

# News Bytes



## Bridge Named for USW Founder Philip Murray

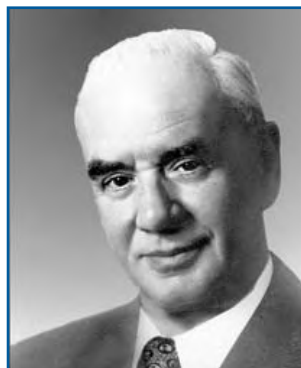
Pittsburgh's 10th Street Bridge is being renamed for Philip Murray, the USW's founder and first president.

The name-change legislation was sponsored by District 10 Director John DeFazio, a member of the Allegheny County Council. A dedication is expected to take place on Labor Day.

Murray joins other notable Pittsburgh figures with bridges named after them including Pittsburgh Pirate Roberto Clemente, artist Andy Warhol and environmentalist Rachel Carson.

Murray, originally a coal miner who emigrated from Scotland in 1902, was named the first chairman of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) when it was formed in 1936.

In 1942, SWOC disbanded to become the United Steelworkers of America and Murray was elected its first president. He died of a heart attack in 1952.



## Gerard Honored, Wins Eugene Debs Award

International President Leo W. Gerard was honored by the Democratic Socialists of America at the Eugene V. Debs-Norman Thomas-Michael Harrington Annual Dinner in Chicago.

Gerard was recognized in May at the 49th annual awards presentation by the largest organization of the democratic left in America. He was chosen because "it's always a bad day for the employer if they pick a fight with the Steelworkers."

The organization also cited the USW's "impressive work in building alliances within the labor movement internationally, and with environmentalists and other progressives in the United States."

## Clean the Planet and Raise Living Standards

If we are to address the global climate crisis, it is essential that governments more stringently regulate both carbon emissions and international trade.

"Labor, environmental and human rights standards are at the core of our vision for making the global economy work for workers," International President Leo W. Gerard told the North American Labor Conference on Climate Crisis. "That should become the new gold standard for how nations trade with each other."

The struggle for sustainability is not just about cleaning up the planet, Gerard said. "It's about engaging in raising standards of living over the long term — creating a world that has the capacity to solve the divisions of wealth and poverty that are the drivers of international conflict."

## USW, CWA Protest Verizon

Union supporters from across the nation gathered at USW headquarters in May to protest Verizon Communications and to show support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

More than 600 people rallied at the USW building in Pittsburgh as another 1,200 protested Verizon at its annual shareholders' meeting held nearby.

"We believe if workers want a union, they should have it. Period. End of story," USW Secretary-Treasurer James D. English told the crowd.

Employees of Verizon face intimidation and harassment during organizing efforts. The Employee Free Choice Act, which passed the U.S. House on March 1, would rein in such employer abuse. The bill is pending in the Senate.



Photo by Jim Coleman

## USW in Alliance with California Pharmacists

The USW has formed a strategic alliance with the Independent Pharmacists' Association, a group representing 265 pharmacists in Northern California.

This alliance is similar to one that was completed last May between the USW and the National Pharmacists' Association representing 1,200 Walgreen's pharmacists in Chicago, now known as NPha-USW Local 1969.

Mark Raus, secretary-treasurer of IPA, said he believes the alliance will help improve work life for his members, employees of Raley's Drug Stores.

The 850,000-member USW is championing personal and patient safety for the 2,600 pharmacists and 36,000 health care workers that it represents.

The union is pushing for proper rest breaks and enough time for pharmacists to fill prescriptions without errors. It is also demanding pharmaceutical giants provide personal protection for pharmacists, particularly those who work at night in dangerous neighborhoods.

## American Chamber in China Opposes Workers' Rights

The USW is urging select members of the American Chamber of Commerce in China to distance themselves from the Chamber's attempt to undermine a proposed law that would bolster some fundamental rights of Chinese workers.

Letters from the union note that while the Chinese Draft Labor Contract Law does not go far enough in protecting the rights of Chinese workers, it would be a significant improvement over current law.

Alcoa responded positively and committed to express its concerns to the Chamber and seek out like-minded companies to work jointly on this issue.

"We are attempting to peel away as much support as possible for AmCham's immoral campaign to undermine Chinese workers' rights, and Alcoa's response to our letter was a step in the right direction," said International President Leo W. Gerard. "Now it's up to Alcoa to follow through on its commitments."

## NAACP Honors USW's Maxine Carter

The NAACP will honor USW Civil Rights Director Maxine Carter with its "Keeper of the Flame Award" during its 98th convention this July in Detroit.

The award, one of the highest honors given by the NAACP, will be presented to Carter on July 11 during a labor luncheon at the COBO Hall Convention Center.

The award is given annually to a trade union activist who has made contributions toward Civil and Human Rights in the spirit of A. Phillip Randolph, a black labor movement leader and founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The convention will be held July 7-12.



Photo by Scott Marshall



Photo by April Dreek

## Workers Protest at DuPont Meeting

Over 100 USW members joined other union, environmental and community activists in a rally outside DuPont's annual shareholders meeting April 25. The protestors demanded the company evaluate phasing out the use of PFOA, a toxic chemical. The company is also forcing current retirees to pay more for their health care while refusing to provide them with pension increases.

## Entrekin Retires

Former District 9 Director Connie Entrekin, a special assistant to International President Leo W. Gerard, announced at the International Executive Board meeting on June 1 that he is retiring effective July 1.

Entrekin began his career as President of Local 4382 representing Gulf States Steel in Gadsden, Ala. He was appointed to the USW staff in 1977 and served as Legislative and PAC Director for former USW District 36 prior to being appointed Assistant to the Director of District 9 in 1996.

In April 2003, after the retirement of Homer Wilson, Entrekin was appointed Director of District 9 by a unanimous vote of the Executive Board and then in 2005 he was re-elected by District 9 members. He was appointed a special assistant to the president last October.



## Local, International Solidarity Key to National Wire Fabric Settlement

Twenty-two months after being forced out on strike, Local 1671 members from National Wire Fabric in Star City, Ark., returned to work May 14, thanks to support received from Dutch, Belgium and German unions and their own solidarity.

None of the 56 members crossed the picket line. "It's because of their solidarity actions locally, the support of people nationally and the activism of the Europeans that the company decided these guys would go back together as a union," said District 13 Director J.M. "Mickey" Breaux. "It let (NWF) know it wasn't just a small group of people in Star City, Ark., who were upset with their working conditions."