



Kickin' Back

For and About Active Retirees

You may retire from your job, but you never retire from your union.



IAM retirees met in Las Vegas on March 25 to discuss plans to address the nation's ailing economy and health care system.

IAM Retirees Plan for the Future

Looking to set the course for the IAM Retirees Department for 2009 and beyond, a small group of IAM retirees joined me in Foxwoods, CT this past February for an extensive strategy session. The group discussed mobilization efforts, issues impacting IAM retirees, ways to bridge the gap between retirees and younger generations and the 5th International Retirees' Conference.

If we are going to survive the current economic downturn, our retirees will have to put forth tremendous effort. We need jobs, we need health care and we need safeguards for Social Security and Medicare. But these things won't magically work themselves out. We need to empower working families and demand our lawmakers work for us.

Emerging from the meeting was a document

laying out future plans of the IAM Retirees Department. *Building a Bridge Between Generations: FDR Through Obama* outlines plans to battle misinformation from the right-wing media, bridge the gap between the 18-29 and the 65+ year old demographics and launch intense grassroots mobilization efforts. The group also formed committees on the economy and health care. The two committees convened in Las Vegas in March to explore ways IAM retirees can help fix our economy and provide health care to all Americans. After pinpointing specific issues during the initial meeting, the committees are set to meet again in May. Also joining us in Las Vegas was Western Territory GVP Lee Pearson, WWW Center Instructor Charlie Micallef, Steve Protulis and Kenneth Williams.

Message from Maria

It warms my heart to report that your IAM Retirees Department continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Over the past year, we have been extremely busy – to say the least: we have recruited more senior activists than ever, continued to clean up our database, and started making plans for the 5th International Retirees Conference. As if that's not enough, a group of your fellow retirees joined me in Connecticut and Nevada to discuss ways to address the growing number of intergenerational crises we face. We formed committees on the economy and health care and we started to distribute a series of papers outlining our findings.

This is a very exciting time for retired IAM members. Although many of us are struggling to cope with rising health care costs and a battered economy, we remain hopeful. Exactly as we have done over and over again, we are the ones that will help right this sinking ship.

As we embark on this ambitious journey, I am so very proud of our retirees. I am proud of the retirees who have been helping grow this department for years and I am proud of the new retirees who are getting involved. I am eager to see where the next couple of years will lead us.

With the consent of our Executive Council, the next Retirees Conference is scheduled for the Rio Las Vegas in August 2010. It promises to be even bigger than our last conference. We have much to look forward to and I know you will be with us every step of the way.

Alliance President George Kourpias Retirees



Former IAM International President George Kourpias has stepped down as president of the 3.5 million-

member Alliance for Retired Americans, concluding an 8-year term in which he transformed the Alliance into the standard-bearer of grassroots retiree activism.

The Alliance is going to sorely miss George. IAM retirees and all working Americans have been blessed by George's commitment to social and economic justice. After serving eight years as the IAM's International President and three years as president of the National Council of Senior Citizens, Kourpias took over as head of the Alliance upon its inception in 2001. Kourpias was instrumental in union retiree

turnout in the November Presidential election, in which union retirees voted by a stunning margin for Barack Obama. He was also a key player in the defeat of former President George W. Bush's efforts to privatize Social Security. Replacing Kourpias as Alliance President is Barbara J. Easterling, former Secretary-Treasurer of the Communications Workers of America.

Alliance For Retired American 2009 National Legislative Conference

The 2009 Alliance for Retired Americans Legislative Conference is being held from June 15 through June 18 at the Hilton in Washington, DC.

The theme of the conference is "Getting the Change We've Fought For". After working tirelessly to get President

Barack Obama elected in November, participants will get to hear from leading members of the Obama administration. Attendees will also be able to organize grassroots activities and lobby on Capitol Hill as we work to improve Medicare and strengthen retirement security.

To register, call 1-888-373-6497, go to www.unionvoice.org/retirees/events/conf_2009/details.tcl or e-mail Joni Jones at jjones@retiredamericans.org. The Alliance asks that you register by June 8 at 11:59 pm.

Stimulus Payments for Many Seniors

What You Need to Know About the \$250 Stimulus Payment:

President Obama recently signed into law an economic stimulus plan that includes a one-time \$250 payment for many seniors. Special thanks to Alliance members who contacted their elected officials in support of this bill.

Who is Eligible?

Individuals who currently receive Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Railroad Retirement or Veterans' benefits.

When Will I Get It?

Payments will be mailed out in late May. Social Security asks that you wait until June 4 to contact them if you did not receive it.

How Do I Get It?

You do not have to do anything. If you currently receive benefits through the mail, look for it that way. If you have direct deposit, it will come that way.

Beware of Scams!

Watch out for anyone saying you need to provide your Social Security number or other personal information in order to get your payment.

Questions?

Contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or www.socialsecurity.gov.

IAM Mourns Bob Kalaski



Robert J. Kalaski, former IAM Communications Director and retiree activist, passed away last November after a courageous battle with cancer. Kalaski, 67, came to IAM Headquarters in 1966 as an Associate Editor and would go on to serve as the head of the

Communications Department from 1977 through 2001. He also served as president of the International Labor Communications Association and vice president of the International Labor Press Association. Upon his retirement in 2001, Kalaski played a pivotal role in moving the IAM Retirees Department forward.

Book Prepares Women for Retirement



For the large number of women worried about their retirement security, there is help. *What Women Need to Know About Retirement*, a joint project of the Heinz Family Philanthropies and The

Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement, offers a wealth of information for women planning for retirement.

Two-thirds of working women earn less than \$30,000 a year, according to the book, with nearly half of all women working in low-paying jobs that do not offer retirement plans. The book covers sources of retirement income for women, forging a lifetime money plan, understanding stocks, bonds and investing in financial markets and social security.

The informational booklet contains a chapter co-written by IAMAW Community Services and Retirees Director Maria Cordone.

"Too many women are not prepared for retirement," said Cordone. "This book will equip women with the knowledge they need to save wisely and prepare for the unexpected."

The entire e-booklet is at <http://www.heinzfamily.org/programs/ebooklp.html>, or you can request a hard copy by contacting the IAMAW Community Services/Retirees Department at (301) 967-3433.

2010 Retiree Conference Planning Underway



During our meeting in Las Vegas, IAM retirees discuss our next conference to be held in 2010. Left to right: Diane Fleming; Mike Aupperle; Bud Sugg; Ron McGaha; Roger Hare; Don Morrow.

We are pleased to announce the Rio Las Vegas will host the 5th International Retirees Conference August 16 -18, 2010. Room rates will be \$59/night + taxes. During our meetings in Connecticut and Nevada, we took every consideration into account when making our decision.

At our last Retirees conference, we had more than 1,200 attendees. And during our three days together we had a great deal of success. When we come together next year I expect to have even more retirees with us and I expect we will be even more productive.

We will provide you with more details as planning continues.

Obama Administration Announces Medicare Advantage Cuts

The Obama administration recently made good on its promise to begin eliminating wasteful spending, announcing cuts to 2010 payments for private Medicare plans. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services said payments to

private insurance companies administering Medicare Advantage plans would be cut by as much as 4 percent next year. Private Medicare plans cost up to 15 percent more than regular Medicare benefits, according to some estimates. While retiree

groups such as the Alliance for Retired Americans have applauded the move, it has angered private insurance companies, who have collected millions of dollars thanks to former President George W. Bush's Medicare Advantage program.

**International Association of
Machinists and Aerospace
Workers**
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro MD 20772

**Community Services/
Retirees Department**

Director
Maria C. Cordone

Phone: 301-967-3433

Fax: 301-967-3427

Email:
mcordone@iamaw.org

We are on the web:
www.goiam.org

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Retirees](#)

Prescription Drug Discount Program

A special program has been developed in alliance with the Pequot Pharmaceutical Network (PRxN) through a Mail Service Prescription Drug Discount Program exclusively for IAM&AW members and their families. You and your family may be able to realize significant savings. Both brand name and generic products, as well as diabetic supplies, are available. There is no fee to join and no monthly premium or fee.

Call PRxN at 1-800-342-5779 for any questions about the program, cost of specific medications, or to enroll over the phone by giving your name, address, phone number and date of birth. Please be assured that PRxN is HIPAA compliant and protects your privacy.

Brochures are available from the IAM&AW Community Services Department (301) 967-3433.

DO YOU HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR NEED TO REMOVE A NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST?

Call our toll-free 800 number (voice mail): 1-800-961-4745

If the mailing label has a number above the name, include that number in your message.

For Change of Address:

- Spell your name
- State your old address
- State your new address and your phone number.

To remove someone from the mailing list:

- Spell the person's name
- State the address where the mailing was sent
- State reason for removal
- Please leave your name and phone number