

NWPA ALF NEWS

DECEMBER EDITION



Happy Holidays
and best wishes
for the New Year!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 13, 2023 NWPA QUARTERLY MEETING

***E-BOARD MEETS AT 6:00 PM**

***DELEGATES JOIN US AT 7:00 PM.**

PLEASE REVIEW THE MEETING SCHEDULES—SOME ADJUSTMENT HAVE BEEN MADE DUE TO THE UPCOMING HOLIDAYS.

<i>CELEBRATING ROSANN BARKER</i>	2
<i>VENANGO DEMS & VENANGO CLARION CLC</i>	3
<i>CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER</i>	
<i>GIFTS THAT KEEPS ON GIVING</i>	4
<i>THE "HILLS AND RIDGER DOCTRINE"</i>	5
<i>DOORING ACCIDENTS: A HIDDEN RISK FOR PITTSBURGH MOTORISTS</i>	6-7
<i>PA DEMS SOUTH WEST CAUCUS</i>	8
<i>HOLIDAY PARTIES—COMP POSSIBLE?</i>	9
<i>MEETING SCHEDULE/CODE OF CONDUCT</i>	10-11

On November 18th we celebrated the long lasting labor legacy of Rosann Barker.

We joined in solidarity at the VFW in Franklin, PA to bid farewell.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this a successful departure . Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Happy Retirement Rosann



Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else.

— Fred Rogers —

Venango-Clarion Chapter & Venango Democrats Spread Holiday Cheer with Free Christmas Meals

Venango County, PA – The Venango County Democrats, in collaboration with the Venango-Clarion Chapter of the NWPA Area Labor Federation, are once again bringing warmth and joy to the community this holiday season. Continuing their annual tradition, they will be delivering free Christmas meals to elderly, shut-in, and homebound members of the Venango County community. Delivery of meals will begin at 11am. Adding to the tradition, individuals seeking company on Christmas day are invited to join in person at 237 Seneca Street, Oil City, where a communal dinner will be served starting at 1:00 PM.

Scheduled for Christmas Day, Monday, December 25, these meals will be freshly prepared and ready to enjoy, aiming to bring comfort and festive spirit to those who might be unable to share the day with family or anyone in need. The traditional Christmas Dinner, lovingly prepared by Venango County Democrats chairman John Kluck and his mother Dianne Kluck, will feature items such as ham, potatoes, vegetables, fresh baked rolls, and cookies crafted by dedicated volunteers.

To reserve a meal, interested individuals can easily do so by visiting the Venango County Democrats' website at www.VenangoDems.org and completing the online form. For those without online access, reservations can be made by calling 814-657-3108 and leaving a message. The meals will be thoughtfully packaged in reusable microwave and dishwasher-safe containers. Reservation requests for meals are encouraged to be made by December 18 to ensure availability.

This initiative is made possible through the kindness and generosity of the Venango County Democratic Party members, the Venango-Clarion Chapter of the NWPA ALF, and the incredible support from the community. Those interested in contributing, whether through assisting with meal deliveries, baking cookies, or making donations, are encouraged to reach out to Kluck at (814) 657-3108.

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

As we get older, and especially if we have children, the holiday focus turns from what we are GETTING OR ASKING FOR to what we give others. One of the most important gifts we can give to our working men and women is knowledge about the workers' compensation process. Many employees do not know what needs to be done when they are injured, and some may even be "mis-led" by information given by employers, whether intentional or not. Many a person "didn't know" vital information that would allow the claim process to perhaps run a little more smoothly—even if it doesn't result in an immediate acceptance of the claim.

Over this year—and over the years—this newsletter has provided tips about workers' compensation. Some have to do with the nuts and bolts of what happens:

Injured workers need to know that an injury should be reported even if witnessed by co-workers and that documentation of the injury, is vital.

Employees need to know that the list of panel medical providers is to be given at the time of the injury.

There is no requirement that the employer/comp nurse/claims rep make their appointments or choose their providers. Among the listed doctors, the employee gets the choice. Knowledge of one's rights for medical treatment after an injury should be tied up with a big red bow and presented to each injured worker!

No one is REQUIRED to use vacation and sick time before workers' compensation benefits are paid. If the claim is denied and the employee needs to use that time to make ends meet, that is the employee's choice. There is no provision in the Workers' Compensation Act that requires exhaustion of sick and vacation time to begin total disability benefit entitlement. While compensation is not paid to an injured worker for the first seven days unless the employee is off for 14 days, once the 14 day mark has been reached, the compensation benefits are retroactive to the first day.

An injured worker, if laid off from a light duty job due to "lack of work" does not collect unemployment, a taxable, deductible benefit. That injured employee should be reinstated to total disability benefits.

The nurse case manager—if one is assigned—is not permitted into the exam room with the employee. That is the employee's time with the doctor. Before and after, the NCM may obtain information. **BUT NOT DURING THE EXAM ITSELF.**

It's also important for injured workers to know that the collective bargaining agreement and the Workers' Compensation Act don't always work hand in hand. An injured worker released to light duty whose claim has been ACCEPTED may get different treatment than an injured worker whose claim has been denied—the latter may be refused a light duty assignment because the claim is "in litigation." The workers' compensation system/Judge cannot do anything about that treatment—it is up to the union to determine whether that is actionable—or not.

There can be Grinches in the workers' compensation system just like in the holiday story—adjusters who send checks late, or employers who call an injured worker out to the night shift on Christmas Eve. The Workers' Compensation Act may not have a remedy for these situations, but talking with a union representative/workers' compensation attorney can provide that worker with knowledge about the effect of one's actions on the receipt of compensation or rights that employee may have.

Knowledgeable union representatives who take the time to be educated about the workers compensation system are actually more important figures to co-workers than Santa Claus. They have the information injured workers need and the willingness to be like Rudolph, guiding that injured employee through the fog of the initial steps after a work injury, including helping them to find representation for their claim. Giving the gift of time, knowledge and support never goes out of style.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US AT BLAUFELD SCHILLER & HOLMES!

Blaufeld Schiller & Holmes LLP
810 Penn Avenue, Suite 700
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412-391-0775
1-800-343-9384
bsh@bshlaw.net

The “Hills and Ridges Doctrine”
Prepared by Signe O’Brien Rudberg, Esquire
Edgar Snyder & Associates, LLC

Slips and falls due to snow or ice, which accumulated to the extent to invoke the Hills and Ridges Doctrine

In our region, snow and ice are constants in our lives from late fall to early spring. Buildups of snow and ice often lead to slippery sidewalks and perilous parking lots that can cause falls resulting in serious injuries. **Property owners in Pennsylvania** have a duty to remove snow and ice from their sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots in a reasonable amount of time after snow or ice accumulates. However, the property owner’s liability is not absolute. Pennsylvania has adopted what is known as the “Hills and Ridges Doctrine” to help limit property owners’ duty to travelers upon their property by allowing owners a grace period to remove ice and snow from their premises.

The “Hills and Ridges Doctrine” protects property owners from being sued for generally slippery conditions such as freshly fallen snow or thin layers of black ice that may be hard to detect or remedy quickly. If property owners were to be held liable for these general conditions, then owners would be forced to anticipate the storm or ensure that their property was immediately cleared of ice and snow. “Hills and Ridges” allows for actions to be brought for slips and falls due to snow and ice only after the snow or ice has accumulated to the point of creating ridges in the snow. Ridges in the snow are proof that the property owner let the dangerous accumulation go untouched long enough for the top layer to melt and refreeze.

To establish a case for a slip and fall under the “Hills and Ridges Doctrine,” there are three essential elements that must be proven before the property owner can be held liable for your slip and fall injuries:

- The accumulation of snow and ice must have been the actual cause of the fall.
- The snow or ice must have accumulated to the point of creating ridges of such proportion as to unreasonably obstruct travel and cause a danger to pedestrians.

The property owner must have either known about the accumulation or a reasonable amount of time must have passed so that the owner should have known that the accumulation needed to be cleared.

The “Hills and Ridges Doctrine” does not pertain to all snow or ice slip and fall injuries, only those that are naturally occurring. The “Doctrine” was adopted in Pennsylvania to help property owners deal with the constant inclement weather in our region, not to absolve owners from all liability. “Hills and Ridges” only applies to the natural accumulation of snowstorms and ice storms but will not create a grace period for property owners who allow artificial conditions, such as water leaks or damaged sidewalks, to become dangerous with ice or snow.

Please remember that adults only have two years from the date of the slip or fall in which to file a lawsuit and children have until two years from their 18th birthday to file a lawsuit for their injuries, but it is always best to pursue a claim as soon as possible, as it can become more difficult as time passes. It always helps to take pictures of the unsafe condition after you have been injured. These property problems can lead to serious injuries for innocent people of all ages from infants to the elderly. Your child could suffer a broken arm, collarbone or leg. Your parent could suffer a fractured hip or leg resulting in surgery and the potential that they will no longer be able to care for themselves. You could hurt your back or sustain an injury that would cause you to miss extended periods of work, which could unnecessarily lead to tight monetary situations. Let our law firm help you recoup medical expenses, lost wages, and damages for pain and suffering.

If a property owner knew of the dangerous condition or that the dangerous condition existed for a long enough period of time that the owner should have known about it, then the owner was on notice of the problem and will likely be held liable for the injuries that the dangerous condition caused to you.

If you have any questions about any type of injury, please feel free to contact Attorney Signe Rudberg at Edgar Snyder & Associates, LLC, toll free at 1.866.306.2667 or email at srudberg@edgarsnyder.com.



US Steel Tower 10th Floor, 600 Grant St, Pittsburgh PA 15219
 1.866.306.2667 – 412.488.6000
www.edgarsnyder.com

Know Your Rights

Protect Your Rights

This article is for informational purposes and is not a substitute for the legal advice of a qualified attorney.

Dooring Accidents: A Hidden Risk for Pittsburgh Motorcyclists

By: Kelly Enders

Riding a motorcycle presents risks distinct from driving a car—drivers' failure to watch for motorcycles in addition to the minimal protection offered by the bikes puts riders at a greater risk. One example of a distinct and serious risk to bikers are dooring accidents.

What Are Dooring Accidents?

Dooring accidents occur when the occupant of a parked vehicle opens their door into a traffic lane in front of a motorcyclist or bicyclist. The rider hits the door and either gets thrown over the door or falls. They happen in several different scenarios. An occupant may open the door suddenly without checking for traffic—this is fairly common since people may remember to look for cars but forget to consider bikes and motorcycles.

Dooring may also happen when a rider is too close to parked vehicles; this often happens in urban areas with dense traffic. You may also see dooring happen when it's foggy or dark outside, as it's easier for vehicle occupants to miss cyclists in traffic.

Whether the rider hits the door and stops or is thrown from their bike, the consequences can be incredibly severe. Possible injuries include traumatic brain injuries, broken bones, bruising, and road rash. If the rider is thrown into a traffic lane, they may get hit again by a vehicle that does not have time to stop. In severe cases, dooring is fatal.

How to Prevent Dooring Accidents

Preventing dooring accidents is the responsibility of both drivers and motorcycle riders. Some basic safety tips include:

Double-check before opening the door: Vehicle occupants have learned to check for cars in the next lane of traffic over. With enough time and repetition, they can also learn to look for bicyclists and motorcycle riders. After checking the next lane once, check again and look specifically for motorcyclists before opening your door.

Check side and rearview mirrors: You should also use all of your mirrors to keep an eye out for motorcyclists. A quick check in the next lane may not yield anything, but checking your side or rearview mirrors could show a motorcyclist rapidly approaching in that same lane.

Ride further away from parked cars: Riders can make a habit of riding further from parked cars. This can be challenging in urban areas.

Always expect someone to open the door: Expecting the unexpected out of others on the road can often help you avoid an accident. Riders should always assume that someone is going to open the door as they approach a parked car. This allows them to slow down and approach with caution.

Liability for Dooring Injuries

The expenses associated with dooring injuries can be extremely costly—which means determining liability is crucial for victims as it allows them to pursue the compensation they deserve.

In many cases, the individual opening the door is liable for the accident. Opening a door into a traffic lane is viewed the same as merging into the lane with your moving car, and in those situations, the right-of-way goes to the person who is already occupied that lane.

In other cases, the rider may be at fault. For example, if they have their own lane to travel in but swerve into the parking lane to get around a slower vehicle, they may very well be held accountable for riding where they are not legally permitted to do so. Depending on the situation, they may have full or partial liability.

As with all vehicles, we recommend that motorcyclists properly insure their bikes with sufficient insurance to protect themselves in the event of an accident. We recommend purchasing an insurance policy with coverage of at least \$10K in medical coverage and at least \$100K per person/\$300K per occurrence in Underinsured and Uninsured Motorist. With the recent onset of more mild winters, motorcycles are on the road for most of the year—making the coverage you purchase for your bike even more important.

Injured in a Motorcycle Crash? Call Caroselli, Beachler & Coleman Today

If you've been the victim of a dooring accident, you have legal options. With over 50 years representing injured motorcyclists, at Caroselli Beachler & Coleman we have the experience to handle your case while you focus on recovery. If you have questions, we can be reached on our website or toll-free at 1-800-222-8816. Our team would be happy to sit down with you, your family member or friend to discuss any potential case or review insurance coverages you may need for yourself or your family.

CAROSELLI BEACHLER & COLEMAN, LLC
REPRESENTING INJURED PERSON AND THEIR FAMILIES THROUGHOUT WESTERN PA SINCE 1972.

NO FEES UNLESS DAMAGES ARE RECOVERED.

LOCAL APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE.

412-391-9860

1-800-222-8816

www.cbmclaw.com

You're Invited!!

Please Join Us
for a
Meet & Greet
with the
2024 Candidates
for PA Attorney General,
Auditor General
and Treasurer



Saturday, December 9th
10:30 a.m.-12:30p.m.
Lamplighter Restaraunt
6566 Rt. 22 Delmont, PA 15626



Hear From the Candidates
and Special Guests!
Enjoy Coffee, Pastries & Light Snacks

Use QR code to pay
\$15 admission



Please R.S.V.P ASAP to
Southwest Caucus Event Chair,
Michelle Milan McFall
using the google form or email to
MichelleforWestmoreland@gmail.com

Southwest Caucus Chairwoman, Shelley Glessner



Join us December 16th 2023

at the PA Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Veterans Memorial Cemetery

560 E 3rd St, Erie, PA 16507

for our annual Wreaths across America ceremony to:

Remember our fallen U.S. veterans.

Honor those who serve.

Teach your children the value of freedom.

Ceremony will begin at Noon with wreath laying to immediately follow

To support Wreaths Across American at the PA Soldiers' & Sailors' Home

please visit: www.wreathscrossamerica.org/PASASH



For more information or to donate, contact:

Ken Vybiral, Volunteer Coordinator, at

814-878-4961 or kvybiral@pa.gov

'TIS THE SEASON FOR

SOLIDARITY!

BAKE SALE!

TO BENEFIT THE

POST-GAZETTE STRIKER FUND

**DECEMBER 19
NOON - 6PM
OR UNTIL WE RUN OUT!**

**WE NEED BAKERS
AND VOLUNTEERS!
SIGN UP HERE:**



<https://tinyurl.com/Dec19BakeSalePGUnions>

**USW
HQ LOBBY
60 BLVD. OF
THE ALLIES
PGH. PA 15222**

**GIFT
BASKET
RAFFLE!**

**WE WANT
YOUR RECIPES!
SUBMIT THEM HERE:**



To add to the *Seasoned with Solidarity* cookbook!

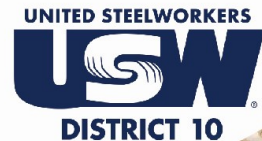
<https://tinyurl.com/CookbookPGunions>

WE WILL BE ACCEPTING CASH OR CHECK
OR DONATIONS DIRECTLY TO THE STRIKE FUND ONLINE

**CAN'T MAKE IT
BUT WANT
TO DONATE?
SCAN HERE:**



SPONSORED BY:



*Tis the Season for Solidarity is a project of USW Local 3657's Fundraising/Recreation and Organizing Committees



NWPA ALF Blended Meeting
Meeting 7:00 PM on Wednesday, 12/13/23
EBoard 6:00 PM
In person: AFSCME DC 8 Hall
1276 Liberty St Franklin, Pa 16323 or via Zoom
Special Speakers—TBD
RSVP 814-450-6520 or director.nwpa.alf@gmail.com

BEAVER-LAWRENCE CLC:

MEETING 7:30 PM
MONDAY, 12/18/23
IBEW 712 HALL
217 SASSAFRAS LANE
BEAVER, PA 15009

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
724-971-7473

BUTLER COUNTY CLC:

MEETING 7:30 PM ON
WEDNESDAY, 12/6/23
UAW 3303 HALL
112 HOLLYWOOD RD., BUTLER,
PA 16003

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
724-285-4883 EXT. 233

**CLEARFIELD-ELK-CAMERON-
JEFFERSON (POTTER) CLC:**

BLENDED MEETING 7:30 PM
THURSDAY, 12/7/23
IBEW LU5
1400 LEONARD ROAD
CLEARFIELD, PA16830

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
814-937-2208.

ERIE-CRAWFORD CLC:

MEETING 6:30 P M
WEDNESDAY, 12/6/23

**DECEMBER MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY
6:00 PM
PLYMOUTH TAVERN
1109 STATE ST
ERIE, PA 16501**

ADMIRAL ROOM-BLASCO LI-
BRARY 160 W. FRONT ST ERIE ,PA
16507

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 814-
823-9940.

GREATER WESTMORELAND CLC:

MEETING 7:00 PM
MONDAY, 12/18/23

HEMFIELD VFD
421 THORNTON RD GREENSBURG
15601

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 724-
600-6266.

INDIANA-ARMSTRONG CLC:

BLENDED MEETING 7:30 PM

**DECEMBER MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY
12/7/23 -7:30 PM**

UMWA 1412
51 ELEVENTH ST
LUCERNEMINES, PA 15754

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 724-
479-0923.

MERCER COUNTY CLC:

MEETING 7:30 PM
THURSDAY, 12/21/23

**DECEMBER MEETING & HOLIDAY PARTY
6:30 PM**

**JAI ALAI
1109 MERCER AVE, HERMITAGE, PA
16148**

USW 1660 HALL
1028 ROEMER BLVD
FARRELL, PA16121

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL OR YOU
PLAN ON ATTENDING PLEASE CALL OR
TEXT

724-854-0605.

VENANGO-CLARION CHAPTER:

BLENDED MEETING 6:00 PM THURS-
DAY, 12/14/23-**POSTPONED UNTIL
JANUARY 2024**

IAM 1842 HALL
24 FRONT ST
FRANKLIN 16323

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 814-671
-4420.

WARREN-FOREST (MCKEAN) CLC:

BLENDED MEETING 6:00 PM THURSDAY,
12/7/23

IUOE 95 HALL
116 DOBSON AVE
WARREN 16365

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL



PA Area Labor Federation Officers

Chair Andrew Harkulich
Sec Treas Phil Lasky
Vice-Chair Shane Clark
Vice-Chair Richard Galiano
Vice-Chair Julie Barnett
Vice-Chair Maria Delgado
Vice-Chair William Palmer
GMP Rep/Trustee Anthony Modaffare
OPEIU Rep/Trustee Jeffrey Hapke
IBEW/Trustee Declan Pape

Executive Board Members

Rep B-L CLC Alicia Craig
Rep B CLC Jim Saeler
Rep CECJ (P)CLC Jeff Miller
Rep E-C CLC Angel Negron
Rep GWCLC Walter (Pat) Geiger
Rep I-A CLC Rachel Sternfeld
Rep M CLC Lonnie McFall
Rep V-C Chapter CJ Pete Kluck
Rep W-F (M) CLC Richard Barrett
Rep B&CTC Rep Retiree Groups Daryl Busch
Rep AFSCME Dave Carey
Rep AFT Antonella Spinelli
Rep CWA Steve Tulblaenko
Rep APSCUF Lee Williams
Rep GMP Anthony Modaffare
Rep IBEW Frank Telesz Jr
Rep IBT John Cerra
Rep IUOE Jeff Blymiller
Rep IUPAT Ron Buechel
Rep Iron Workers Greg Bernarding
Rep OPEIU Jeffrey Hapke
Rep PAJBWU John Cochran Jr
Rep SEIU Mike Butler
Rep TWU Dennis Sabina
Rep UA James C Kirsch
Rep UBC Lonnie McFall
Rep UFCW Rebecca Valvo
Rep UMWA Chuck Knisell
Rep USW Paul Pelc

Director NWPALF

Amy Alcorn

NWPA AREA LABOR FEDERATION, AFL-CIO'S

CODE OF CONDUCT

THE NWPA AREA LABOR FEDERATION, AFL-CIO IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN ENVIRONMENT FREE

FROM DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT, REGARDLESS OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S RACE, ETHNICITY, RELIGION, COLOR

SEX, AGE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITY, GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION, ANCESTRY, PREGNANCY, OR ANY OTHER CHARACTERISTIC PROHIBITED BY LAW.

AS, THE AFL-CIO WILL NOT TOLERATE DISCRIMINATORY, HARASSING OR OTHERWISE UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE OR AT ANY OF ITS ACTIVITIES, EVENTS OR MEETINGS. IT ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTS EVERYONE IN THE WORKPLACE—AND THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF ITS ACTIVITIES, EVENTS OR MEETINGS—ABIDE BY IT.

