

BCTGM *News*

MARCH/
APRIL 2016

VOLUME 18
NUMBER 2

BOYCOTT

AFL-CIO Endorsed!

Nabisco Snacks

made in **MEXICO!**



**CHECK
THE LABEL**

See Page 16



the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Urgent Retiree Action Needed to **Protect Pensions**

An Open Letter to **BCTGM Retirees** from International President David B. Durkee

Brothers and Sisters:

In the most recent edition of the BCTGM News, I addressed in this column the many serious challenges this Union is facing in our ongoing effort to protect the pensions and retirement security of current and future retirees.

The “Great Recession” beginning in 2008, caused by massive Wall Street and banking industry fraud, wreaked havoc on even the most well-run pension funds, such as the B&C Fund. The B&C Fund, which covers nearly 110,000 retired, active and vested BCTGM members, has also had to withstand the adverse impact of the failure of the former Interstate Brands/Hostess Baking Company to pay more than \$900 million in withdrawal liability when it left the Fund.

At the same time, Republicans in Congress are working day and night to dismantle Social Security; seeking to privatize this critical pillar of retirement security for working men and women. Their only purpose for pursuing Social Security privatization is to enrich and empower their financial supporters on Wall Street.

A deep commitment to the retirement security of our members and their families is a core value of this Union. For this reason, the International Officers and staff devote enormous time, energy and resources every day to this issue.

Now we are forced to confront another major threat to the retirement security of our members, both active and retired. Nabisco/Mondelēz, the largest employer of BCTGM members in the biscuit industry, the second largest contributing employer in the B&C Pension Fund and one of the Fund’s founding employers has announced that it wants to get out of the Fund. Exiting the Fund has been a company priority in the current National Master Contract negotiations.

At the same time, the company also is committed to eliminating many hundreds of BCTGM jobs and shipping those jobs to its factories in Mexico where workers receive poverty-level wages and are exploited in countless other ways.

We know that if Nabisco/Mondelēz is successful in its plans, employees retiring from the company would immediately suffer a severe cut in their hard-earned benefits. And, as a result of the company’s withdrawal from the Plan, other B&C Pension Fund pensioners – including those who retired from Nabisco – could also face future reductions in their pension amounts.

And while Nabisco/Mondelēz is trying to get out of the B&C Fund, CEO Irene Rosenfeld has set up a \$35 million pension for herself.

Nabisco/Mondelēz’s frontal assault on our members’ jobs and retirement security cannot and will not stand!

For this reason, the BCTGM International Union and our local unions across the country are fighting back hard and

“The Company will withdraw from participation in the ‘B&C Union and Industry International Pension Trust Fund’...”

— Proposal from Nabisco/Mondelēz in current National Master Bargaining

utilizing all available resources to stand up to Nabisco/Mondelēz’s aggressive attacks on our members and retirees.

This is a fight in which every BCTGM member, active and retired, regardless of industry or region, must be fully engaged. No one in the BCTGM family can afford to sit on the sidelines. This impacts all of us.

The centerpiece of our campaign is a nationwide consumer boycott of Mexican-made Nabisco products. Twenty-five percent of this company’s sales are in the United States. Right now, the company is struggling in Europe and other regions of the world.

A successful U.S. boycott of Mexican-made Nabisco products will show this company that its plan to make products in Mexico and sell them in the United States is misguided and that a better, more successful business model would be to keep the production in this country.

BCTGM local unions and members throughout the Union are responding to the urgency of this situation and vigorously promoting the consumer boycott.

Now, I am calling on all of our retirees to step up and join the active members on the front lines in this crucial fight.

Here is What You Can Do to Help:

- Take the “Check the Label” flier on the back page of this magazine and show it to your local grocery store manager. Urge him/her not to stock Mexican-made Nabisco products and to call Nabisco and tell the company not to send any more Mexican-made products to the store;
- Call Nabisco/Mondelēz CEO Irene Rosenfeld (847-943-4000) and tell her to stop shipping American jobs to Mexico and stop the attack on our pensions;
- Urge family and friends to participate in the consumer boycott;
- Visit the website www.fightforamericanjobs.org to learn more about this campaign and share the site with as many others as possible.

I firmly believe that BCTGM retirees are an enormously valuable resource not only in this campaign to stop Nabisco/Mondelēz, but in our Union’s ongoing work to ensure retirement security for all BCTGM members. I will be communicating with you in the near future to share ideas we are developing to expand our outreach and support from the men and women who helped build the pension plans of which this Union is so very proud.

Thank you for your solidarity and willingness to “get back in the game” for what is truly the biggest fight this Union has ever been engaged in.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

David B. Durkee

BCTGM International President

AFL-CIO ENDORSES BCTGM's Made-In-Mexico Nabisco BOYCOTT

The AFL-CIO has officially endorsed the BCTGM's nationwide consumer boycott of Nabisco snack products made in

Mexico. The "Check the Label" campaign was launched this spring to stop Nabisco/Mondelēz from continuing to outsource jobs, by urging American consumers to reject Mexican-made Nabisco products and, instead, buy those that are produced in America in support of middle-class American jobs.

The AFL-CIO's endorsement is a watershed moment in BCTGM's boycott, as it adds 12.5 million union members in 56 affiliated national and international unions, as well as their families and their local and extended communities across the United States and the globe.

Reflecting on the momentum that the AFL-CIO endorsement of the boycott brings, BCTGM International President David Durkee said, "The AFL-CIO's support of this campaign sends the strongest

signal yet that American workers and consumers will not stand idly by while Americans lose their jobs. Our brothers and sisters in the labor movement are key allies in this struggle, and we greatly appreciate their support.

The *Check the Label* campaign is an essential component of the movement to stop consumers from buying Nabisco products that are made in Mexico. We want this company to understand that Americans will not support a company that moves work from the U.S. to countries where they exploit low wage workers and then send product back into our

**SUPPORT
AMERICAN JOBS!**

**Pledge to buy
AMERICAN-MADE
Nabisco/Mondelēz
snacks ONLY**

www.fightforamericanjobs.org

communities."

The boycott applies to all Mondelēz International/Nabisco snack food products that are labeled "Made in Mexico," including Oreos, Newtons, Chips Ahoy, Honey Grahams, Animal Crackers, Ritz Crackers, Premium, Belvita, Lorna Doane, Teddy Grahams, Honey Maid, and Wheat Thins. (Learn how to Check The Label on page 16.)



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The BCTGM News

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From 1886 to 2016:

History of Tobacco Workers

In the largest of the five cigarette companies in New York City in 1878, 380 girls and women, along with 75 men and 25 boys, worked a 10-hour day. A few worked the machines, moistening tobacco with cold steam and squeezing it under 16 tons of pressure into a six-inch high block two feet by four feet, machine slicing it into cigarette-length shreds for the cigarette makers. At that point, cigarette making was still a hand process. At long tables, over individual small stone slabs, they worked their tobacco, manipulating it by means of a second piece of paper in order not to touch it, pasting with a flat stick, the best of them making 16,000 cigarettes a week. Training a competent cigarette maker required three weeks, during which



the worker earned nothing. The average man earned \$16 a week; the women, not above \$12; the boys closer to \$4.

– Exertpt from *Challenge & Change: History of the Tobacco Workers International Union*, by Stuart Bruce Kaufman

Emblem of Progress

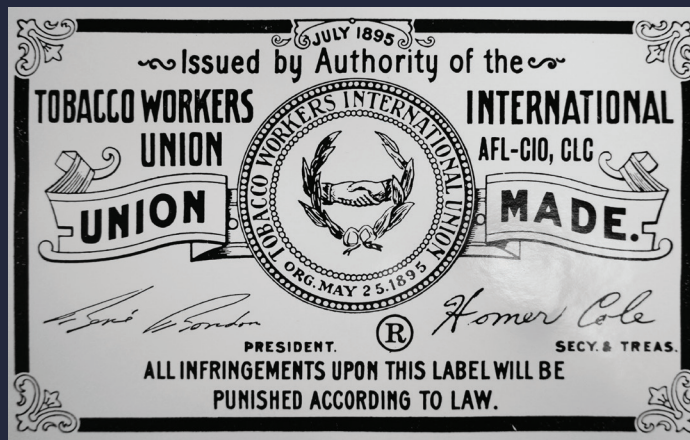
Albert N. Dennis on his 534th weekly broadcast, “Labor News Review” radio program proclaimed:

“The one emblem that most truly represents the fruits of ceaseless toil and effort for the betterment of mankind, from alpha to omega, from the days of serfdom to the present advanced state of wage earners, is the union label – whether a label on a product, a union shop card or a union service button.

“The union label affords the ONLY positive assurance that the goods you purchase were (1) made by capable workers, fairly compensated for their work; (2) not made in a foreign nation by exploited labor; (3) not made in a prison;

(4) not made by child labor, and (5) not produced by ‘sweatshop’ methods. The same principles apply to union services of all kinds.

“When you demand union-made goods and union services, you (1) assuredly help yourself; (2) you help your fellow-men, and (3) you aid in the advancement of civilization to higher standards and greater accomplishments.



“These simple truths must be plain to all who toil, their origin a part of the age-long struggle of ALL wage earners – and certainly their worth should be appreciated by all. Truly, the union label is an emblem of progress.”

– *Cigar Makers Official Journal*, November 1944, Vol. 68

Armed with an AFL charter and \$179 treasury of the Tobacco Workers Conference Council,

the National Tobacco Workers Union looked almost solely to the strength of the union label to give substance to its claim of being a national union. Its strategy was to print labels and distribute them free of charge to union manufacturers to affix to their products. The National Tobacco Workers Union adopted its union label in July 1895.

Union officers would not allow manufacturers to make their own arrangements to print the union label. In fact, when several began to place the label on advertising materials as well as on their tobacco, the union was quick to put an end to the practice.

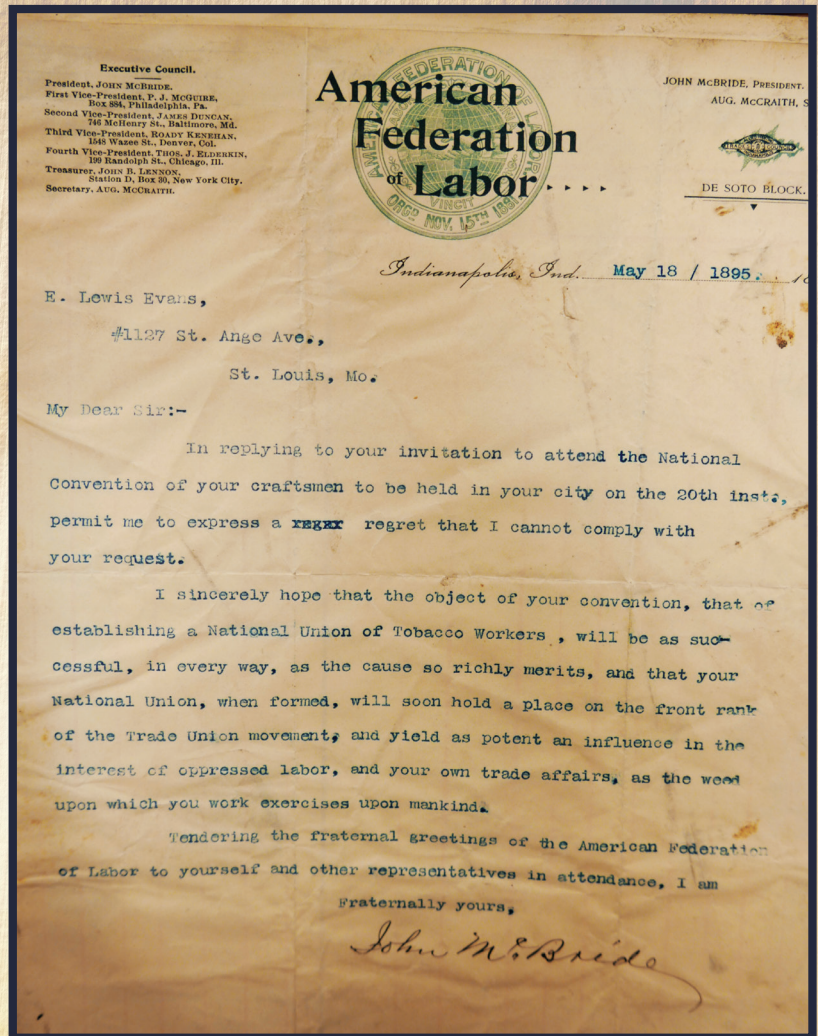
In 1898, Liggett & Myers signed an agreement with the Union but turned down the company's request for an order of labels to be rushed to its facilities to label current products. The union insisted that if they wanted product labeled, they would have to send for a member of the union to do it.

In the formation of new local unions across the country, the union label was the very cornerstone of the organization. It was said to be the chief factor in building the National Union.

By the Union's 3rd convention in May 1897, 27 companies in 16 cities and nine states were using the label and the Union was ready to send its first organizer on the road.

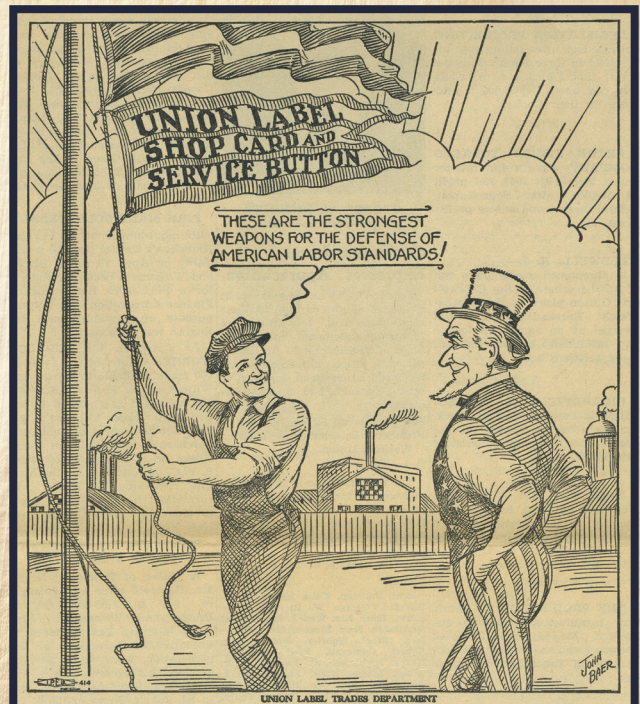
“We have learned that throughout the nation there are many conflicting reports in regard to organization in the tobacco industry, and especially in the cigarette field. As in other unions, we of course insist first of all that the labor movement and the public be guided first of all by the T.W.I.U. Blue Label, which signifies that the product is made in a 100 percent union shop, under fair conditions.

— *The Tobacco Worker*, March 1941



▲ Then AFL President John McBride declines an invitation to attend the founding Convention of the NUTW, sending his well-wishes for the establishment of a successful tobacco workers' union.

Cartoon from Union Label Trades Dept., *The Tobacco Worker*, June 1941



WORKING FOR SAFE JOBS

Workers Memorial Day • April 28, 2016

On April 28, the BCTGM and the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day

to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe jobs. This year, we will come together to call for work in this country that is safe and healthy and pays fair wages. We will celebrate the victories won by working people and commit to fighting until all workers have safe jobs and the freedom to form unions without the threat of retaliation.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act and Mine Safety and Health Act promise workers the right to a safe job. The BCTGM and our allies in labor have fought hard to make that promise a reality—winning protections that have made jobs safer, saved hundreds of thousands of lives and prevented millions of workplace injuries and illnesses.

But our work is not done. Many job hazards are unregulated and uncontrolled. Some employers cut corners and violate the law, putting workers in serious danger and costing lives. Workers who report job hazards or job injuries are fired or disciplined. Employers contract out dangerous work to try to avoid

responsibility. As a result, each year thousands of workers are killed and millions more injured or diseased because of their jobs.

Business groups have launched an all-out assault on working people, seeking to roll back existing protections and rights, and to block new safeguards. We have fought back, joining with worker centers,

local activists and other partners to defend and advance these hard-won gains. The BCTGM has been part of the fight to win a stronger coal dust standard for miners and a new rule to protect workers from deadly silica dust, which soon will be finalized, along with stronger anti-retaliation protections for workers who report job injuries.

DECADES OF STRUGGLE by working people and their unions have improved working conditions and made jobs safer. We must push forward and continue our fight to:

- **defend safety and health protections** and workers' rights from industry attacks;
- **win new workplace standards** for silica, combustible dust and infectious diseases;
- **prohibit employer policies and practices** that discourage reporting of workplace injuries;
- **increase attention to the safety and health of Latino and immigrant workers** who are at much greater risk of death and injury;
- **pass the Protecting America's Workers Act** to provide OSHA protection for the millions of workers without it, stronger criminal and civil penalties for companies that seriously violate job safety laws, and improved anti-retaliation protections for workers who raise job safety concerns;
- **ensure workers' right to have a voice on the job**, and to freely choose to form a union without employer interference or intimidation; and
- **demand higher wages** for workers through mobilizing, organizing, collective bargaining and legislative action.

WORKPLACE DANGERS Faced by BCTGM Members

Every year, workers in BCTGM-related industries are killed on the job because of hazardous conditions. It is well-documented that workers in the food processing and agricultural industries face unprecedented dangers daily in their workplaces.

From combustible dust explosions and entrapment in grain elevators, to blunt force trauma and lung disease, workers in the food sector face hazards that few other workers are forced to confront.

According to OSHA, employers are legally required to provide a workplace that is free from hazards. And yet every year thousands of workers are killed on the job, while millions more are hurt on the job or exposed to industrial diseases.

Many employers simply ignore the law and force workers to work in areas without the needed safety equipment or protection. Other employers speed up lines to such a degree that workers must rush their job (exposing them to injury), or must work in positions that can lead to back, neck and knee injuries or lead to cumulative trauma disorders. Many employers do not provide adequate

training, leaving workers to fend for themselves and learn on the job. All too often this leads to injury and death.

In the agricultural sector, a common hazard is engulfment in a grain elevator. According to OSHA, a worker can be completely submerged in flowing grain within 60 seconds. More than half of all grain engulfment accidents result in death by suffocation. Allowing workers to move grain while a sweep auger is running can cause the worker to become entangled in this dangerous equipment and submerged in the flowing grain.

Many BCTGM members in the sugar, grain and baking sectors face combustible dust hazards. An explosion can occur when fine granules, like grain or sugar dust, form a cloud in a confined area and touch an ignition source, such as a spark, flame or overheated pipe. The result can be a catastrophic and deadly explosion. Since 1980, more than 450 accidents involving dust have killed nearly 130 workers and injured more than 800, according to a Center for Public Integrity analysis of data compiled by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the U.S. Chemical Safety Board.

Nabisco Layoffs Exemplify America's FAILED TRADE LAWS

Mary Willis is all too familiar with the feeling of loss that comes when your job is outsourced.

Willis, 50, of Chicago, was laid off March 23 from the Southside Chicago Nabisco bakery. The layoff of 277 BCTGM Local 300 members at the plant is a result of the decision by Mondelez to shift Chicago's cookie and cracker production lines to a plant in Salinas, Mexico.

Willis landed her job at the Mondelez/Nabisco bakery in 2013 after a year of financial hardship following bankruptcy of Hostess and the shuttering of the Twinkie bakery where she worked for 10 years.

Willis was hired at the Hostess Schiller Park bakery in 2002 where she worked as a wrapper and packer and was a proud member of BCTGM Local 1. She truly enjoyed her work at the bakery and was devastated in 2012 when during the bankruptcy proceedings Hostess shut the plant and eliminated the livelihoods of 300 workers.

In reflecting on that loss Willis says, "We were like a family and we all lost everything – except for what our union gave us. The company just shut our plant down and that was it. We all thought we would retire from there. And at that point in my life I still needed another 12 to 15 years of work to retire. We didn't just lose our jobs. We lost a family."

It took Willis a full year to find another job. In October 2013, she was hired by Mondelez and joined the ranks of Local 300 as a worker

at the Southside Chicago Nabisco bakery. "At that time, I was tired of the constant job loss but I had faith that it would all be okay. Because when you have been through it three or four times, you are wary and suspicious," recalls Willis.

So at the May 2015 meeting when Mondelez approached Local 300 workers about the investments needed to the bakery, Willis said the lines sounded uncomfortably familiar. "There were a few of us that came over from the

Hostess bakery and we had heard it all before. The company promises to invest in the plant to try to keep it open. You got to at least TRY to be optimistic. We hoped the place wouldn't close – that you would one day get to retire. We wanted to have faith," says Willis.

"They quit me. I didn't quit them," Willis recalls with emotion. "And the truth is that

Mary Willis in front of her Northwestern Chicago home. She says she remains optimistic that she will land on her feet again. Willis, a proud member of Local 300, says, "I love my union. I fully believe in my union."



Dubbed "the Nabisco 600", Local 300 members who have been laid off from the Chicago bakery are attending labor events and showing up outside retail stores in communities urging American consumers to "Check the Label" and boycott Nabisco products made in Mexico. Pictured here is a group of workers from Chicago at a Mineworkers rally outside Pittsburgh.



when one company sees another get away with this – abandoning their workers – they think they can leave too,” she adds.

Once again Willis finds herself mourning the loss of her work community. “We are like a family and this hurts. With Hostess I lost my family. With Nabisco, I have lost a second family.”

Yet Willis says she continues to believe. “God doesn’t close one door without opening another one. We still support one another and lean on one another. It really takes a community to get through this. And I have my union and I love my union. We will get through this.”

Willis is an educated woman. She says she likes working in a factory, making food that Americans enjoy. “I choose to do this work. I have college degrees in nursing but I happen to prefer my work in the factory and I will tell you what, it takes an educated worker to run those machines,” notes Willis.

Her work in manufacturing first began in 1985 when she went to work at Brach’s, the

The offshoring of the Chicago Nabisco bakery jobs has gained the attention of presidential candidates, including Hillary Clinton, pictured here meeting with Intl. Vice Pres. Jethro Head and a group of Local 300 members in the union office outside the Southside Chicago plant.



historic, sprawling Chicago candy production plant that helped earn the city the name of the “World’s Candy Capital.” Willis worked at the candy factory until the 1990s, when workers were laid off when the company moved the jobs to Mexico.

In 2000, Willis went to work at the Entenmann’s bakery as a member of BCTGM Local 1. She worked in the utility department, sanitation department, as a bagel baker and as a machine operator. She left the Entenmann’s bakery a year before the company moved production out of Chicago and closed the plant permanently. During this time, Willis, who had

a young daughter, took a second job as a seasonal worker at the Nestle’ Franklin Park factory.

Willis admits that it is difficult to navigate the emotions of a constantly downsizing, outsourcing world. “It seems that hard work doesn’t matter anymore. This is the corporate attitude. And it used to be that places like Nabisco were proud places to work but now workers like me are tossed to the curb despite years of dedication,” says Willis.

Since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico and Canada increased from \$17 billion to \$177.2 billion, displacing more than 850,000 U.S. jobs. The majority of the job displacement is the result of a surge in outsourcing of production by U.S. corporations into Mexico. When other trade and investment deals the U.S. is party to are considered, more than five million U.S. manufacturing jobs have been lost in the last 20 years. The impact on American working families and the communities in which they live has been devastating. Well-paying middle-class jobs with decent benefits have either been eliminated altogether or replaced by lower paying jobs with few (if any) benefits. Families suffer, communities have smaller tax bases, infrastructure spending is impacted and consumer spending decreases.



BCTGM Intl. Rep. Brad Schmidt (right) leads the one-day shop stewards training at Local 433 in North Sioux City, S.D. on Feb. 9.

Educated and Engaged LOCAL 433 STEWARDS

Stewards play a vital role in their workplaces and in the labor movement, guiding and leading their coworkers in the everyday struggle of policing the union contract and protecting workers' rights. This position requires patience, persistence, attention to detail, and excellent communication skills.

Recognizing that these traits need to be learned, developed and practiced, Local 433 (Sioux City, Iowa) President and GEB Member Paula Steig and International Representative Brad Schmidt recently shared their many years of in-plant experience with a group of newly-elected Local 433 shop stewards.

The stewards came from several different plants, including Bimbo Bakeries USA in Bellevue, Neb., Interbake Foods in North Sioux City, S.D., Bimbo

Bakeries USA in South Sioux City, Neb. and J. Skinner Co. in Omaha, Neb.

The participation of the stewards from the J. Skinner plant is especially exciting as it a direct result of a successful internal organizing effort led by Steig the hard work of Steig in a successful internal organizing drive at the facility. The plant has suffered recently from low membership, which leads to deteriorating union strength within the plant. Recognizing this, Steig reached out to the workers and slowly the plant is gaining membership strength.

The day-long training included discussions about how to serve as the first line of defense against unscrupulous supervisors and corporate agendas, simulated workplace role playing, and a thorough review of the roles and responsibilities of stewards.



Pictured here are Local 433 stewards (from left to right) Jordan Miller, Alan Boyce, Kyle Trost, Monica Jimenez, Joe Hinds and Herbert Walker.

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130 Years

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BCTGM-Made **Cheerio's** celebrates *75 Years*

BCTGM Local 36G workers have been producing Cheerio's in Buffalo, N.Y. for decades.

And this year the famous General Mill's brand and the world's first, oat-based, ready-to-eat cereal, turns 75.

Union members at the plant produce 62 million boxes of Cheerio's per year at the company's most historic property. The Buffalo General Mills cereal and flour plant is one of the last working grain elevators in Buffalo. It is contained within a 27-acre complex where workers produce the iconic cereal as well as Gold Medal flour.

Local 36G Business Agent and GEB member Tom Binger worked in the flour mill from 1980 to 2002, when he was elected to his current position. According to Binger, the oldest structure on the General Mills property, which is bordered by the Buffalo River and the City Ship Canal, dates to 1903. Many of the nearly 400 current workers at the plant have parents or grandparents who baked cereal and

Local 36G members at the iconic Buffalo plant make 62 million boxes of Cheerio's per year.



milled flour on the site.

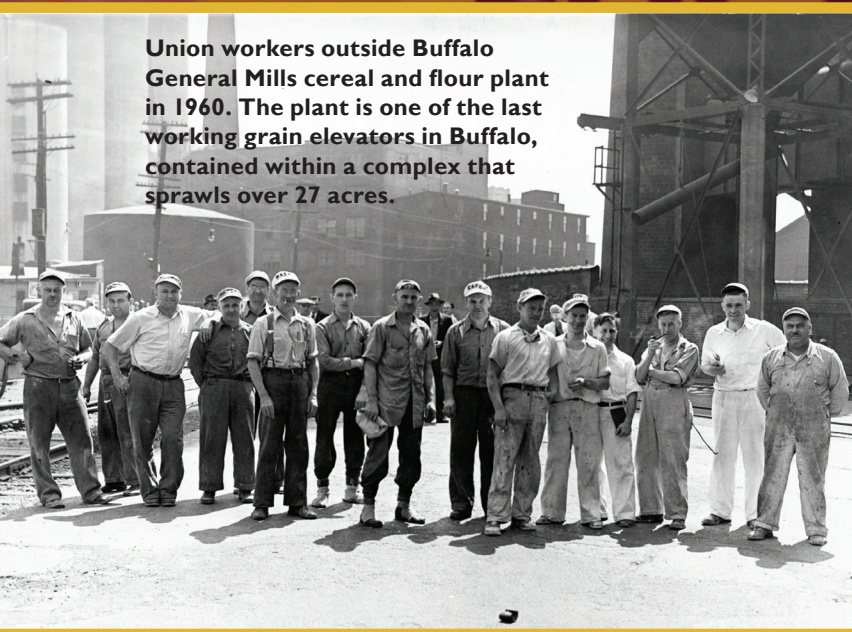
Flour-making began at the General Mills property in 1904, under the Washburn Crosby brand, a name still visible on a sky-high chimney stack on the site. According to Binger, a trek to the top of the grain elevator offers expansive views of downtown Buffalo, north toward Niagara Falls and southwest along Lake Erie.

Construction on the current cereal building began in 1939 but a fire destroyed the structure in 1940, one week before it was slated to open. This delayed the start of production of what was initially branded as "CheeriOats" until October 1941.

General Mills has modernized the plant and its production process throughout the years, with computers and automation taking on tasks previously done by hand. However, much remains the same and the grain is still brought to the factory by rail – or ship from Duluth, Minn. – and stored in the grain elevator for later use.

According to Binger, you can identify Cheerio's made by Local 36G members in Buffalo by checking the code on the box; Cheerio's made in Buffalo begin with the letters "BU."

Union workers outside Buffalo General Mills cereal and flour plant in 1960. The plant is one of the last working grain elevators in Buffalo, contained within a complex that sprawls over 27 acres.



BCTGM Pledges **FULL SUPPORT** for Lifeway Workers



It has been more than a year and a half since workers at three Chicago-area Lifeway Foods facilities overcame a vicious anti-union campaign and voted overwhelmingly to join the BCTGM.

Since that time, executives for Lifeway, including CEO Julie Smolyansky, have refused to negotiate a first union contract with BCTGM Local I (Chicago) and continue to violate federal labor law.

In November 2015, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a Summary Judgement ordering the company to negotiate with the union. In December 2015, an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) ruled that the company had illegally fired two workers, had violated federal law for anti-union activity, and had

unilaterally changed work rules that ultimately harmed many of the company's female workers.

Despite these actions, the spirit of the Lifeway workers has not been diminished. Instead, workers have remained steadfast and committed to their decision to become BCTGM members and are welcoming a renewed effort to expose the hypocrisy of CEO Julie Smolyansky.

The Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) sent a pointed letter to CEO Smolyansky insisting she sit down with the Local and negotiate first contract. Support has also come from Jobs with Justice, BCTGM Local 300, Chicago-based worker organizations, and numerous other unions.

Meanwhile, the Local is also making every effort to ensure that CEO Smolyansky hears the message of her workers loud and clear.

In February, the Local set up pickets and handed out flyers at a political fundraiser CEO Smolyansky was hosting. In March, officers

and activists from Local 37 (Los Angeles) hand-billed a Food Expo in Anaheim, Calif. that Smolyansky was attending. In early April, Local I activists picketed a conference where Smolyansky was the keynote speaker.

According to BCTGM Local I President Donald Woods, there is no reason but anti-union animus that is keeping Lifeway workers from realizing their dream of joining the BCTGM. "By ignoring the wishes of her employees, and snubbing her nose at the federal government, CEO Smolyansky is really showing her true colors as an employer," said Woods.

According to BCTGM International President David B. Durkee, the International Union will do everything in its power to bring the company to the table to negotiate in good faith. "The BCTGM is taking this issue very seriously and will utilize any and all means to convince Ms. Smolyansky to stop her vicious anti-union campaign and sit down to negotiate a contract, as the NLRB has demanded," said Durkee.



TPP Could **Hurt** Canadian Health Care

A new report sheds light on the impact the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal could have on the Canadian healthcare system.

A new series called “What’s the big deal? Understanding the Trans-Pacific Partnership” by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives sheds new light on aspects of the giant trade deal that has not garnered significant media attention. One such area is Canada’s healthcare system. Below are excerpts from the report “Major Complications: TPP and Canadian Healthcare”.

“As even its proponents admit, the agreement would have only a marginal impact on actual trade volumes and economic growth. But its 30 chapters and thousands of pages of rules would place many new constraints on government policy in areas not strictly related to trade, including public health.”

“Without doubt, the TPP’s single biggest direct impact on the Canadian health care system would be to increase drug costs as a result of extending patents. Canada already has an industry-friendly system of intellectual property protection for pharmaceutical patent holders. This is reflected in the high prices Canadians pay for prescription drugs.”

“The overarching impacts of the proposed treaty would be to weaken our public health care system, undermine health regulation, and obstruct efforts to renew and expand public health care in the face of new challenges.”

“Canadians already pay too much for prescription drugs and the TPP would worsen this situation by extending patents and impeding cost-saving measures. Research clearly shows that extending monopoly protection and boosting brand-name drug company profits in hopes of generating higher levels of research and development (R&D), and more innovative medicines, has been a failure. The TPP would burden the Canadian health care system with higher drug costs while frustrating efforts to find a better balance between needed innovation and the affordability of medicines.”

“The TPP will further increase these costs by requiring the federal government to extend the term of patents to account for supposed regulatory delays in approving drugs for sale. The TPP could also have adverse effects on the criteria that Canada uses to decide on drug safety and effectiveness, how it approves or does not approve new drugs for marketing, post-market surveillance and inspection, the listing of drugs on public formularies, and how individual drugs are priced in the future.”

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