

Local 400 UNION LEADER

Occupy Giant & Safeway!

With Giant & Safeway Profitable,
Member Activism Defines Bargaining



At Stake: The American Dream



The general election is eight months away, but already one thing is clear: at stake is nothing less than the survival of the

American Dream—the idea that through hard work, anyone can raise his or her economic standing.

President Obama put the choice before our nation in stark but accurate relief in his State of the Union Address, saying, “We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well, while a growing number of Americans barely get by. Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.”

In other words, will the game continue to be rigged for the top 1 percent or will the 99 percent have the same opportunity to succeed?

That’s what President Obama’s most likely opponent at this writing—former Mass. Gov. Mitt Romney (R)—doesn’t get.

Romney was born rich, he’s worth between a quarter and half a billion dollars, he makes more money each day—nearly \$60,000—than most Americans earn in a year, and he pays taxes at a lower rate—13.9 percent—than most middle class taxpayers.

He thinks his critics are jealous. But no one has a problem with success if you earned it fairly; the problem is if you played with a stacked deck.

That, in a nutshell, was Romney’s world of private equity. As head of Bain Capital, he bought companies, chopped them up, extracted their assets, and sold off what was left. He made millions while many workers lost their jobs. Romney even made money on the 22 percent of Bain acquisitions that went bankrupt. He didn’t get rich making things or even selling things; he did it by playing financial games where the result was, “heads I win, tails you lose.”

Similarly, look at his low tax rate, the result of a gaping loophole rammed through Congress by high paid lobby-

ists—some of them representing Bain—that taxes most of his income at the capital gains rate of 15 percent, rather than the 35 percent he should have owed.

But in my view, the most damning thing about Romney is that he’d make inequality even worse as president. His economic plan would cut his own taxes by another 40 percent, while raising taxes for millions of Americans and slashing programs that working families and the poor need to survive.

That sounds like the policies of the last president of, by and for the 1 percent—George W. Bush—only on steroids. Why would anyone want to go back to those days?

Under President Obama’s leadership, we avoided a second Great Depression, the economy is moving, the private sector is creating jobs, we’re investing in our future, all Americans will soon have access to health coverage, and workers’ rights are being enforced again. More importantly, he’s running on an agenda that will restore equal opportunity and start to spearhead the upward mobility that once characterized our great nation. The choice before us couldn’t be more clear.

— Thomas P. McNutt, *President International Vice President*

*Will the
game continue
to be rigged
for the top
1 percent?*

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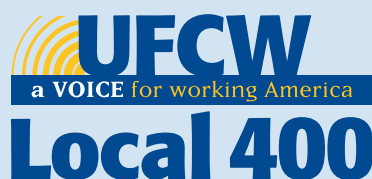
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Obama Delivers for Workers; Romney for the 1 Percent

A series of recent Obama Administration actions have helped American workers protect their rights and raise their economic standing, while attacks by likely Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney further expose his allegiance to big business and his fellow 1 percenters.

First, in late December, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) approved a final rule to modernize and democratize the union election process by preventing unnecessary delays and frivolous litigation.

Then, right at the start of the New Year, President Obama made three recess appointments to the NLRB, averting what would have been a disaster for workers because the Board would have been without a quorum and unable to enforce labor laws and regulations. Senate Republicans had refused to approve the president's NLRB nominees precisely because they wanted the Board to stop functioning, enabling big business to run roughshod over workers and violate the law with impunity. President Obama wouldn't let them get away with it.

"President Obama has shown once again that he's on our side," said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. "He is standing up for the 99 percent. The rule issued by the NLRB is an important step toward achieving greater balance and fairness in the union representation process. At the same time, his recess appointments ensure that workers' rights will be protected and the law will be enforced."

Noting that the National Retail Federation filed a lawsuit to challenge the NLRB's union election rules, McNutt said, "The rule does nothing to prevent

management from making its wishes known—repeatedly—to its workers prior to a vote. That's why the retail federation's lawsuit is a dead giveaway about their true motivation. They don't want a democratic process; they want to continue to stack the deck in their favor. Perhaps that's because they know that with truly free and fair elections, they would lose most of the time. The result would be rising living standards for the 99 percent and that's the 1 percent's worst nightmare."

A prominent member of the 1 percent—former Mass. Gov. Mitt Romney (R)—made headlines in a recent debate when he called the Obama administration's appointees to the NLRB "labor stooges."

In response, McNutt commented, "It's awfully rich to have the tiresome charge of 'labor stooges' made by a politician who is perhaps the ultimate stooge for corporate America.

"After all, Mitt Romney was born wealthy to a father who ran American Motors Corporation," McNutt said. "Then, he grew up to become richer still as a corporate raider who swooped in, bought up companies, drove many into bankruptcy, downsized many more, and made millions of dollars whether his acquisitions succeeded or failed. So perhaps it's only natural that he wants the NLRB to serve as a rubber stamp for management. After all, his entire career has been about putting capital before labor, and putting the interests of

wealthy investors ahead of workers who serve as mere pawns in his restructuring games.

"That explains why Romney supports 'right-to-work-for-less' laws that result in lower pay for most workers and squeeze families out of the middle class," McNutt said, "and why his tax

plan gives 60 percent of its tax cuts to the top 1 percent, while raising taxes on millions of middle class families with children.

"Do we really want a president who's worth a quarter-billion dollars yet pays taxes at a lower rate than many Local 400 members, keeps some of his money in the Cayman Islands, and wants to cut his own

already-minimal taxes by 40 percent?" McNutt asked.

"In the world according to Mitt Romney, anyone who talks about economic inequality is guilty of 'envy,'" McNutt charged. "In the real world, no one begrudges the rich for their wealth; rather, all we want is a fair shot at creating opportunity for ourselves and raising our economic standing. It's corporate stooges like Romney whose policies deny the 99 percent our fair shot and keep the deck stacked so they remain on top no matter what.

"It couldn't be more clear in the current economic environment that America's workers need a fighter for them and a responsible leader in the White House. That man is President Obama," McNutt said.

"President Obama has shown once again that he's on our side."

— Local 400 President Tom McNutt

Local 400 Members “Occupy” Richmond, Charleston

Lead Fight to Ban Self-Checkout of Alcohol

Local 400 member activists have been descending on the state Capitols in Richmond, Va., and Charleston, W.Va., meeting with legislators and urging them to pass bills that would ban the use of self-scan devices for purchases of alcoholic beverages.

“Self-checkout in and of itself is a destructive move that takes away people’s jobs, destroys customer service, undermines the local economy, and uses free labor by customers to line the pockets of corporate shareholders,” said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. “Take that and add alcohol to the equation and you’ve got an explosively bad mix virtually guaranteeing that underage youth can get their hands on whatever they want whenever they want it.

“Perhaps it’s not surprising, then, that two of the most notoriously anti-worker retailers in the U.S., Walmart and Food Lion, are leading the opposition to a ban on self-scan for alcohol,” McNutt said. “Clearly, their desire for profits trumps any sense of social responsibility to prevent underage drinking and drunk driving.

“Members of the Virginia and West Virginia General Assemblies have a choice—they can stand with the likes of

Walmart and Food Lion, or they can stand with working families, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and police associations,” McNutt explained. “Our members are making this stark choice clear to legislators today—and come election day, we’ll be making it clear to the voters, too.

“I couldn’t be more proud of our members’ leadership in the campaign to pass this vital legislation in Virginia and West Virginia,” McNutt said. “They are showing how activism is the key to our members’ ability to protect their jobs, raise their economic standing, improve their lives, and build a better future.”

In addition to pushing for passage of SB 645, introduced by Senate Democratic Caucus Chairman Donald McEachin, Virginia members have also been playing a key role in opposing anti-worker legislation written by the corporate front group, the American Legislative Exchange Council (see page 6). Local 400 members helped defeat a bill that would have enshrined the commonwealth’s notorious “right-to-work-for-less” law in the constitution and lobbied against legislation restricting voting rights (see page 27).

In West Virginia, Local 400 members are leading the fight for House Bill 4603,



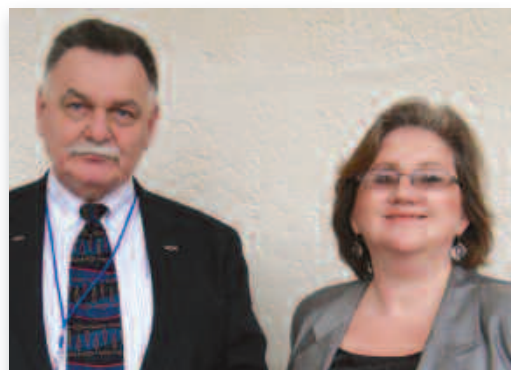
Local 400 members Dominic McGee (left) and Rebecca Lucas lobbied the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond.

introduced by Dels. Daniel Poling (D - Wood) and Mike Caputo (D - Marion), prohibiting the sale of beer and wine at self-scan registers. Members are also joining with the West Virginia AFL-CIO, the Communications Workers of America, and other unions to urge passage of legislation increasing the number of state troopers on the streets and taking other measures to create good jobs.

Last fall, the California legislature enacted a ban on self-scan of alcoholic beverages spearheaded by UFCW Local Unions in the state and opposed by non-union retailers. The new law should serve as a model for other states around the country.

However, some retailers’ greed is so great that they are trying to circumvent the law. The non-union chain Fresh & Easy—owned by the British supermarket conglomerate Tesco—has continued to sell alcohol at self-checkout stands, claiming that a red light would go off when a customer purchased beer or wine and that an employee would then come and check the customer’s ID. The

(Continued on page 20)



Local 400 members Sterling Ball (far left) and Melissa Carpenter lobbied the West Virginia legislature in Charleston, along with Gary Southall (right).



Anti-Worker Corporate Front Group Writes Legislation in Va., Across U.S.

Take a look in Richmond and in state capitals across America—especially those under the control of extremist Republicans. What you find is that virtually identical bills are passing in state after state. This is no accident. It's part of an orchestrated campaign by a secretive anti-worker big business front group known as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

Funded by Walmart, Koch Industries, ExxonMobil, GlaxoSmithKline, and many other giant corporations and business trade associations, ALEC brings together 300 corporate lobbyists and 2,000 legislators to write “model” state legislation further enriching business interests and undermining the economic standing and rights of working families.

Nowhere does ALEC exercise greater control over the legislative process than in Virginia. More than 100 current and former legislators have ties to ALEC, including House Speaker William Howell, Governor Bob McDonnell, and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli. According to a recent report by ProgressVA, a progressive advocacy organization, more than 50 ALEC-written or inspired bills have been introduced in the Virginia General Assembly, including at least three requested by McDonnell. Equally distressing, more than \$230,000 in Virginia taxpayer money has been spent sending legislators to ALEC meetings in places like Las Vegas, San Diego and Orlando, where they met with corporate lobbyists behind closed doors.

“ALEC is the dirty little secret of the Virginia General Assembly,” said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. “Whenever a Walmart or Koch Industries wants some-

thing done, they can get ALEC to write a bill, ship it off to Virginia, and find a legislator willing to put his or her name on it, introduce it, and push for its passage. Meanwhile, similar bills are introduced in Indiana, Wisconsin, Arizona and dozens of other states. Soon, before anyone else is aware, some of the biggest, most profitable businesses in America have padded their bottom lines at the expense of taxpayers and workers.

“Indeed, ALEC is one of the most insidious ways that the wealthiest 1 percent amass even more money and power while the 99 percent fall farther and farther behind,” McNutt said.

Among its findings, the ProgressVA Report revealed that ALEC legislation introduced in the General Assembly would:

- Undermine the rights of minority, lower-income, younger and elderly voters by requiring them to show photo identification in order to cast a ballot (see page 27).
- Ban Project Labor Agreements on public works projects, driving down wages, benefits, training and safety standards for construction workers.
- Attempt to sabotage the federal health care reform law by prohibiting the imposition of any penalties on state residents who fail to purchase health insurance—this formed the legal basis for Cuccinelli’s lawsuit against the federal government over the Affordable Care Act, a move that, if successful, would force more than 30 million Americans to remain uninsured.
- Reduce the asbestos liability for a single company—Crown Cork and Seal—a pet project of Howell.

- Benefit the corporation that co-chairs ALEC’s education committee by encouraging school districts to contract with private virtual-education companies.
- Benefit US Tobacco by lowering tax calculations on chewing tobacco.

“Special favors, crony capitalism, a rigged game—that’s the impact ALEC has in Richmond and elsewhere around the country,” McNutt said.

ALEC also has its fingerprints all over the spate of anti-worker legislation being passed in state legislatures around the country, such as bills repealing collective bargaining rights for public employees, right-to-work-for-less laws, bans on automatic dues collection, and prohibitions on the use of dues for political activity. In addition, the big business front group is behind state legislative efforts to slash taxes on the rich and corporations, promote privatization, and eviscerate health and safety regulations.

“Virginia voters have a right to know if their state delegates and senators have been bought and sold by ALEC and the corporate interests that fund it,” McNutt said. “Are our elected officials sponsoring legislation written by corporate lobbyists and falsely claiming to have authored it themselves? Are they using taxpayer dollars to travel on junkets where they hobnob in luxury with the Walmarts of the world?”

“In addition to fighting this blight on our democracy and pressuring legislators to stand up for working people rather than corporate profits, it’s vitally important that we expose this abuse of our legislative system in Virginia and everywhere else ALEC’s tentacles reach,” McNutt said.

Setting the Record Straight On the Maryland Dream Act

Guest Column by the Hon. Kumar Barve, Majority Leader, Maryland House of Delegates

Currently, there are approximately 11 million undocumented immigrants in America and they are not going anywhere. It is estimated that undocumented immigrants in Maryland paid \$275 million in state and local taxes last year. Undocumented immigrants will play a large role in how Maryland moves forward and I think it is important that we realize this. That is why I was proud to be a co-sponsor of legislation that gives children who were brought to the United States at a young age the opportunity to achieve the dream of a college education.



Commonly known as the DREAM Act, the legislation that the Maryland General Assembly passed in 2011 exempts individuals who attended and graduated from Maryland high schools from paying out-of-state tuition rates at the public institutions of higher education in Maryland. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of misinformation spread about the DREAM Act and what it does. As this bill will be up for referendum in November 2012, it is important to explain what is and is not true about this bill.

First off, it is absolutely false that this bill provides scholarship money to students. No check will be cut to any students. The DREAM Act requires students or their guardians to file tax forms for three years prior to attending community college as well as requiring them to go to a community college for two years, during which time they also pay taxes.

Only after those two years at a community college can these students apply for in-state tuition rates at the University System of Maryland. When they apply to the University System of Maryland, they will only be allowed to compete for slots with out-of-state students, not with in-state students. Furthermore, male students will have to register with the Selective Service.

Let's understand, this bill affects students who were brought here by their parents—they didn't make the decision to come here. They grew up here in Maryland and don't know any other country. In many cases, they aren't even fluent in the language of their home country. They graduated from our high schools and simply want to continue learning.

This bill is a strictly tailored measure to assist these students. Those people opposed to the DREAM Act will tell you it will cost the state \$2 billion a year, but that is just not correct. This bill will help more students gain a college education.

We know education leads to safer, healthier and more prosperous communities and this bill helps solidify that foundation. Without this bill, we would be perpetuating a two-class system where these kids would not be given the opportunities to succeed and be contributing members of society.

But understanding the facts behind the DREAM Act is not enough. This law has to be seen within the context of American cultural and economic history. America, of course, is a country of immigrants, many of whom were not welcomed by the existing inhabitants. A familiar pattern occurred in which these new Americans often occupied the lower ranks of the economy performing the jobs that others avoided. With each generation, however, they and their children worked up the ladder of American success. Key to that upward mobility was, and still is, education. To cut off this generation from education would be to create, for the first time since the Civil War, a permanent underclass. We cannot permit this to happen in our country.

As we get closer to November, it is important that we share all the benefits of the DREAM Act. When similar legislation was considered by the United States Congress, it was projected that it would reduce deficits by \$1.4 billion during the 2011-2020 period while increasing government revenues by \$2.3 billion over that same time period. Ensuring the passage of the DREAM Act in November 2012 is not only a moral right, it also makes strong fiscal sense.

UFCW & Kroger Reach Win-Win Pension Plan Agreement

Should Be Model for Giant/Safeway Bargaining

Local 400, along with 13 other UFCW Local Unions, and Kroger recently reached a landmark agreement to improve and secure pension funds for more than 170,000 retired and active UFCW members.

Ratified unanimously by Local 400 members working at Kroger in the Roanoke, Va., area, the agreement merges four pension plans, protects the current benefits of vested employees, enhances the benefits of new hires, ensures full funding by Kroger, and provides for 10 years of fiscal stability.

Local 400 President Tom McNutt praised this agreement and said it should serve as a model for bargaining with Giant and Safeway.

"At a time when many pension funds are severely underfunded due to the lost economic decade of the 2000s, and when the very existence of defined benefit retirement plans is under threat, the UFCW and Kroger have shown how to restore these plans to solvency while fully protecting the retirement security of all beneficiaries," he said.

"With pension plan funding a major issue in our bargaining with Giant and Safeway, I urge management to consider the approach pioneered by the UFCW and Kroger in looking at how to forge a win-win solution," McNutt said.

Among its provisions, the UFCW-Kroger agreement includes automatic benefit increases as pay increases with benefits proportionately pegged to salary levels, and it will provide a more secure and stable pension fund in an unstable financial environment. The combined

plan also includes a commitment by Kroger to pay off all of the unfunded liability in the new fund covering the 14 UFCW local unions involved.

It is especially noteworthy that Kroger made a contribution of approximately \$650 million to the new fund in January—roughly six times the amount required under the agreement. The company did so because the cost of borrowing is at historic lows.

Wall Street provided its own testimony to the wisdom of Kroger's farsighted approach, with both Standard & Poor's and Fitch's assigning BBB ratings to the company's issue of 2.2 percent bonds to finance the contribution. Fitch's rating "reflects Kroger's industry-leading sales growth and market share gain, strong cash flow and relatively steady credit metrics," *Supermarket News* reported, while S&P similarly noted expectations of Kroger's "consistent sales growth."

"We applaud Kroger's decision to make up the bulk of the new plan's funding gap in one bold move," McNutt said. "Kroger is coming out ahead financially

and the company is becoming much more attractive to investors, while our members and retirees are gaining greater peace of mind, knowing their pension will be there for them when they need it."

By contrast, Moody's downgraded Safeway from Baa2 to Baa3 in January, just weeks after Fitch's downgraded Safeway's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating from BBB to BBB-.

"The lesson for Safeway is if it wants to increase its appeal to investors and lower its borrowing costs, it should look to our agreement with Kroger to ensure full funding of its pension obligations," McNutt said.

He noted that the company still has

strong fundamentals. Moody's itself commented on Safeway's "good cash flow, adequate liquidity and its market position as the second largest supermarket chain in North America," as well as "positive management initiatives geared toward market differentiation through customer loyalty, health and wellness programs and cost control."

"Giant and Safeway are highly profitable and in great shape," McNutt explained, "and by reaching a strong collective bargaining agreement with us that addresses their obligations to our members' retirement security, they'll be in even better shape for the future."

"The UFCW and Kroger have shown how to restore pension plans to solvency while fully protecting members' retirement security."

— Local 400 President
Tom McNutt

Local 400 ACTS!

Members Making a Difference

Local 400's greatest strength lies with our 40,000 members—hard-working men and women of great talent, intelligence and dedication who are making a difference on the job and in our communities. Here are four members who stand out because of their activism, their special skills, and the unique stories they have to tell. Like so many of their brothers and sisters, they are making our world a better place.

Scott Bryant **Craftsman Extraordinaire**

Walk into Kroger #401 in Roanoke, Va., and chances are you'll find Scott Bryant behind the seafood or meat counter proudly serving his customers. But what you may not know is that Scott is also a master of the craft of woodturning.

A Local 400 member for the past 15 years, he first became interested in woodturning in 1997 when his grandfather gave him a lathe. Scott taught himself the craft and since then, he has

Chef Jeff Henderson (right) proudly displays his Scott Bryant-made pen at a Local 400 Stewards Seminar, along with Local 400 President Tom McNutt (center) and UFCW Region 2 Director Al Vincent.



honed it to the point where his pens, Christmas ornaments, vases, bowls, wine stoppers, lidded boxes, urns and other hand-made pieces of art are in high demand.

In fact, Local 400 purchased Scott's pens as gifts for guest speakers at the January 5th Giant and Safeway steward seminar, where one was given to the world-renowned Chef Jeff Henderson.

Scott typically works on his lathe for four or five hours on his days off and two to three hours after he gets off work at Kroger, where he serves as lead seafood clerk and meat cutter.

Scott's wood shop is a place of serenity where he can unleash his creativity. Flipping on the radio to his favorite rock 'n roll station, he places the wood on the lathe and begins turning out his next masterpiece.

"The more you do it, the better you get," he said. "What I like most about it is you use your imagination, combining it with hand-eye coordination. There are no 'cannots.' The sky's the limit to what you can do."

The first wood piece Scott made was a little mahogany bowl, which took several hours—and most importantly, didn't involve any injuries.

"People don't realize how dangerous wood turning can be," he said. "When a piece of wood turns at 2,600 RPMs, you're going to get some nicks. One time, I was sanding a bowl that had a thin rim and my hand slipped cutting my thumb pretty deep."

Scott's craft expanded dramatically five years
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Local 400 ACTS

Continued from page 9

ago when a wood supply store near his home opened, offering rare woods from all over the world. He is helping out at the wood supply store by making the displays for the new pen kits that will soon stock the shelves. Most notably, Scott will participate for the second time in the Memorial Day Woodturning for the Troops event where wood turners gather at the shop to create pens that will be sent directly to veterans of the Iraq War.

Scott is proud to be a Local 400 member. "I joined because everyone said what a great union we have and recommended I become a member," he said. "I took their advice and I'm glad I did."

Depending on what he makes, Scott gives some of his works of art as gifts to friends and family, while selling others. Often,



Photo by Karlyn Williams.

his Kroger customers purchase his custom-made products as unique gifts for holidays and graduations. He's especially pleased to have Local 400 as a customer, too.

"This is what gets me outside of Virginia and lets people know who I am and what I can do," he said.

Banks Stamps

Building Bridges of Respect

Danville, Va., has undergone dramatic and often wrenching changes over the past 50 years and Banks Stamps has experienced them all. Originally a worker at Dan River Mills, the late textile manufacturer that was once the city's largest employer, he joined DanChem Technologies in 1975 and has worked there—as a proud Local 400 member—ever since.

After going through the bitter 10-month-long strike in 2004, Banks became a steward and made it his mission to build new bridges of respect between management and his Local 400 brothers and sisters.

"We just wanted our fair share of what the company was capable of doing," Banks recalled. "We felt like the company didn't respect us. But we earned that respect because everyone stuck together. We have mechanics, carpenters and a lot of other talented people here and everyone helped one another out throughout the 10 months.

"I became a steward after the strike ended because I wanted to help my brothers and sisters," he said. "As lead person in shipping, I had a good idea about how the departments were run and what management was thinking. I felt like I could bridge the gap between hourly and salaried workers.

"My thought was that our union and the company can work together to get results," Banks explained. "They have to

make money and we have to make money. It shouldn't be 'us and them'—it should be 'we.'"

In his eight years as steward, Banks has been true to his word. By all accounts, communication between supervisors and Local 400 members has improved and the labor-management relationship is strong. "Both sides have to know the contract and understand it," he said. "When we have different interpretations, we sit down together and hash it out. We still have our disagreements—if the company doesn't do what it agreed to do, it's going to hear from me! But each side respects the other and we make every effort to resolve our issues."

Evidence of the improved relationship can be seen in a new worker-run safety program now getting off the ground. "It's in the early stages," he said, "but so far it's been a big success because the guys are excited about taking control of our safety and health."

Banks and his fellow stewards work hard to overcome the challenges posed by Virginia's "right-to-work-for-less" law, achieving very high membership rates. "I think actions speak louder than words," he said. "Members see how our union works for them and they join of their own initiative. Today, some shifts have 100 percent membership."

Banks, who has two children with his wife of more than three decades, Rebekah, serves on the committee that will tackle the next round of bargaining, which takes place at the end of this year. "We're working to make sure we get our fair share and that we're treated fairly," he said. "That's what everyone wants—and what every worker should have a right to expect."

Lester Price

Taking Nothing for Granted

Lester Price has more than 25 years experience as a Local 400 member and Giant employee, but even today, he never takes his union representation for granted.

Before joining Giant, Lester worked for a non-union employer. "No one had a voice there," he recalled. "One morning, someone came up on the dock and fired 12 people just like that." Outraged, he contacted former Local 400 Executive Assistant to the President Don Cash and started an organizing campaign. "Ever since then, I decided I would be the voice for a lot of people," Lester said.

Today, having served as a steward for more than seven years, Lester tells his co-workers and fellow Local 400 members, "Unless you've worked for a non-union company, you don't know what you've got here. You've got your hands on a gold mine being a union member."

Still, Lester wants being a Local 400 member to get even better, which is why he serves on the advisory committee in the current bargaining with Giant and Safeway, and participates in the negotiations. "I'd like to see a good contract," he said. "With the economy in the shape it's in, people need jobs



and we need wages that catch up with the cost of living. We have got to get the American people back working again."

A meat cutter at Giant #147, Lester said, "I enjoy helping the customers, seeing a smile on their faces. That's what management needs to understand. None of them deal with the customers personally. When the customers think of Giant, they look to us; they don't see the owners. That's why management needs us and why they ought

to do right by us in bargaining."

Lester is talking with his co-workers, keeping them informed about the status of bargaining and urging them to be very careful with their personal finances over the next few months. "We're hoping for smooth sailing, but you never know what might happen," he said. "Members should prepare now and be ready for anything."

Lester lives in Clinton, Md., with his wife of more than 30 years, Carol. They have two sons and three granddaughters, and he is looking forward to retirement. "I appreciate everything our union does," he said. "It's thanks to Local 400 that I'll be able to retire and that we get medicine, health care, glasses and so many other benefits. The more workers who join good strong unions like ours, the more we'll get this country back to where it needs to be."

Sherwood Wile

A World of Experience

Sherwood Wile brings to his work as a Local 400 steward and deli clerk at Kroger #534 in Yorktown, Va., a literal world of experience. An educator who still works as a substitute teacher in York County public schools, he has taught in Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Mexico and Ecuador, as well as in West Virginia, Washington State and New York, where he was a member of the National Education Association. He has also been a member of the Teamsters when he worked as a warehouseman, been a truck and school bus driver, and worked in both non-union and unionized hospitals.

Sherwood's experience living overseas helps him as a steward. "Talk about being in the minority," he said, "I was in the minority for many years. I also know what it's like to not be familiar with the culture or fluent in the native language. So this helps me bridge the gap with our own members who came here from other countries and help them feel comfortable. Plus, my Spanish comes

in handy." Among his fellow members he helps are people born in the Philippines, Mexico, Pakistan, Spain, India and the Caribbean.

"Diversity is a great strength of both Kroger and Local 400," he noted.

A resident of Newport News, Sherwood has worked at Kroger for 12 years and served as a steward for seven years. His past membership in other unions and his own experience needing Local 400 assistance to resolve a problem he faced helped drive his activism and prepared him well for being a steward.

"We're here so our co-workers can come and talk to us about anything and not feel threatened," Sherwood said. "I can explain things or if I don't know, I check it out and get back to them."

"We support our members when they have issues with management and help solve their problems," he explained. "We make sure their rights are protected and upheld. We also have to know the contract and make sure management lives up to its terms. Sometimes supervisors aren't that familiar with it and we wind up having to remind them what their obligations are."

Sherwood has always been proud of his union membership and finds it particularly valuable in the retail food industry.

(Continued on page 17)

Local 400 Members Make Giant & Safeway Profitable

The many sacrifices and hard work of Local 400 members have helped Ahold/Giant and Safeway become highly profitable, growing companies that dominate the Washington, DC, area grocery market.

“Our members are the profit engine for Ahold globally and Safeway nationally,” said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. “In years past, management promised us that if we sacrifice to help their companies grow, we’d reap the rewards over the long run. We’ve delivered on our part of the bargain. Now it’s time for management to do the same.”

Ahold Bolstered by Giant-Landover

Giant-Landover is part of the Royal Ahold global empire, but without it, the company would not be performing nearly as well. Ahold’s net sales in 2011 were \$39.1 billion—a 2.5 percent increase over 2010. In the fourth quarter, net sales grew 4.5 percent over the same period one year earlier.

However, within the United States, Ahold’s net sales in 2011 totaled \$25.1 billion, a 6.6 percent increase over the previous year. Identical-store sales and comparable-store sales both rose by approximately 5 percent. So Ahold’s U.S. operations—primarily Giant-Landover and Stop & Shop in New England, whose workers are represented by other UFCW Locals—accounted for nearly 65 percent of the multinational corporation’s revenue.

While Ahold’s 2011 sales increased by a smaller amount—4.2 percent—in its home country of the Netherlands, they decreased elsewhere in Europe, making Giant-Landover and Stop & Shop the best performing parts of the company.

Notably, Giant holds the number one

position in the Washington, DC, area, where it has a 36 percent share of the grocery market. In addition, Giant has grown each of the last 15 quarters in its core markets.

“Members working at Giant should understand that when store managers tell them that sales are down across the country, our research shows this isn’t true,” McNutt said. “Even corporate headquarters in Amsterdam is singing a different tune.” In Ahold’s own words in its fourth quarter trading report, “We are pleased to have delivered another solid performance over the quarter, growing sales and market share in the United States and the Netherlands. We continue to be well positioned in challenging market conditions ...”

Another sign of Ahold/Giant’s strong performance is its recent decision to purchase three Baltimore-area Fresh & Green’s stores.

Safeway a Cash Machine

Safeway is also highly profitable and, like most big corporations, it is recovering much faster from the recession than working families. In its most recent report, the company exceeded Wall Street forecasts, reporting earnings-per-share of \$0.38, up 15 percent from the third quarter of 2010, and net profits of \$130.2 million (up 6 percent) on revenue of \$10.1 billion (up 7.1 percent).

Moreover, the company is sitting on \$180.5 billion in cash and cash equivalents—money that is earning virtually

nothing today, but could be used to better compensate the employees whose hard work generated that cash.

Safeway ranks number two in the Washington, DC, region, with 22 percent of the grocery market. *Fortune* Magazine ranks Safeway as the 60th largest company in the U.S.

CEOs Rake in the Money

As is too often the case in recent years, CEO compensation at these companies continues to reach stratospheric levels while the workers who make that pay possible struggle to make ends meet.

Safeway Chairman and CEO Steve Burd raked in nearly \$11 million in 2010—about 529 times what the average Safeway or Giant worker makes. He is now the second-highest-paid CEO in the grocery industry. As if that wasn’t enough, Burd took home another \$240,000—equal to the annual income of more than 11 Giant and Safeway workers—for serving on the board of directors of Kohl’s Corporation.

Reflecting the slightly lower levels of inequality common in Europe, Ahold CEO Dick Boer received more than \$2.7 million in 2010, while outgoing Chief Financial Officer Kimberly Ross was paid more than \$2.9 million.

“These two CEOs make thousands of dollars an hour,” McNutt said. “I have no beef with executives being well-compensated for producing good results, but they have no business trying to lower our members’ economic standing at the same time. That’s greed and hypocrisy all rolled into one and we will not tolerate it. Instead, these companies should start rewarding all employees fairly for all they do to make money for shareholders.”

BARGAINING IS NOT A Spectator Sport

With heated negotiations taking place between Local 400 and Giant and Safeway, members should understand that what will make the greatest difference in securing a good contract is not what takes place across the bargaining table, but **what you do** in your stores and in your community. It's **member activism** that matters the most.

Indeed, there is much that you can do today to have a positive impact on the bargaining and prepare yourself for whatever might occur as we fight to gain an agreement that empowers you to improve your life and your future. We encourage you to:

- **Join the Local 400 Activist Contract Team (ACT!).** More than 3,000 members have signed up for ACT! in more than 200 stores so far, volunteering to help spread our story and convince Safeway and Giant to share the fruits of our labors.



The more members who join ACT!, the more powerful our voice will be. Talk with your shop steward or call your representative to sign up.

- **Volunteer for store and community actions.** Over the next month and beyond, Local 400 members will organize various activities that might include handbilling, informational pickets, door-to-door canvassing, rallies and media events. By saying yes! and participating in these activities, you'll let Giant and Safeway management know we're mobilized, united and ready to do whatever it takes to improve our economic standing. Your shop steward will let you know about what we're doing and ask for your help.

- Visit <http://occupygiantandsafeway.org> to keep informed about all the latest bargaining developments—and while you're there, sign up to receive our **INSIDE Occupy Giant and Safeway** email newsletter.

visit [http://](http://occupygiantandsafeway.org)
Occupy
GIANT AND
SAFEWAY.ORG

- Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Occupy-GiantandSafeway daily, to share news and express your views.
- Sign up for our Twitter feed: [@Local400ACT](https://twitter.com/Local400ACT).

facebook

twitter

- Talk with your customers and your neighbors about how our sacrifices made Giant and Safeway competitive and profitable, and now all we're asking for is our fair share of the prosperity our hard work generates. Tell them all we want is a contract that creates a ladder to the middle class and ensures our health and retirement security, and ask them to support our cause by telling the store manager how they feel. In addition, if you know of a community leader or organization interested in supporting our efforts, please call the Local 400 Community Growth Strategies Department at (301) 459-3400, or 1-800-638-0800.

- **Prepare for a possible work stoppage.** No one wants a strike or a lockout. But you should be prepared in case that becomes the only option in our fight for a good contract. That means doing what you can now to get your credit cards cur-

rent, putting any extra money you can into savings, discussing what could happen with your family, and developing a survival plan in case you have to go without a paycheck for an extended period of time. Hopefully, none of this will be necessary and if it is, there will be help available from Local 400's strike fund and the AFL-CIO's Community Services Agency. But we must be ready for anything.



Members ACT! on Gian

Pledge to Make Employers "Share the Fruits of Our Labors"

.....

Launch occupygiantandsafeway.org Website

Demanding that Giant and Safeway "share the fruits of our labors," Local 400 members are joining the Activist Contract Team (ACT!) in droves as they wage the most aggressive contract campaign in Local 400 history to produce a collective bargaining agreement that improves their economic standing and strengthens their health and retirement security.

Bargaining, which started on January 11, 2012, affects 17,000 Local 400 members in the Washington, DC, area, as well as members of Local 27 in the Baltimore area. The current contract expires on March 31, 2012.

With Giant and Safeway both enjoying strong profits and the top two positions in the region's grocery market (see the article on page 12), Local 400 members are ready to do whatever it takes to gain a new agreement that reflects their indispensable role in the companies' success.

A Pivotal Moment

Calling this "a pivotal moment for each and every one of us," Local 400 President Tom McNutt told a January stewards meeting that, "our hard work over the past 30 years has built Giant and Safeway into the industry leaders in the Mid-Atlantic. Throughout these three

Local 400 President Tom McNutt discusses bargaining with Giant and Safeway stewards.



decades, we sacrificed at the bargaining table to make them competitive—and we succeeded.

"They have the ability to pay," McNutt said. "We don't have the ability to make concessions. Our families are suffering. Theirs aren't. We're working harder than ever and they're making the Sheriff of Nottingham look like a Saint. So we will work 24/7 to improve our contract—to make sure they share the fruits of our

labor—or they may find their fruit rotting and unsold. That's not a threat. It's a statement of fact.

"At the same time, we're going to emphasize with equal fervor our intent to find win-win solutions—to create the double bottom-line," McNutt explained. "Because at the end of the day, we're all in the same boat. We want Giant and Safeway to keep growing and thriving—and they should want to maintain the most productive, value-adding workforce in the retail food industry."

Battle for the 99 Percent

Throughout the daylong meeting, speakers and stewards emphasized that corporate management is in the top 1 percent, while Giant and Safeway workers are in the bottom 99 percent. For example, Safeway CEO Steve Burd made nearly \$11 million last year, while Dick Boer, CEO of the Netherlands-based Ahold, which owns the Giant brand, received \$2.7 million. In addition, Giant ranks number one in the Washington, DC, area, with 36 percent market share, and Safeway is second with 22 percent.

"Between the two of them, Safeway and Giant have nearly 60 percent market share," McNutt said. "Now, that's dominance, folks. It's our hard work that makes

Members of the Local 400 Activist Contract Team (ACT!) rally stewards at a January meeting.



t/Safeway Bargaining



Giant and Safeway stewards participate in an interactive mock contract negotiation workshop to prepare themselves for the current round of bargaining.



Chef Jeff Henderson told the stewards his inspiring story of growing up in a union family and his rough road from a prison cell to the Vegas strip as the first African American executive chef in the Bellagio.

that dominance possible—and it's our hard work that will maintain and expand their dominance in the years to come.

"So the issue isn't whether Giant and Safeway can afford to agree on a good contract that builds a new ladder to the middle class and improves your economic standing," McNutt said. "We know they can. Rather, it's whether these two companies choose their long-term self-interest over short-term greed."

McNutt made a case that there are larger issues at stake, too. "It's about whether retail jobs will be middle class jobs," he said. "It's about whether we, the 99 percent, start getting our fair share of the prosperity that right now flows only to the top 1 percent."

Taking Bold Action

During the January meeting, stewards put the final touches on an unprecedented-

ed strategic campaign to mobilize thousands of members and allies for direct action. They also discussed the importance of members making their own personal preparations for a strike, should one become necessary.

Over the past two months, the contract campaign has been in full force, with ACT! members educating customers, civic leaders, clergy, elected officials and others about what is at stake—not only for Local 400 members but for the wider community and the local economy. Local 400 members, stewards and staff are also having one-on-one meetings with elected officials at all levels to talk about the importance of a fair contract and its economic impact. Each official is being asked to join our ranks, to stand with Local 400 members, and to walk with us outside of the stores on picket lines if a strike is necessary.

At the same time, Local 400 launched a new website—<http://occupygiantandsafeway.org>—providing members with information on the status of bargaining, background on the issues at stake, corporate financial reports and other vital information.

In addition, a fleet of traveling billboards—with a photo of members underneath the headline "BE FAIR TO DC/MD/VA GROCERY WORKERS" alongside the occupygiantandsafeway.org website address—drove around the metropolitan area. Each traveling billboard visited at least four stores a day, generating enormous attention, horn honking, and discussion.



One of the fleet of three traveling billboards.

Inside the bargaining room, McNutt, Local 27 President George Murphy, Jr., and the Local 400 members on the Advisory Committee are delivering the clear message that we deserve a fair contract in 2012. The advisory committee is made up of a very diverse group of stewards and members representing all classifications and varying years of service.

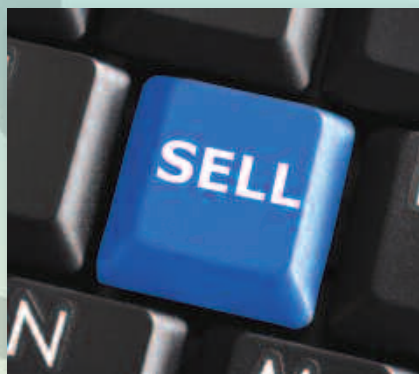
For updates on the bargaining, please visit <http://occupygiantandsafeway.org>. To share your experiences in talking with customers and supporting the contract campaign, please email us at occupygiantandsafeway@gmail.com.

Pension Plan Divests from Walmart

In a major sign that Walmart's anti-worker policies are undermining its appeal to shareholders and hurting the company financially, one of the world's largest pension funds, ABP of the Netherlands, is selling all its holdings of the corporation's stock.

"In an era when global capital has amassed greater power over every sphere of our lives than ever before, it is absolutely critical that workers maximize our economic clout," said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. "The decision by ABP to divest itself of Walmart is a giant step forward in that direction.

"American workers usually do not have a say in where their



pension plan assets are invested," McNutt said. "That's why Local 400 members and retail food workers around the globe owe a debt of gratitude to ABP for its wise and far-sighted decision to divest from Walmart, and why we urge other pension funds to follow suit. Not one dollar of workers' retirement assets should be invested in a company that has almost single-handedly destroyed the American middle class.

"I find it especially noteworthy that Walmart is in 'distinguished company,' joining four companies that make clusterbombs and PetroChina, an oil company with holdings in the Sudan and Burma, on ABP's blacklist," McNutt added.

RESPECT DC, OUR WALMART HELP RESTORE SANITARY CONDITIONS AT LAUREL STORE

Adding to the many indignities they face working at Walmart, associates at the Laurel, Md., store were forced to go for weeks without toilet paper and hand soap in lavatories shared by customers and associates, and without latex gloves for deli clerks. Managers told the associates it would be weeks before these essential items were resupplied due to corporate budget cuts.

But then OUR Walmart, and the Respect DC Coalition threatened to expose the company's unsanitary working and shopping conditions and all of a sudden, toilet paper, soap and gloves made a reappearance.

"What kind of company doesn't stock its bathrooms with



toilet paper?" asked Cynthia Murray, an 11-year Laurel Walmart associate. "What kind of company doesn't provide hand soap or gloves to people handling food? Do they want their associates and customers to get sick?

"We know very well that if it wasn't for our associates working together through OUR Walmart and Respect DC's decision to hold a press conference, we'd still be lacking basic sanitation in our store," she said.

"On our own, Walmart associates are powerless to impact corporate decisions even when our health is at stake," said Ernestine Bassett, a Washington, DC, resident who has worked at the Laurel Walmart for four years. "But when we join together to gain a voice on the job through OUR Walmart, management can no longer ignore us. And with the support of the community, we can get even more done. On behalf of all my fellow Walmart associates, I want to thank

Respect DC for helping to make our workplace safer."

"This frightening episode shows why DC Mayor Vincent Gray is foolish to trust Walmart and welcome the company to DC unconditionally," said Dyana Forester of Respect DC. "Without an enforceable community benefits agreement, Walmart will do literally anything to squeeze out another penny of profits, even if it comes at the expense of the health of its associates and customers."

"I urge my fellow DC residents to contact Mayor Gray and the City Council," Bassett said. "Tell them DC doesn't need six Walmarts that operate like our Laurel store does. The only way Walmart should come to town is with a legally binding agreement that the company will treat its DC associates with respect and dignity."



UFCW, Local 400, Smithfield, Kroger Team Up to Feed Less Fortunate

To help record numbers of struggling families receive the food and nutrition they need, the UFCW International Union, Local 400 and the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP teamed up with Smithfield and Kroger to deliver 120,000 servings (30,000 pounds) of protein to the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond over the holidays.

"During these tough economic times, it's important for all of us to pitch in and help those in need," said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. "This donation is an expression of the labor movement's highest values—that all people should be treated with respect and dignity and no one should go without food and other necessities. I'm especially pleased that two employers of UFCW members, Smithfield and Kroger, are joining us in this worthy cause."

The donation was part of Feeding the Hungry, a joint program of the UFCW and Smithfield to donate and help deliver 20 million servings of protein over three years to food banks around the country. The partnership is designed to bring



Local 400 members deliver Smithfield hams to the Central Virginia Food Bank in Richmond

much-needed assistance to the growing number of people facing hunger and food insecurity in our communities.

"Last year we fed over six million people and as we take our nationwide Feeding the Hungry Tour on the road for the second year, the UFCW is committed to ensuring that families across the country have the relief and the opportunities they need to weather the current economic crisis," said UFCW International President Joe Hansen. "All across the country, UFCW members are on the front lines of efforts to improve and strengthen their communities, and this partnership reflects their unwavering commitment to

protect and advocate for families during tough times."

Feeding the Hungry is part of the UFCW's commitment to find solutions based on shared responsibility. UFCW members have a long history of helping those in need, not only for the well-being of workers, but also for the broader community, especially in difficult times.

More than 50 million people in the U.S. daily experience hunger. One in six adults and one in four children know what it is like to go to bed hungry or to have to decide between buying food and paying for other necessities such as utility or medical bills.

Local 400 ACTS

continued from page 11

"Typically, supermarket companies don't treat employees that well," he said. "The only way that changes is with our union. Without a union, employers feel they can fire you whenever they want for any reason and all you can do is say goodbye. But with our union, you've got support and protection.

"Another advantage is better pay and especially the benefits," Sherwood added. "Very few companies anymore offer any kind of benefits or if they do, you've got to pay for it out of your own pocket. I know what that's like because I once worked for 7-11. But thanks to Local 400, at Kroger, we've all got great medical and dental benefits and retirement security."

Sherwood finds that most workers who don't join Local

400 when they're first hired usually change their mind when they see how much they benefit from union representation. "I don't browbeat people," he said. "I let everyone know we're here for them, they see we're fair and honest, and that often takes care of itself. And I make it clear that if you want more benefits, if you want better working conditions, joining our union is the only way to stand up to management and improve our contract. Plus I ask them, 'do you buy a pizza once a week?' That's all it takes to make things better."

Over a long life and career, Sherwood has seen a lot change and believes the labor movement is the key to improving the plight of working families. "We've been heading backwards lately," he said. "But history moves in cycles. The Occupy movement shows that workers are fed up with inequality. We just have to keep working, do our best, keep a positive attitude and things will come around again."



Jason Bender
 Courtesy Clerk
 Shoppers
 #2366
 College Park,
 Md.

Heather Thomas
 Pharm Tech
 Giant #350
 Silver Spring,
 Md.



FACES OF Local 400



Charnette Herndon
 Florist
 Safeway #2892
 Washington,
 D.C.





Edward Mayo
Office Assistant
Giant #315
Lanham, Md.



Angela Vanderworken
Front End
Kroger #537
Virginia Beach, Va.



Peter Lewis
Cashier
Safeway #1462
Falls Church, Va.



EMD Sales Workers Join Local 400, Ratify First Contract

It was a struggle that lasted more than a year, but the campaign by 38 workers at EMD Sales in Baltimore paid off when they won their union representation election and then ratified their first collective bargaining agreement on January 26, 2012.

"I want to personally welcome our brothers and sisters at EMD Sales to the Local 400 family," said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. "Thanks to their hard work, they've now empowered themselves with a strong voice in the workplace, improved their economic standing, and gained greater health and retirement security. Plus, they know the 40,000 members of Local 400 and the 1.3 million members of the UFCW throughout North America have their back."

EMD Sales is an international foods distributor based in

Baltimore, Md. The company offers more than 2,000 groceries, refrigerated and frozen products to Giant, Safeway, Shoppers Food & Pharmacy, and other retail food outlets. EMD's warehouse was originally in Landover, Md., but moved to Baltimore last year.

"Our goal is to expand the union market share in our core industries in all the areas of our jurisdiction, not only horizontally by representing more workers at supermarkets and grocery stores, but vertically—throughout the supply chain," McNutt said. "That's why our members' victory at EMD Sales is a very important step forward as we work together to increase our clout at the bargaining table and throughout the corridors of power."

EMD Sales se une a Local 400, Ratificación del Primer Contrato

¡Hemos luchado por más de un año, pero lo logramos! La campaña de 38 empleados de EMD Sales en Baltimore ganó su elección de representación laboral y ratificaron su primer acuerdo de negociación colectiva el 26 de enero de 2012.

"Quiero personalmente darle la bienvenida a nuestros hermanos y hermanas de EMD Sales a la familia de Local 400," dijo el Presidente de Local 400, Tom McNutt. "Gracias a su lucha lograron establecer una voz en el lugar de trabajo, han mejorado su posición económica, han ganado un mejor seguro de salud, y un mejor plan de retiro. Además, saben que tiene el respaldo de los 40,000 miembros de la Local 400 y de los 1.3 millones de miembros de la unión UFCW a través de Norte America."

EMD Sales es una distribuidora internacional localizada en Baltimore, Maryland. La compañía ofrece más de 2,000

comestibles, productos congelados y refrigerados a Giant, Safeway, Shoppers Food & Pharmacy, y otros establecimientos de comida al detal. Originalmente, el almacén de EMD Sales estaba en Landover, Maryland pero se mudó para Baltimore el año pasado.

"Nuestra meta es expandir la unión a las industrias principales en nuestra jurisdicción, no solamente de manera horizontal a través de la representación de más trabajadores de supermercados y colmados, pero también verticalmente, a través de la cadena de suministro y abastecimiento," dijo McNutt. "Por eso es que la victoria de nuestros nuevos miembros de EMD Sales es una paso importante hacia el aumento de nuestra fuerza en la mesa de negociaciones y a través de los corredores del poder."

Local 400 Members Occupy

Continued from page 5

California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control rejected Fresh & Easy's transparent attempt to evade the law, issuing a ruling stating, "No alcoholic beverages may be sold through any checkout stand that allow(s) operation by the customer at any point during the check-out process." Nevertheless, Fresh

& Easy has continued to resist compliance.

"This really should be a no-brainer," McNutt said. "No one should be able to purchase alcoholic beverages unless they are at a cash register staffed in person by a clerk who can check his or her ID. How ironic that some of the same legislators who are so insistent that voters bring photo IDs to the polling place seem a lot less concerned about a process that will

let IDs go unchecked when people buy beer, wine and booze.

"If ever there was legislation deserving of bipartisan support—and acceptance by retailers and state Alcoholic Beverage Commissions as well as by working families, anti-drunk driving activists and law enforcement officers—it is this," McNutt added. "We're going to keep plugging away until these bills become law in every one of our states."

UFCW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Your union is about more than your paycheck and benefits.

That's why each year the UFCW awards several SCHOLARSHIPS of up to \$8,000 each to UFCW members or their unmarried dependents.

The application will be available online from January 16 - April 16, 2012.

For more information, and to find out if you're eligible, please visit:

www.ufcw.org/scholarship



**If you are unable to apply online, you may request an application by writing to:
UFCW International Union, Attn: Scholarship Program, 1775 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006
If you need the scholarship rules or application in another language,
please contact us (1-800-551-4010) and we will obtain assistance for you.**



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Labor to the Rescue

Kroger Member Receives Assistance After Fire Destroys Home

Roy "Eddie" Dempsey, a Local 400 member who works at Kroger #813 in West Virginia, knows first-hand what tough times are all about. Last October, his house burnt down to the ground, leaving him with nothing.

Fortunately, the AFL-CIO Community Services Agency exists to help union members going through tough times and they came to Eddie's rescue, choosing him as a recipient of its 2011 Holiday Basket Program.

The Community Services Agency asks unions—national and local—to support the Holiday Basket Program by making donations of non-perishable food, money, gift cards, or to "adopt" a family and provide toys, clothes, gifts, food and funds for them.

"As union members, we're all in this together and we all look out for one another," said Local 400 President Tom McNutt. "The AFL-CIO Community Services Agency is one important way we do that. I'm pleased that Eddie Dempsey is receiving a helping hand from the agency."

Mike Belcher, Eddie's shop steward, brought his plight to the attention of Local 400 representative Dale Burns, who nominated him for the program.

"Our brother has worked at Kroger for 33 years," said Burns. "We are so grateful that Eddie received the assistance he needs and deserves this past Christmas."

Eddie was "adopted" by the AFL-CIO Safety and Health Department, which contributed the lion's share of the donation he received. Overall, the agency helped approximately 45 families with items and funds totaling well over \$22,000 during the holiday season.



Local 400 member Eddie Dempsey (center) shows his check from the AFL-CIO Community Services Agency, accompanied by Kroger #813 Shop Steward Mike Belcher (left) and Local 400 Representative Dale Burns.

2012 Martin E. Gerel Memorial Scholarship

The law firm of Ashcraft & Gerel, LLP has always valued their connection with the Washington, DC union movement. In recognition of this special relationship, the firm established a Union Scholarship Program more than 30 years ago. We are pleased to honor this commitment by providing a scholarship in memory of Martin E. Gerel.

The law firm of ASHCRAFT & GEREL, LLP offers this Scholarship to Washington, DC metropolitan area union members and their families to help with the high cost of education. Each year we award a one-time grant of \$5,000.00 to an eligible student for education expenses.

If you, your spouse or child, plan to pursue education or training **full-time**, you can apply now. *Applicants must be enrolled for their post-high school education or training by the Fall of 2012 to be eligible for this year's award.*

A committee of union volunteers screen the applications and a finalist is chosen by an independent party. No one at Ashcraft & Gerel, LLP participates in the selection process. This is an equal opportunity program, conducted without regard to race, gender, religion, age or disability.

To obtain your scholarship application, call 703-931-5500. The deadline to submit your application is **April 30, 2012.**

December Fiscal Report

1	BALANCE IN CASH ACCOUNT AT BEGINNING OF MONTH	1,019,862
2	RECEIPTS (from all sources):	
	DUES	1,47,065
	MISCELLANEOUS	43,925
3	TOTAL RECEIPTS	1,290,990
4	TOTAL OF LINES 1 AND 3	2,310,852
5	DISBURSEMENTS for current months	1,320,826
6	CASH ACCOUNT BALANCE at the end of current month	990,026
7	BALANCE AT END OF MONTH as shown on Bank Statement	1,086,770
8	DEPOSIT IN TRANSIT	144
9	TOTAL OF LINES 7 AND 8	1,086,915
10	LESS: Checks included in item 5 not returned with bank statement	96,889
11	BALANCE (Should agree with Line 6)	990,026
12	PETTY CASH FUND	750
13	TOTAL OF ALL LOCAL UNION'S SAVINGS ACCOUNTS at the end of month	2,386,557
14	DEPRECIATED VALUE OF Real Estate, Furniture, Equipment, Automobiles, etc.	840,506
15	OTHER ACCOUNTS OR INVESTMENTS (Bond, Stocks, Credit Union, Building Funds, etc.)	552,461
16	LESS: LIABILITIES (other than Rent, Utilities, Withholding and Per Capita Tax)	1,018,045
17	TOTAL WORTH OF LOCAL UNION (Totals of lines 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 minus line 16)	3,752,255

2012 AREA MEETINGS SCHEDULE *

**Monday, March 19
CLARKSBURG**
Best Western
100 Lodgeville Road
Bridgeport, WV 26330
(304) 842-5411

**Tuesday, April 10
CHARLOTTESVILLE**
Holiday Inn
1901 Emmett Street
Charlottesville, VA 22901
(434) 977-7700

**Wednesday, April 11
BECKLEY**
Holiday Inn
114 Dry Hill Road
Beckley, WV 25801
(304) 252-2250

**Wednesday, May 2
BLUEFIELD**
Quality Hotel &
Conference Center
Route 460 Bypass
3350 Big Laurel Hwy
Bluefield, WV 24701
(304) 325-6170

**Thursday, May 3
BRISTOL**
Holiday Inn –
Bristol Conference Center
3005 Linden Drive
Bristol, VA 24202
(276) 466-4100

**Tuesday, May 8
DANVILLE**
Holiday Inn Express
2121 Riverside Dr
Danville, VA 24540
(434) 793-4000

**Thursday, May 10
HUNTINGTON**
Hampton Inn
3442 US Route 60 East
Barboursville, WV
(304) 733-5004

**Tuesday, Sept. 4
CHARLOTTESVILLE**
Holiday Inn
1901 Emmett Street
Charlottesville, VA 22901
(434) 977-7700

**Monday, Sept 10
BECKLEY**
Holiday Inn
114 Dry Hill Road
Beckley, WV 25801
(304) 252-2250

* All meetings are at 6 p.m.

2012 QUARTERLY MEETINGS SCHEDULE *

**Tuesday, March 20
LANDOVER**
Local 400 Headquarters
4301 Garden City Drive
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 459-3400

**Wednesday, April 4
RICHMOND**
Holiday Inn – Central
3207 North Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23230
(804) 359-9441

**Thursday, April 5
NORFOLK**
Norfolk Office
3620 Tidewater Drive
Norfolk, VA 23509

* All meetings are at 6 p.m.

**Monday, May 7
ROANOKE**
Central Labor Council
2101 Dale Ave. SE
Roanoke, VA 24013
(540) 345-4561

**Wednesday, May 9
CHARLESTON**
Holiday Inn – Civic Center
100 Civic Center
Charleston, WV 25301
(304) 345-0600

**Tuesday, June 19
LANDOVER**
Local 400 Headquarters
4301 Garden City Drive
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 459-3400

**Wednesday, August 1
CHARLESTON**
Holiday Inn – Civic Center
100 Civic Center
Charleston, WV 25301
(304) 345-0600

**Wednesday, Sept. 5
RICHMOND**
Holiday Inn – Central
3207 North Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23230
(804) 359-9441

**Thursday, Sept. 6
NORFOLK**
Norfolk Office
3620 Tidewater Drive
Norfolk, VA 23509

ALL IN THE FAMILY Condolences

Family of Carson Rigney, *Emmis Business Forms*

Family of Elaine Coleman, *Shoppers 37*

Family of Robert McCain, *Dan Chem Retiree*

Donna Waddell, *UFCW Local 400, Loss of
brother-in-law*

Family of Jack L Derosa, *Giant Retiree*

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LOCAL 400 RETIREES

Giant

George C Ayres, *Myrtle Beach, S.C.*, 34 years

Kathryn L Bailor, *Charlottesville, Va.*, 39 years

William L Bennof, *Crownsville, Md.*, 31 years

Frances A Camp, *Middleburg, Va.*, 22 years

Janice L Campbell, *Forestville, Md.*, 30 years

Dawn M Cook, *King William, Va.*, 31 years

Ronald H Dorsey, *Jessup, Md.*, 38 years

Joseph P Earman, *Falls Church, Va.*, 36 years

Donna M Griffith, *Stafford, Va.*, 30 years

Talbert G Guyah, *Fredericksburg, Va.*, 22 years

Donna A Hayes, *Cheltenham, Md.*, 32 years

Joseph B Kirby III, *Ft Washington, Md.*, 36 years

Samuel L Moore, *Olney, Md.*, 13 years

Elnora L Porter, *Forestville, Md.*, 11 years

Mona L Reno, *Burke, Va.*, 37 years

Edmund L Richard, *Beltsville, Md.*, 11 years

Harvey H Ricketts III, *Damascus, Md.*, 36 years

Shirley A Rogers, *Arlington, Va.*, 27 years

Lana F Vermillion, *Laurel, Md.*, 35 years

Mack Washington, *Fredericksburg, Va.*, 25 years

Kroger

Raymond E Hensel, *Virginia Beach, Va.*, 5 years

Nelda S Lawrence, *Richmond, Va.*, 7 years

Chiquita Morris, *South Boston, Va.*, 5 years

Safeway

Archie G Barker, *Woodbridge, Va.*, 44 years

Arlene F Bonjonia, *Alexandria, Va.*, 15 years

Joseph L Brown, *Upper Marlboro, Md.*, 44 years

Kenneth R Harnage, *Woodbridge, Va.*, 17 years

Richard E Haynes, *Bowie, Md.*, 4 years

Thelma M Kettner, *Vienna, Va.*, 10 years

Idrees A Khan, *Falls Church, Va.*, 15 years

William J McIntosh, *Columbia, Md.*, 29 years

Linda L Pilkerton, *Port Tobacco, Md.*, 22 years

Delia S Rinehart, *Falls Church, Va.*, 9 years

Trudi K Rohr, *Ashburn, Va.*, 30 years

Scan

Ann E Stewart, *Silver Spring, Md.*, 16 years

Shoppers Food & Pharmacy

Douglas J Bright, *Falls Church, Va.*, 5 years

Harold Ray Crawford, *District Heights, Md.*, 27 years

Robert E Curry, *Alexandria, Va.*, 26 years

Robert D Dowell, *Fredericksburg, Va.*, 6 years

Karen K Drabczyk, *Glenn Dale, Md.*, 34 years

Lois B Gilliam, *Ft Washington, Md.*, 23 years

Tara R Gray, *Marbury, Md.*, 21 years

Roger W Lyburn, *Middletown, Md.*, 21 years

Mary K Marcinizyn, *Ruther Glen, Va.*, 25 years

Hoa T Nguyen, *Herndon, Va.*, 9 years

Gary L Redmond, *Fairfax Station, Va.*, 21 years

Elizabeth L Riggs, *Front Royal, Va.*, 25 years

William C Smith Jr, *Washington, D.C.*, 37 years

Valeree D Speaks, *Forestville, Md.*, 24 years

Charlie B Watson, *Alexandria, Va.*, 14 years

Super Fresh

Esam A Amireh, *Dumfries, Va.*, 36 years

Michael E Collins, *Beltsville, Md.*, 11 years

Joe J Fagan, *Fairfax, Va.*, 30 years

Timothy M Keller, *Springfield, Va.*, 38 years

Walter A Leslie Sr, *Clinton, Md.*, 22 years

James L Marsh, *Arlington, Va.*, 41 years

Linda L Stockdale, *Fairfax, Va.*, 10 years

Wendy M Williams, *Cobb Island, Md.*, 30 years

Have You Moved? Then Let Us Know!

Please fill in the information below.

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Mail this information to: UFCW Local 400, 4301 Garden City Drive, Landover, Md. 20785.

¿Se ha mudado? ¿Entonces déjenos saber!

Por favor llene la información a continuación.

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Envíe esta información a: UFCW Local 400, 4301 Garden City Drive, Landover, Md. 20785.

Stop the Assault on Democracy



From 1776 through 2008, American democracy continually expanded the right to vote. First, the franchise was extended to non-property owners, then to former slaves and then to women, while the 1960s saw the removal of Jim Crow laws that kept African Americans away from the polls.

But suddenly, for the first time in history, our nation is moving backwards, with millions of Americans denied the right to vote. The reason? A cynical, partisan power play by the Republican Party to keep people of color, lower-income Americans, senior citizens, the disabled and young adults—in other words, population groups they consider likely to vote Democratic—from choosing our leaders.

Virginia is front and center in this battle. Following the lead of 14 other states that recently enacted voter suppression laws written by a big business front group, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the Virginia House recently passed a bill requiring all voters to show photo identification in

order to cast a ballot. If passed by the Senate and signed by Gov. Robert McDonnell (R)—as appears likely at this writing—Virginians without photo IDs could only cast provisional ballots that would not be counted unless the local electoral board verifies the voter's identity.

This is a contemptible infringement on the right to vote because, nationally, more than 21 million Americans—many of them African Americans, Latinos, the poor and the elderly—do not have photo ID cards.

Often, these laws don't even try to disguise who they're disenfranchising. In Texas, for example, student ID cards cannot be used at polling places but concealed-carry permits issued to gun owners let you right in the voting booth!

Lawmakers in Virginia and elsewhere claim these laws are needed to prevent voter fraud. But that's a smokescreen to hide their vote-rigging agenda. As the conservative *Richmond Times-Dispatch* editorialized, "this is a solution in search of a problem...there is not even apocryphal

evidence" of voter fraud. "On the other hand," the newspaper notes, Virginia "does have a long and repugnant history of racial discrimination."

According to the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law, state voter suppression laws—which also include barriers to voter registration efforts and cutbacks on early voting—will make it much harder for more than five million voters to cast ballots in 2012. Notably, these states account for 171 electoral votes—63 percent of the 270 needed to win the presidency.

As outrageous as it is to stack the voting pool to favor one party over the other, the news media's treatment of voter suppression laws as "politics as usual" is equally disgraceful. It's one thing to try to win playing by a fair set of rules, but to disenfranchise large segments of the population to gain power is beyond the pale. We must call out the vote-riggers for their assault on democracy, do everything in our power to help vulnerable voters overcome the new barriers in their way, and fight to defeat the enemies of democracy in this fall's elections.

Mark P. Federici
Secretary-Treasurer

▼ Millions of Americans are being denied the right to vote. ▼

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