase prescription drugs at what is expected to amount to as much as \$1 million in savings. Several members of Congress will join the bus trips that will depart from such cities as Burlington, Vt., Detroit, Mich., Grand Forks, N.D., Seattle, Wash., and Anchorage, Alaska.

"The Rx Express will demonstrate the urgent need for action by Congress on an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit," said Alliance Executive Director Ed Coyle.

The bus trips, said Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), show just how "ludicrous it is for U.S. citizens, especially older Americans, to have to go to Canada to purchase lower-cost medicines because of the lack of a prescription drug benefit within the Medicare program. We must bear in mind for every person making the trip to Canada, there are others who are far worse off physically and who need lower-priced medications even more. Unfortunately, they cannot physically board a bus."

According to the Alliance, older people account for 13 percent of the U.S. population but more than one-third of the drug expenditures. Nearly one-third of older Americans, 11 million, lack drug coverage of any type in the course of a year.

Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities have poorer health and require a greater number of and more expensive medications than the Medicare population as a whole. Although many qualify for Medicaid, 28 percent lack drug coverage from any source.

*For more information on these trips and the continuing fight for retiree benefits visit the Alliance for Retired Americans website at [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org)*

### Elsewhere in the Steelworkers

Six decades after they were created, Baltimore's two major United Steelworkers locals have merged in a move that members say makes sense but will take getting used to. With their ranks decreasing as the number of employees at Bethlehem Steel Corp.'s Sparrows Point plant dwindles, United Steelworkers of America Locals 2609 and 2610 have joined to create Local 9477. "It's sad, and I'm sure it's the same for 2609; everybody misses it," said Ron Allowatt, who stepped down as president of 2610 to become a safety coordinator after the merger. "I just hope everybody can get together for a common goal here and try to make things right for ourselves and for the company. We have got to worry about the future - the workers, the retirees and their health care - and we've got a lot of things to worry about other than ourselves politically." United Steelworkers of America President Leo Gerard came to Baltimore on May 22 — 60 years to the day after the formation of the union, including both locals - to swear in the new officials. John Cirri, who was president of 2609, was named interim president. An election will be held in April. The union was originally formed to give workers a stronger voice on working conditions, hours, benefits and wages. Local 2610 represented workers on the steel-making side of the plant, and 2609 represented those on the finishing side. The two locals had a combined 32,000 members at their peak during World War II, but membership has fallen to about 3,000 as automation and production cuts have reduced Sparrows Point's work force. "I think it should have been done long ago," said Fred Crenshaw, a retired steelworker who belonged to 2609 for nearly 43 years. "There are a lot of expenses with two unions." Along with the former 2609 and 2610, the new union includes several smaller unions within Sparrows Point: 9084, which represented workers in the fuel department; 4727, whose members are in the fire department; and the office and clerical workers of Local 9116.

**And...**

Steelworkers solidarity at Kaiser Aluminum Corp., where 3,000 workers were locked out illegally for 20 months in 1999 and 2000, triumphed May 15 when a National Labor Relations Board administrative law judge required Kaiser to pay workers \$100 million.

Kaiser, which filed for bankruptcy protection in February, used the lockout to unlawfully try to force the union to accept a contract containing an illegal "blank-check" wage proposal, according to the administrative law judge. The NLRB estimated Kaiser's potential back pay liability at more than \$100 million.

"If the company is really serious about restructuring and returning to profitability, it's time for management to start obeying the law and work with us to build a stronger Kaiser Aluminum," says USWA President Leo Gerard.