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Beaver County Continues To Put Workers, Community At Risk

*SEIU Local 668 Press Release
November 19, 2020*

Once again, workers and the general public have been put at-risk after an unnecessary COVID-19 exposure in Beaver County. After testing positive, a county employee came into the office, refused to wear a mask while in the Beaver County Courthouse, and knowingly exposed a number of county workers in meetings throughout the day. Because the Courthouse remains open to the general public, members of the community have been exposed to this highly contagious virus as well. As of today, November 19th, there are already nearly two dozen county workers who have contracted coronavirus in the last two weeks, and we expect that number to rise with this latest exposure.

These new COVID-19 cases are a direct re-

sult of the Beaver County Commissioners continual failure to provide swift, consistent, and clear workplace safety policies for county workers to keep them and the public safe during the pandemic. Because Commissioners Jack Manning, Daniel Camp, and Tony Amadio refuse to provide proper guidance to department heads, there is no clear policy for Human Resources to follow when a worker or someone from the public enters a county building and exposes others to COVID. Instead, each department head gets to decide how to handle this ongoing pandemic themselves. Unfortunately, this means that different workers in the same building are being told contradictory things as managers handle exposure and quarantine situations in radically different ways.

"The commissioners don't care at all about county workers," says SEIU Local 668 member

and Beaver County chief shop steward Joe Mann. "They refuse to do anything at all in their power to help protect workers, our families, and our community. It's dangerous they're not taking their elected positions seriously to protect the health and wellbeing of so many Beaver County residents."

SEIU Local 668 continues to demand that Manning, Camp, and Amadio release and enforce a comprehensive and clear COVID-19 workplace safety plan – one that is consistent with federal and state public health standards on COVID-19 and that is applicable to all county workers. These guidelines must include, at a minimum:

**One standard set of rules for county workers to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infections to the greatest extent possible:

Continued on page 3

Solidarity Calendar

*UAW Local 1311 and USW Local 1016-03 – UAW Local 1311 has been on strike at Langeloth Metallurgical Company in Langeloth (near Burgettstown, Washington County) since September 9, 2019, and USW Local 1016-03 has been on strike at the NLMK Pennsylvania plant in Farrell since August 22nd. The Northwestern Pennsylvania Area Labor Federation and Washington-Greene CLC are organizing a “2020 Union Families Christmas Project” for the approximately 90 striking workers at Langeloth and the approximately 425 striking workers in Farrell, and their families. Please read the flyer at the end of the **November** issue of the UNION BUG for information about how union and other organizations and individuals can help with the project, including volunteering to help at Christmas parties in Burgettstown and Farrell.

*TNG-CWA Local 38061 (Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh) – Please help union journalists at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette by visiting the Newspaper Guild website at www.pghguild.com to email a letter to the Post-Gazette encouraging it to revoke imposed working conditions that the company illegally and unilaterally has put in place, fire its union-busting law firm from Tennessee and return to the bargaining table and negotiate in good faith. The

Guild’s contract at the Post-Gazette has not been renewed for more than three years. The Guild recently held a rally and car caravan through downtown Pittsburgh to make the public aware of its effort to settle a fair contract. The rally and caravan were held on November 21st.



USW Local 1016 President Terry Day accepting a “2020 Union Families Christmas Project” donation from Progressive Democrats Pennsylvania Steel Valley Chapter President Tina Shannon. The donation was made on December 5th at the USW Local 1016-03 union hall in Wheatland. The \$1,279 donation was collected by the national PDA and the Steel Valley Chapter. Tina also delivered a letter addressed to striking Local 1016-03 indicating that “PDA supports the efforts of labor unions to maintain and expand hard fought for healthcare benefits until the time when the passage of Medicare for All legislation eliminates the need for union negotiators to bargain with employers for such benefits.” Looking on are Northwest Pa. Area Labor Federation Director Rosann Barker and USW Local 1211 shop steward Bob Williams. The “2020 Union Families Christmas Project” is an initiative of the NW Pa. ALF.

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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.

President's Report

By Rick Galiano
Labor Council President

* The Labor Council Executive Board's November monthly meeting was held on November 16th. It proceeded as a virtual meeting via teleconference call. The November membership meeting was canceled.

* The Executive Board voted at the November meeting to make the following donations:

- \$500 to the Beaver Falls Christian Assembly Care Outreach Ministry for its efforts to help those in need at Christmas. The Ministry's annual Free Christmas Day Dinner has been canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- \$250 to the UAW Local 1311 strike fund (See Solidarity Calendar on Page 2).
- \$250 to the Women's Center of Lawrence County.
- \$100 to Midland Women's MLK Committee's 2020 virtual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday.
- \$100 to the United Way of

Lawrence County's Taste of the Town.

* The 2021 Labor Council wall calendars are now available. Please contact any Labor Council officer if you want a calendar for your local union or home.

* Congratulations to Mtume Imani on her election as president of the Beaver County NAACP. She was elected on November 2nd and will take office in January. She succeeds Willie Sallis, who will retire from the presidency at the end of December. President-elect Imani has sent Labor Council Community Services Committee chairman Mark Benkart a letter expressing her wish that the working relationship between the Labor Council and Beaver County NAACP continue and grow during her administration. Under President Sallis' leadership, the Beaver County NAACP and the Labor Council cooperated on a wide range of activities, beginning with the October 2, 2010, One Nation Working Together

rally in Washington D.C. Best wishes to Willie in the future. [Editors Note: Also see Community Services Report on Page 3 of this issue of the UNION BUG].

* On behalf of the Executive Board and the members of the Labor Council, I would like to wish all of you and your families Happy Holidays and safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.



Beaver County NAACP President-elect Mtume Imani.

County Puts Workers, Community At Risk

Continued from page 1

**Clear protocols for rapid notifications of possible exposure to all county employees;

**Implementation guidelines for the enforcement of the Secretary of Health's mitigation measures, effective November 20th.

We also call on the Beaver County Commission-

ers to close down all county-run buildings to the public and institute sweeping telework for workers wherever possible. It's shameful that these county leaders, who are willingly attending large gatherings like bachelor parties, recklessly extend their risky behavior to the hard-working public servants under their authority.

With infection and mortality rates across the Com-

monwealth and the nation surging, we must demand our leaders adhere to their oath of office and protect those they've sworn to serve. Beaver County's Commissioners must do everything in their power to stop the spread now – not when hospitals and healthcare facilities are overrun with their own county workers and residents.

Community Services Report

By Mark Benkart
Community Services Chairman

Once again, Christmas is approaching, although, this is one that we will not forget. Because of the pandemic, a lot of us, including me, will be spending it alone. We have to make the best of it, knowing that better things will come once this is under control.

On December 2nd, I received an e-mail from the Secretary of the Beaver County NAACP, Mtume Imani, that Willie Sallis will retire from the president's position at the end of December and that she will begin a two-year term as president in January. Her email stressed that she wants the excellent relations between the Beaver County NAACP and the Labor Council to continue during her term.

The Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council has a long relationship with the Beaver County NAACP under the leadership of Willie Sallis. The first time was when we met, along with Tina Shannon, president of the local Progressive Democrats of America chapter, to organize a trip to Washington DC for a rally called One Nation Working Together, scheduled to happen on October 2nd, 2010. The theme was Putting America Back to Work and Putting America Back Together.

In approximately one month, we filled five buses with people attending this event. Among the many things that we learned, was that our agendas were pretty much the same, and, of course, that we

worked well together.

So began our relationship. We did many other things together, such as sending five busloads of people to Washington DC in 2013 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's March on Washington for Jobs, Peace and Freedom. Our contingent was the largest group from Western Pennsylvania to attend the March.

But our growing coalition finally got a name when Willie Sallis convinced Reverend Dr. Will J. Barber, president of the North Carolina NAACP and leader of the national Moral Mondays Movement, to be the keynote speaker at the Labor Council's fourth Human Rights Banquet in 2014. In fact, the banquet was a joint effort with the NAACP and was designated as such on the mailings and event literature.

Willie and the leadership of our coalition first met Reverend Barber in March 2013, when we sent a bus to Harrisburg to protest the passage of a voter ID law by the Republican controlled legisla-

ture that would have purged 750,000 people from the voting rolls. We had previously met with State Senator Elder Vogel, asking him to vote against the bill. We also protested in front of his office (he nevertheless voted in favor of the bill which was later found to be unconstitutional by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court).

When we heard the power of Rev. Barber's words in Harrisburg, we decided that we would try to bring Rev. Barber to Beaver County. Willie, as an NAACP branch president, was the person who made it happen.

At the banquet, Reverend Barber challenged us to start a Moral Mondays Chapter, after which, the cooperation of the Labor Council, Beaver County NAACP and allied groups in Beaver and Lawrence Counties became formalized as the Moral Mondays Coalition of Pennsylvania.

Since the banquet, our Moral Mondays Coalition, relying on Willie's foresight and organizational skills, have done many other things together.



Left: USW Local 1211 shop steward Bob Williams with a part of the groceries that he collected and delivered to striking USW Local 1016-03 in Farrell on December 5th.



Union Made Gifts for Everyone On Your List

The holidays are here and you're facing that annual dilemma of how to complete Santa's list? Not to indulge gender stereotypes, but we've compiled a list of favorites for the men, women and kids on your list. Yes, Labor 411 knows that not every guy likes tools or every women craves perfume, but some do. Check out our website for a list of all sorts of favorites gift ideas. Everything on our lists is made by companies who treat their workers fairly and gives them a voice on the job.

Happy holidays and let's all try to help build a stronger America.

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For the Kids

Hasbro Toys (RWDSU/UFCW)
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 Star Wars (RWDSU/UFCW)
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BEAVER/LAWRENCE
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We're on the Web:
pa.aflcio.org/349

Calendar of Events

- 12/19 NW PA ALF Christmas Party for Families and Children of striking UAW Local 1311 members; 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; Knights of Columbus, 2086 Smith Township Rd., Burgettstown, Pa. 15023. Please see article and flyer appearing in the **November** issue of the UNION BUG for how to donate to, and/or volunteer to help at, the event.
- 12/21 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and membership meetings; Please check with Executive Board for status of the meetings.
- 12/24 NW PA ALF Christmas Party for Families and Children of striking USW Local 1016-03 members; 10:00 am – 3:00 pm; Farrell VFW, 1233 Idaho St., Farrell, Pa. 16121. Please see article and flyer appearing in the **November** issue of the UNION BUG for how to donate to and/or volunteer to help at the event.
- 12/25 Christmas Dinner and Toy Giveaway; Beaver Falls High School –**CANCELLED** due to COVID-19 pandemic. Please see letter from CARE Outreach Ministries attached to the end of the **November** issue of the UNION BUG for additional information.
- 01/18 Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday; Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration Committee banquet **CANCELLED** due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- 01/18 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and Membership meetings. Please check with Executive Board members for status of the meetings.

Calendar of Events submissions must be emailed to Jody Kohser, Calendar of Events Coordinator, at jkohser@verizon.net, by 6:00 p.m. on January 11th to be considered for publication in the January 2021 Issue of the **UNION BUG**.