

The Professionals Guild of Ohio



PGO UNION NEWS

December 2015

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Professionals Guild
of Ohio
P.O. Box 7139
Columbus, Ohio 43205

Questions or comments can
be directed to the Executive
Director.

E-Mail:

cmason@professionalsguild.org

Website:

www.professionalsguild.org

Like us on Facebook

Phone:

614-258-4401 or

800-331-5428

Fax:

614-258-4465

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The Ghost of Christmas Past: Republicans Revive Right to Work

By Paul Henry,

PGO Field Representative

Republicans in the Ohio House of Representatives have recently reintroduced what has sadly become an all too familiar bill. Right to work is back from the grave as HB 377. An initial hearing of this bill was held on December 1.

Though a union presence was on hand during the initial hearing, expressing its opposition and reminding everyone right to work states have lower wages and income, fewer job-based benefits and higher poverty rates, it fell on deaf ears. The Republican representatives ignored these facts and continued to preach how this legislation would benefit business owners. Unlike SB 5 which would have made both public and private sector fair share fees illegal, HB 377 is focused solely on the private sector.

The resounding defeat of SB 5 has led to a shift in tactics by those supporting this anti-worker legislation. Realizing that an across the board attack would likely not be successful, anti-union legislators are now attempting a divide and conquer strategy. Membership in private sec-

tor unions has dwindled over the years due to the unrelenting attacks on collective bargaining throughout the country. Clearly, the hope is that there will be less opposition since there are fewer workers that will be directly hurt by this legislation. If we are to counter this strategy and save collective bargaining for all workers, it is imperative that we do not let these anti-worker legislators succeed.

You can help defeat this latest assault on workers by contacting your representatives and letting them know that you do not support anti-worker legislation and ask them to stand against HB 377. If you are unsure who your representative is, you can find out by going to <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/find-my-legislators> and enter your zip code. This will give you the contact information for your representative. It is important that we remind our law-makers that we are as united now as we were on SB 5. Nothing's changed: right to work is still wrong for Ohio.





"You knew when you hired me that I wasn't a go-getter."

**Tough Break for Seniors—
No 2016 COLA increase**

By Paul Henry, PGO Field Representative

Seniors will have to tighten their belts this coming year as social security checks will remain stagnant. The government reported that there will be no cost of living increase for 2016. This is the third time since 2010 that this has happened. Mark Tweed, a financial advisor, stated that the drop in oil prices have brought down the inflation rate so much, the government chose not to boost benefits.

Seniors living on a fixed income are less concerned about falling oil prices and more concerned about the rising cost of medical care. With medical costs rising and no increase to social security, seniors will be forced to make difficult decisions no one should have to make such as whether or not to receive medical care or buy groceries.

Though this is dire news for those in their golden years, it is also seen as a boon for those still within the work force. Without inflation, workers will supposedly have a better opportunity to save some money.

Seattle Teachers End Strike

By Paul Henry, PGO Field Representative

The five thousand member Seattle teachers union successfully ended a weeklong strike with a new agreement. These teachers haven't received a raise in six years. If approved, the new contract will rectify this situation. Under the deal, teachers' base pay will rise 3 percent this year, 2 percent in 2016, and 4.5 percent in 2017.

Pay raises were not the only issue teachers were fighting for. In an unprecedented move, the teachers were able to win a guaranteed 30 minutes of recess time for all elementary students. This was an issue the teachers collaborated on with their students' parents. Additionally, the union and school officials agreed to create committees at thirty schools to investigate equity issues, including disciplinary measures that were disproportionately affecting minorities.

By addressing their own issues along with those of the students they serve, the Seattle teachers had the support of their community during the union's confrontation with the school district. Keeping the community involved was the key to winning a good contract for the teachers and their students.

Papa John's Rips Off Workers

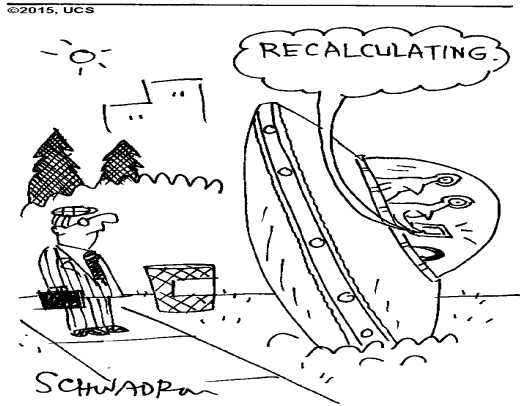
By Paul Henry, PGO Field Representative

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman conducted an investigation into the unscrupulous business practices of Papa John's and discovered that Papa is a crook! At the conclusion of his investigation, Schneiderman stated, "Once again, we've found Papa John's franchises in New York that are ripping off their workers and violating critical state and federal laws." Papa John's engaged in wage theft for around 250 employees just in New York. Over half a million dollars will be paid out in settlement for the franchises actions.

So what did the Attorney General mean when he stated, "once again"? Back in July, Papa John's stores were found breaking minimum wage and overtime laws and another two stores were found to be liable for over three million dollars in wage theft. It is a violation of the law for an employer to pay below the minimum wage, to force employees to work



"It probably won't work."



off the clock, or to not pay overtime when it is required—all of which Papa John’s has been guilty of doing. Additionally, Papa John’s founder, John Schnatter has reduced hours for workers to keep them from qualifying for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

Clearly, this is not a labor friendly company. So next time you order a pizza, support your fellow workers and bypass Papa John’s. There are plenty other pizza businesses that don’t cheat their workers.

UAW Ends Two-Tier Contract at Chrysler

By Paul Henry, PGO Field Representative

Once upon a time, auto workers could make a living wage, have good healthcare, and expect a pension when they retired. Then one day the auto industry declared bankruptcy and the workers were faced with a terrible dilemma: make substantial concessions at the bargaining table or lose their jobs. The workers chose to make concessions by creating two wage scales. Existing workers would continue to make the same wages they previously had made, up to 29 dollars an hour, but new workers starting wages were reduced to slightly above 15 dollars an hour.

When this enormous wage cut was agreed-to for new workers, the union understood that working with the auto makers was essential in keeping them from going out of business. Fortunately times have changed. The same auto makers that once teetered on the edge are profitable again. Chrysler’s latest figures showed a \$1.4 billion profit in North America with a profit margin of 7.7 percent. Given this turnaround, when it was time to negotiate a new con-

tract, the union was ready for the return to profitability to pay off for the workers.

The two-tier agreement had created a major division within the work force. Denny Crum, a forklift driver in Toledo who started two years ago stated “We were told by several people within the union, ‘These tiers are going away, we’re going to fight to get rid of them. These were just brought in to keep the company afloat when the economy crashed.’” The union was true to its word. The new UAW contract allows new employees to eventually rise to the top-tier wage of twenty nine dollars an hour, bringing back the opportunity to earn the wages that created the middle class in America.

With the Chrysler contract solidified, the hope is that the UAW will be able to remove the two-tier wage schedule in its contracts with the other auto makers. The auto industry has played an integral role in America by providing solid manufacturing jobs that have allowed the working class to also be the middle class. Hopefully, this signals the beginning of the end of the race to the bottom for workers.

PGO Council 13 Elects Officers

Lucas County Children Services members have elected officers to serve for the next two years. Re-elected officers include: President **Joe DeStazio**; Executive Vice President **Lynn Pinkelman**; Professional Vice President **Dave Rudebock**; Clerical Vice President **Amy Kunkel**; Service Vice President **Mike Hiltman**; and, Secretary **Joy Taylor**. **Nancy Reineke** is the new council treasurer replacing **Regina Garmon-Brown**. PGO congratulates all these officers and thanks **Regina** for her service as council treasurer.



“Imagine if we knew what the hell we were doing!”



**Buy Union
Made in the USA**

The holidays are upon us and where we spend our money matters. The Union Label website is a great place to start if you are looking for gifts made in the USA by union workers. Check it out by going to www.unionlabel.org. You can search by category or key words.

If you are looking for big ticket items like computers or tablets, there are two websites to help you find union built, made in the USA devices. Go to www.unionbuiltpc.com and www.computersmadeinusa.com. When booking your hotel reservations when you travel over the holidays, be sure to check www.hotelworkersrising.org to avoid staying at a hotel that is being boycotted because of its poor labor practices. And, as always, pack those stockings full of sweet treats from **Hershey's**, **Russell Stover**, or **See's Candies**, all made by union brothers and sisters.

Stock the bar at your holiday party using United Farmworkers produced wines:

- **Chateau Ste. Michelle**
- **Columbia Crest**
- **Dollarhide Ranch**
- **Scheid Vineyards Inc.**
- **Papagni Fruit Company**
- **Balletto**
- **Charles Krug**
- **C.K. Mondavi**
- **St. Supery**
- **Gallo of Sonoma**

Can't decide what to buy? Give a gift card to the following stores staffed by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers:

- **Albertsons**
- **Fry's**
- **Giant**
- **Kroger**
- **Macys**
- **Meijer**
- **Safeway**
- **Vons**

**Tis the Season
Holiday Reminder**

We are in the holiday season, so this is a good time to remind everyone, especially new employees, that there usually are some restrictions relating to holidays. Like most things, this will vary from union contract to union contract. However, common provisions require employees to work their last scheduled shift before and after a holiday or be on FMLA leave during that time in order to receive holiday pay. Also, some contracts prohibit using personal leave or non-FMLA sick leave to extend a holiday.

If you might have an issue in this regard, check your union contract, particularly the articles on holidays, vacation, and sick leave or talk to your local union representative.

**2016 PGO Executive Board
Meetings Scheduled**

Quarterly meetings of the PGO Executive Board have been scheduled for January 23rd at the PGO offices in Columbus, April 16th at the Montgomery County Children Services offices in Dayton, July 16th at the PGO offices in Columbus and October 15th at the Lucas County Children Services offices in Toledo. All meetings are scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m. All meeting dates, times and locations may be subject to change by the Executive Board.

PGO Office Holiday Schedule

In observance of the Christmas and New Year Holidays, the PGO office will be closed on December 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31, and January 1.

