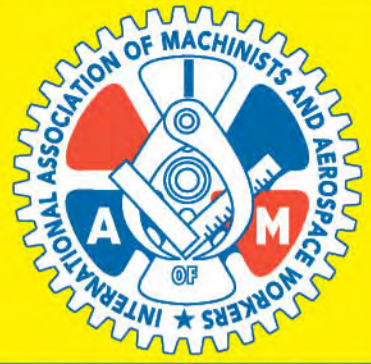


HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday, September 12, 2012



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Convention Honors True Heroes



Retired U.S. Army General Wesley Clark, left, presents Iraqi War veteran and Local Lodge 2916 member Connie Rendon with an award from IAM members for her sacrifice and service. Rendon was severely injured during her deployment in Iraq in 2004.

Delegates to the 38th IAM Grand Lodge Convention gave a hero's welcome to one of their own, Iraqi war veteran and Local Lodge 2916 member Connie Rendon of Corpus Christi, TX.

In a special presentation on behalf of the IAM, renowned Retired U.S. Army General Wesley Clark presented Rendon with a special award.

"This is in appreciation of your service to our country and the sacrifices you've made in the defense and protection of all Americans," said General Clark, reading the inscription. "On behalf of your Brothers and Sisters of the IAM, we are proud of you and express our heartfelt thanks."

Rendon, a retired Sgt. First Class in the U.S.



Army Reserve, was severely injured on Sept. 8, 2004, after being called to active duty in Iraq. Near the end of a long nighttime resupply convoy mission, an Improvised Explosive Device went off next to Rendon's truck. She suffered a long list of major injuries: broken ribs, a collapsed lung, a broken left arm, multiple broken and mangled facial bones, and her right arm was nearly blown off. Her passenger, a soldier from her unit, was killed in the blast.

"I used to question myself, why me?" said Rendon in an emotional recount of that fateful day's events and the moment she realized she would be okay. "Have faith and believe... because I do. That's why I'm here today."

"In 2010, Local 2916 organized a Veterans Day parade and ceremony in the Corpus Christi area specifically to honor Connie," said IAM International President Tom Buffenbarger. "I was proud to be there that day. Connie represents the very best of what Machinists are all about – hard working, loyal people who love their families, support their communities and their union Brothers and Sisters; and who, when called upon, serve their country with honor, courage, and modesty." Buffenbarger asked delegates to rise in honor of all Machinists who have served in the armed forces of both the United States and Canada to help preserve the freedoms we cherish.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund President



Jan Scruggs was also presented with a medallion, as well as a Sabertooth® knife by International President Buffenbarger.

Earlier this year, Rendon and Scruggs were asked to participate in the Union Sportsmen's Alliance TV show *Brotherhood Outdoors*, an award-winning series that celebrates union men and women from around

the country with a once-in-a-lifetime hunting or fishing adventure in North America. Delegates were given the opportunity to see a preview of the episode starring Rendon and Scruggs scheduled to air later this fall.



Retired U.S. Army General Wesley Clark also presented Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund President Jan Scruggs with an award from IAM members for his service and creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC.

Scruggs provided delegates with a slideshow update of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, a national treasure the Machinists have proudly helped to maintain.

And as a show of support, General Clark, a union member himself, spoke about the importance of unions in America. "We who serve in uniform have so much to be grateful for – you," said Clark. "You give us the technology, the weaponry, the support we need to have the finest armed forces in the world.

"The premiere challenge of the 21st century is to



maintain and create sustained, well-paying, meaningful jobs for ordinary Americans. You can't do that without a strong union movement. I salute you. And I encourage you to take it forward. Build this union movement to deal with the complexities of the modern economic challenges of a global economy, and let's help America stand tall by raising America's middle class."

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Canadian Leaders Outline Challenges, Opportunities



Canadian New Democratic Party (NDP) Leader Thomas Mulcair addresses delegates for the first time since being elected the leader of Canada's official opposition.

Two distinguished leaders from Canada, New Democratic Party (NDP) Leader Thomas Mulcair and Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti outlined the challenges and opportunities ahead in Canada's political and labor arena.

When Thomas Mulcair took control of Canada's NDP last year following the death of much-admired leader Jack Layton, many wondered what would become of the political party formed in 1961 to better represent workers in Canada.

Today, the party is doing quite well, and Mulcair is increasingly mentioned as a strong candidate to become Canada's first NDP prime minister.



After being given a hero's welcome by delegates in Toronto, Mulcair described the challenges facing the NDP, as well as IAM members, in Canada and the U.S.

"Sometimes it feels like we're just too small, and the world is just too big to control what goes on around us," said Mulcair. "But the truth is, our fate – and our future – are still very much in our hands."

"In the past, Canadians saw New Democrats as the party of opposition," said Mulcair. "The role of New Democrats over the coming years – and my role as Opposition Leader – is to prove that we are serious, competent, public administrators. The work ahead of us won't be easy, but I can promise you this: New Democrats are up to the task and together, we can build a fairer Canada and a better world."



Ken Georgetti

The top officer of the Canadian Labour Congress, Ken Georgetti, also spoke to IAM Convention delegates, listing compelling reasons for renewing the spirit and substance of international solidarity.

"Here in Canada, the Stephen Harper Conservative government is trying to interfere with unions' right to democratically determine how dues are spent – by introducing Bill C-377," said Georgetti.



“It couldn’t be clearer – Bill C-377 is intended to intimidate unions, to restrict our ability at organizing, at political education and – most of all – to restrict our ability to engage in political action.”

The anti-worker agenda in Canada sounds disturbingly familiar to the agenda in the U.S. and other industrial countries. The transnational hit list includes cutting unemployment insurance eligibility, making temporary foreign workers available more quickly, increasing the retirement age and reducing the size of the public sector.

The right-wing in Canada also hopes to establish a two-tier health care system to promote private for-profit health care. To get it, they are deliberately underfunding the public system – another lesson they learned from their counterparts in the U.S.

Georgetti proposed asking parents in Canada a simple question to counter the right-wing’s campaign against labor unions: “Do you really want your child to earn \$600,000 less in their working lifetime because their career was spent in non-union jobs?”

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AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka led a call for international action to build an economy that creates good jobs and dignity for all workers.

Trumka Leads Call for Economic Dignity for Workers

The third day of the IAM's 38th Grand Lodge Convention featured rousing speeches by a host of distinguished speakers. AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka electrified the crowd with a call to action to create a global economy based on dignity and fundamental freedoms for workers. Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer had delegates cheering after ripping into Walmart and the Koch brothers, and AFSCME's newly-elected President Lee Saunders paid tribute to the heroes of 9/11.

Trumka reinforced the Convention's theme



of international solidarity and outlined the clever right-wing tactics designed to pit worker against worker, especially in the U.S. presidential campaign. “Clearly corporations have been thinking globally and they’ve been exploiting us around the globe from pole-to-pole,” declared Trumka. “When we fail to stand up for our own rights here, workers somewhere else get hammered. When workers far away in India or China are exploited, well, we’re exploited, too.”

And in North America, the subtle campaign to pit worker against worker is being fueled by anti-labor politicians and their corporate allies. “They want us against each other so we won’t vote about what matters, so we won’t vote about the future of our countries, so we won’t notice that Mitt [Romney] and his billionaire buddies have been making off like bandits while working people everywhere have shared the suffering of joblessness and financial insecurity and foreclosure,” said Trumka.

Trumka challenged delegates to work hard to create a true global movement to improve workers’ lives. “A real movement for an economy that creates good jobs, a movement that honors the dignity of all workers and our fundamental freedoms every single day,” said Trumka, and a movement that creates “a better world, a world that offers opportunity to every person who wants a job, a good job, so people can raise a family if they want to and have a decent life.”



“Our Kind of Guy”

Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer took the stage wearing comfortable jeans and a shirt with a loosened bolo tie, prompting International President Buffenbarger to introduce him as “our kind of guy.”



Brian Schweitzer

Describing his successful run for governor in a state that hasn’t elected a Democrat in more than 20 years, Schweitzer said he was like that dog who spent years chasing passing cars and trucks.

“One day I woke up to find I had caught that truck,” said Schweitzer, who went on to successfully press for education reforms that emphasized what he called ‘smart education,’ including apprenticeship training, full-time kindergarten and a program that allows half of Montana’s high school students to graduate having finished their freshman year in college.

The reforms paid off. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Montana now leads the nation in the percentage of students receiving college degrees.

The delegates roared their approval when Schweitzer ripped into the Koch brothers and Walmart for promoting a corporate and political philosophy that favors wealth without responsibility.



“I guess if you take the hypocrites out of corporate America, there ain’t nobody left,” said Schweitzer, who wondered aloud when there might be a party representing working people and an economy that puts working people “at the front of the line, not at the back of the line.”

“Remember this Governor’s name,” Buffenbarger advised delegates after Schweitzer concluded his remarks. “And when you see this name a few years down the road or sooner, you’ll know what kind of candidate this man can be.”



Lee Saunders

Tribute to 9/11 Heroes

In a presentation that began with a solemn recollection of what it was like to be in lower Manhattan on the morning of September 11, 2001, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) President Lee Saunders paid personal tribute to the brave men and women who rushed into the World Trade Center that day.

“They say courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to act in spite of it,” said Saunders who was working just two blocks from the World Trade Center on 9/11. “We salute those who lost their lives on 9/11 and the workers who were in Washington, D.C., Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and New York City. All were courageous sisters and brothers the world will never forget.”



Saunders went on to praise the millions of teachers, police, fire and government workers who have endured a relentless assault by right-wing politicians and Republican Governors who are attacking public employees' bargaining rights.

"Some come with hatchets, some come with scalpels, and some come with big bucks from their corporate supporters," said Saunders. "But they're all coming for all of us. No matter whether you're in the private sector or the public sector, they're coming after all of us."

The small but traditional divide between public and private unions has all but vanished in the wake of the Great Recession that spawned calculated austerity programs that conveniently strip unions of wages, pensions and bargaining power.

"We are all in this together," declared Saunders. "The members of this union stood with AFSCME all the way in Wisconsin. You stood with us all the way as we battled Scott Walker, a real bad guy. And I pledge to you today, and I pledge to Tom and everyone sitting in this room, that you can count on AFSCME to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with you in whatever battles you are confronted with in Canada or across the United States. We will stand with you."



Panelists Discuss Human Rights, the Fight for Dignity



Labor Rights panelists included, from left, Rob Johnston, IndustriALL; Owen Herrstadt, IAM; Jin Sook Lee, BWI; and Judy Gearhart, ILRF.

Following the day's "Human Rights – A Fight for Dignity" theme, a distinguished panel of experts discussed the almost non-existent rights of workers around the world, specifically migrant workers, shipbuilders and children.

"The International Labor Organization estimates 215 million children worldwide are working instead of going to school," said Judy Gearhart, Executive Director of the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF), who's worked with child labor issues in the chocolate industry of Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). "We can't stop child labor unless we first have dignified work, decent work and trade union rights for all. If workers can't negotiate



a better situation and earn a decent living, we'll never really be able to get those kids back in school."

The panel, moderated by IAM Trade and Globalization Department Director Owen Herrnstadt, included Rob Johnston, Executive Director of the Aerospace and Base Metals Sectors of IndustriALL, who discussed the tribulations of shipbuilders and shipbreakers in India and Pakistan. Jin

Sook Lee, Migration, Gender and Campaign Director of the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), outlined BWI's aggressive, innovative campaigns to organize migrant workers, large global companies, and construction workers for big sports campaigns like the Olympics and the World Cup.



Most Wanted: Global Corporate Criminals panelists included, from left, Eric Holt-Giménez, Food First; Paul Paz y Miño, Amazon Watch; Maria Roeper, IAM; and Carleen Pickard, Global Exchange.

A panel on global corporate criminals continued the day's theme with a discussion on sweatshops, free trade, the world food industry and the oil industry.

"I'm here not just with a story about a corporate criminal, but I'm here with a conviction," said Paul Paz y Miño, Managing Director of Amazon Watch, referring to a recent \$18 billion judgment against Chevron for the oil company's contamination of the Ecuadorian



rainforest. “Chevron made the deliberate decision to save \$3 a barrel by dumping 18 billion gallons of toxic waste in hundreds of unlined, open-air pits. And then, they left. It’s the largest environmental oil-related disaster in history – and it was done deliberately. Over the course of this time, there was cancer, birth defects, spontaneous miscarriages and skin disease. Some 30,000 people were affected.”

The panel, moderated by IAM Associate General Counsel Maria Roeper, also included Carleen Pickard, Executive Director of the Global Exchange, who talked about her organization’s campaign to hold companies like Target, JC Penney and The Gap accountable for global sweatshops. Eric Holt-Giménez, Executive Director of the Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy, discussed the challenges of the world food industry in which a “corporate food regime” monopoly is putting corporate profits ahead of feeding the poor and hungry.



Delegates Secure Funding For Winpisinger Education Center



Convention delegates took action to secure funding for the IAM's premiere training facility, the William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center where more than 72,000 IAM members have attended classes.

The pride and deep affection members have for IAM's William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center at Placid Harbor took center stage on the third day of the Convention when delegates took an important step to secure funding for the operation of the IAM's premiere training facility. More than 74,000 IAM members have attended classes at the Center.

By unanimous vote, delegates adopted a resolution to cover any Winpisinger Center operating costs not covered by the investment income generated from the IAM Strike Fund, which has traditionally funded the Center's operation.

After several large strikes, the financial meltdown of 2008 and the increased cost of covering travel expenses for students, the interest on the Strike Fund



Local 2339H member Julie Martin, right, was one of many delegates who expressed their deep appreciation of the Winpisinger Center.



has not kept up with the costs of operating the Center, causing a debt to the Strike Fund that has been paid by the General Fund.

To ensure the future operation of the Center, delegates approved a resolution to clear the Center's debt to the General Fund and thus to the Strike Fund, reduce expenses without damaging programs, and authorize the Executive Council to use other funds to operate the Center when the investment income from the Strike Fund is insufficient.

Delegate support was strong with many members expressing a common appreciation of the training they received. "Education is the lifeblood of our union," said Delegate Shawn Humpherys of Local 1287 in Salt Lake City, UT. "The Winpisinger Center has touched, either directly or indirectly, every member of our union, I support this resolution."

"I have been to the Winpisinger Center several times," echoed 2339H of Houston, TX, member Julie Martin. "It's a great asset to our union and needs to remain in place."

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