

UNION



BUG

A Newsletter of the Beaver-Lawrence Counties Central Labor Council

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DEFEND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

By Tom Conway
USW

International President
(Article produced by Independent Media Institute)

Joe Oliveira and his coworkers relied greatly on donations of food and gift cards after going on an unfair labor practice strike against multibillion-dollar specialty steelmaker ATI in 2021.

They cut household expenses to the bone, burned through their savings despite the public's generous support of their cause, and held fundraisers to help one another cover mortgages and car payments during three and a half months on the picket line.

As much as the strike tested workers, however, it pressured ATI even more and ultimately enabled Oliveira and more than 1,300 other members of the United Steelworkers (USW) to secure long-overdue raises and stave off the company's attempt to gut ben-

efits.

Corporations so fear this kind of worker power that they're asking the U.S. Supreme Court to rig the scales and help them kill future strikes before they even begin.

Glacier Northwest, a company in the state of Washington, sued the International Brotherhood of Teamsters seeking compensation for ready-mix

the case, but Glacier Northwest appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, betting a right-wing majority that's already proven its animosity toward unions would seize the opportunity to kick working people once again.

Corporations anticipate that a ruling in favor of Glacier Northwest will encourage a frenzy of similarly frivolous claims against unions nationwide, bleeding precious resources and eviscerating worker's right to strike.

The justices held arguments on the case on January 10, 2023, but it's not known when the court will rule.

"That's our greatest strength," said Oliveira, vice president of USW Local 1357 in New Bedford, Massachusetts, pointing out that the right to strike helped working people over many decades win not only fair wages but also retirement security, safer working conditions

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USW District 10 Director Bernie Hall and District 10 staff representative Guillermo Perez (left to right) at solidarity rally for striking Post-Gazette workers January 28th. Also pictured are (left to right) judge of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas candidate Patrick Sweeney, PA State Representative Dan Miller with son Cole, and Rachael Heisler. Patrick Sweeney is a USW member and Rep. Miller is a former USW member. The rally was held in front of the City-County Building in downtown Pittsburgh. The Beaver-Lawrence CLC has adopted a resolution supporting the striking workers. The resolution was adopted at the Labor Council's January membership meeting. Director Hall is a former Beaver-Lawrence CLC executive officer.

concrete that went to waste amid a weeklong drivers' strike in 2017.

The Washington Supreme Court threw out

President's Report

By Rick Galiano
Labor Council President

* Thank you to Starbucks United Organizer Tori Tambellini for attending the Labor Council's January membership meeting and reporting on the Starbucks organizing drive in western Pennsylvania and throughout the U.S. Tori was fired by Starbucks in July, 2022, from her position as a Starbucks shift supervisor in Pittsburgh. More than 264 Starbucks U.S. stores have voted to unionize since late last year. 14 Pittsburgh area stores have voted to unionize. Starbucks United members will hold three to five day strikes at the end of March. The purpose of the strikes is to convince Starbucks to begin meaningful contract negotiations with Starbucks United. Tori asked that the Labor Movement and its community allies support the strikes. Star-



Starbucks Workers United organizer Tori Tambellini addressing the January Labor Council membership meeting. Tori was fired last July from her position as a Starbucks shift supervisor in Pittsburgh. As of February 1st, 375 Starbucks stores have filed for union elections, and 286 stores have voted to unionize. The NLRB has issued more than 60 complaints against Starbucks, encompassing over 1,200 alleged violations of labor law. Starbucks Workers United will hold a series of limited day strikes at the end of March. The March issue of the UNION BUG will provide information on how union members and community allies can support the strikes.

bucks United will notify the Labor Council as soon as the strike itinerary is finalized.

* NWPA ALF Director Rosann Barker attended the January Labor Council meeting and reported that she will retire from her office on April 1st of this year. We thank Rosann for her long service to the Labor Movement and wish her all the best in her retirement.

* PA AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer George Piasecki will attend the February Labor Council meeting. New Castle NAACP President Lawrence Williams also will attend the meeting.

* The food and beverages at the February meeting will be sponsored by Coco's Restaurant in New Castle. The food and beverages at the January meeting were sponsored by the Labor Council.

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The opinions expressed in Union Bug articles are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council or its officers.

2023 BEAVER-LAWRENCE CLC AFFILIATED LOCALS

American Federation of Musicians	International Union of Operating Engineers IUOE 66
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Councils and Locals	International Union of Painters and Allied Trades IUPAT DC 57 IUPAT 409 IUPAT 530 IUPAT 751 IUPAT 2006
Pennsylvania Public Employees Council 13	
Western Pennsylvania Public Employees Council 84	
Northwestern Pennsylvania Public Employees Council 85	
AFSCME 248	
Local 1483, Lawrence County, CAF	
AFSCME 1816	
AFSCME 1983	
AFSCME 2105	
Local 2367, State Supervisory, District 1	
AFSCME 2602	
Local 2902, Lawrence County	
American Federation of Teachers AFT 3975	Laborers' International Union of North America LIUNA 833
Association of Pennsylvania State College University Faculty	National Association of Letter Carriers NALC 84
American Postal Workers Union	Operatives of Plasterers and Cement Masons International Association TRI-STATE COUNCIL OF OPCMIA
APWU Pittsburgh Metro 081	Office & Professional Employees International Union OPEIU 277
APWU Pittsburgh Metro Retirees	Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses & Allied Professionals
Amalgamated Transit Workers Union	Pennsylvania Workers United
Building & Construction Trades Councils	Pennsylvania State Education Association
Bever County B&CTC	
Lawrence County B&CTC	United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers, and Allied Workers ROOFERS 37
Communication Works of America CWA 13000	Service Employees International Union SEIU 668 SEIU HealthCare PA
Glass Molders and Pottery Workers	Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation SMART 12
Heat Frost Insulators and Allied Workers INSULATORS LOCAL 2	Transportation Workers Union TWU 2035
International Association of Fire Fighters IAFF 3539 BEAVER FALLS	United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters UA 27 UA 449 UA ROAD 7 SPRINKLER FITTERS 669
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers	United Auto Workers
IAM District 98	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America UBC 420
IAM 1060	United Food and Commercial Workers UFCW 1776
IAM 1976	United Mine Workers of America
International Association of Theatrical Stage Employees	United Steelworkers USW District 10 USW 256L USW 623 USW 1196 USW 1211 USW 1212 USW 9305
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers IBB 154	UWUA UWUA 612/666
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	
IBEW District 3	
IBEW 29	
IBEW 126	
IBEW 201	
IBEW 712	
International Brotherhood of Teamsters IBT 205	
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL ENGINEERS	
IRONWORKERS IRON 3	

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

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and fairness on the job.

“It’s rotten when it comes to that point,” he said. “It’s very hard on families. It’s not fun anymore. But I think it’s probably the greatest weapon we have in our arsenal.”

And it’s sometime the only way to force employers like ATI to bargain in good faith.

The USW made progress



Contingent organized by Beaver County Democratic Committee members at P-G strikers solidarity rally on January 28th. (Left to right) Jerry DeSena, Andy Bosh, Ashlee Caul, Janet Myers, Bob Steffes, Jan Carpenter, Sheila Dattilo, Mike Rossi and Dan Bosh. Bob Steffes is the co-vice chair of the Beaver County Democratic Party. Mike Rossi is the Prothonotary of Beaver County. The Beaver County Democratic Party has adopted a resolution in support of the striking Post-Gazette workers. The resolution was adopted by the Committee in December.

toward a new contract with ATI before COVID-19 hit in 2020. But when negotiations resumed in 2021, the company demanded unnecessary concessions that not only failed to recognize the sacrifices workers made during the pandemic but also would have compounded the harm ATI inflicted on the union members with a months-long illegal lockout that began in 2015.

“There was absolutely no way we were going to go for

that,” recalled Oliveira, not his coworkers and USW members at several other ATI locations overwhelmingly authorized the strike and then stood strong together until ATI came to its senses and began bargaining in earnest.

The shared struggle brought workers even closer together.

Oliveira could scarcely believe his eyes when striking USW members from ATI locations in Ohio and Pennsylvania showed up unannounced at one of his own local’s fundraisers. They drove hundreds of miles to support their USW family.

And Oliveira recalled how his heart swelled when the president of a large Pennsylvania local – one with hundreds of members – stood up at a meeting and vowed to continue fighting until ATI agreed to job security language that the 60 union members in Bedford urgently need.

“He was adamant about that. It was an unbelievable moment for me. Being a small local, it

meant a whole lot to us,” explained Oliveira, adding that the New Bedford representatives also “showed our integrity” by going to bat for language that workers in other locations wanted just as much. “I couldn’t be more proud to be a USW member.”

That’s exactly the kind of strength that Glacier Northwest and its pro-corporate allies hope to decimate with a Supreme Court ruling giving companies free rein to try to divide workers

and suppress strikes, creating a sword that will hang over every union when its members are left with no choice but to consider striking.

Glacier Northwest failed to make adequate preparations for the strike, leaving it unable to deliver the concrete that remained in drivers’ trucks at the start of the walkout. The company now wants the union to pay for the undelivered concrete – an outrageous demand when the



Striking Post-Gazette worker James “Hutchie” VanLandingham in Washington, D.C., with Rep. Chris Deluzio, where he was a guest for President Joe Biden’s State of the Union address.

very purpose of a strike is to put economic pressure on unreasonable employers.

When planning a strike, unions often meet with management to discuss an orderly shut down of operations because the

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workers, who care about returning to a safe plant when the strike ends, want to avoid damage to the furnaces, smelters, and other equipment where they work.

"If you're worried about losing product, don't be a jerk. Sit down with the union", Oliveira said, stressing that unions strike only as a last resort.

While Glacier Northwest's suit seeks to punish workers for striking, it's increasingly common for employers to throw workers into the street with lockouts, refusing to let them do their jobs in an attempt to force concessions.

And Glacier North-

west's alleged losses pale next to the harm companies intentionally inflict on workers, families, and communities during labor disputes.

After locking out about 1,200 USW members in Massachusetts in 2018, for example, National Grid brought in less experienced managers and scabs to perform the highly dangerous work of maintaining natural gas lines.

Besides depriving workers of their paychecks, National Grid callously cut off their health coverage, leaving families scrambling to care for grievously ill children.

"You're basically just a number to them," said one union member, explaining how National Grid ripped away his

health insurance shortly after doctors found cancer in his young son's kidney and lymph nodes.

The option to strike remains as crucial as ever, Oliveira observed, noting that employers are doubling down on union-busting efforts as more and more Americans seek to join unions in the wake of the pandemic.

An adverse decision in this case will be just another weapon that American companies will use to force their workers into less favorable contracts.

"We can't afford to go backward," Oliveira said. "We need to go forward. We need more rights, not less."

In Brief



Groundbreaking ceremony for a new building at the IBEW Local 712 Edwin D. Complex in Vanport. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 21st. IBEW Local 712 officers appearing in pictures (left to right): Brady Jones, Building Trustee; Declan Pape, Recording Secretary; Jeff Hill, Executive Board; Rodney Hill, Treasurer; John Kochanowski, President; Frank Telesz, Business Manager; Rich Halicek, Building Trustee; Matt Cowie, Vice President; Bob Allison, Executive Board; Nick Crisci, Building Trustee, and Bob Vranges, Building Trustee. The Beaver-Lawrence CLC will maintain an office in the new building.



NWPA ALF Director Rosann Barker addressing the January Labor Council membership meeting. Rosann announced that she will retire as NWPA ALF Director on April 1st but will continue to serve the labor councils of the NWPA ALF in a more limited capacity.

BEAVER/LAWRENCE
CENTRAL LABOR
COUNCIL



We're on the Web:
pa.aflcio.org/349

Calendar of Events

- 02/20 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and Membership meetings. Executive Board – 6:30 PM; Membership – 7:30. PSEA Building, New Castle. PA
AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer George Piasecki and New Castle NAACP Chapter President Lawrence Williams will address the membership meeting.
- 03/28 PA AFL-CIO Scholarship Essay Contest entry application deadline. See flyer at end of the January issue of the UNION BUG for entry application.
- 03/29 NWPA ALF Executive Board and Delegates meetings. Executive Board – 6:00 PM; Delegates – 7:00 PM. AFSCME DC 85 Hall, 1276 Liberty St., Franklin 16232. Attendees may join in person or via ZOOM. RSVP to 814-360-8336 or nwpaalf@gmail.com.
- 04/13 NWPA ALF Scholarship Essay Contest entry application deadline. See flyer at end of the January issue of the UNION BUG for entry application deadline.
- 04/15 Martin Luther King Community and Students Award Luncheon. 11:00 AM. Center Stage Banquet Hall, Monaca. Labor Council Vice-President Jan Carpenter and IBEW Local 201 delegate T Berry will be recognized for their efforts to strengthen the bond between the Labor and Civil Rights movements. See the flyer appearing at the end of the January issue of the UNION BUG for additional information.
- 04/17 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and Membership meetings. Executive Board – 6:30 PM; Membership – 7:30 PM. IBEW Local 712 Edwin D. Hill Complex, Vanport.
- 05/20 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Scholarship Essay Contest entry application deadline. See flyer at the end of the January issue of the UNION BUG for entry application.

Calendar of Events submissions must be emailed to Jody Kohser, Calendar of Events Coordinator, at jkohser@verizon.net, by 6:00 p.m. on March 14th to be considered for publication in the June 2023 Issue of the **UNION BUG**.