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BCTGM *News*

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NUMBER 5



November **7th**

Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!



the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE 2006 ELECTIONS—YOU DECIDE

future. Because of the greatness of the American democratic process, elections here truly matter and determine the quality of life and standard of living of our citizens.

This year is no different. In fact, given the weakened state of the economy, the enormous financial pressures on working families and the tremendous changes taking place around the world, this year's elections take on even greater importance than some elections in years past.

Elections are about choices. Working people must decide whether they will vote for candidates who truly have their interests at heart or for those candidates who say they care about working families but end up protecting only the interests of the privileged and the corporate bosses.

Every election year, corporations contribute millions of dollars (the profits made off of the products produced by and sold to working people) to politicians who vote against workers every chance they get. They spend millions of dollars to fund political television and radio ads designed to convince working people to vote against their own interests.

Amazingly, our own money is constantly being used against us!

Unfortunately, we know that all too often these corporate persuasion tactics have been successful. Far too many times in recent elections, working people have been blinded by diversionary political smokescreens that focus on phony "wedge" issues that have nothing to do with the economic well being of most Americans.

As a result, we have helped put in office the hand-picked candidates of corporate America rather than candidates who will do what's best for working people, our children and grandchildren.

To see the scope and impact of this strategy of deception, all we have to do is pay attention to the news. Each and every day we witness another fiasco for working families caused by the people running this country.

Energy policies that enrich the oil companies and drain our wallets; health care policies that enrich the drug companies and make health care more and more unaffordable; trade policies that enrich corporations and send our good jobs to second and third-world countries; retirement security policies that enrich employers and eliminate our pensions; government contracting policies that enrich unscrupulous companies like Halliburton and leave the average taxpayer holding the bag—the list goes on and on.

To truly understand the deceit and out-and-out lying that characterizes today's government actions, we need look no further than the recent congressional debate on raising the minimum wage. Leaders in Congress publicly claimed they supported an increase in the minimum wage

(even though they vote against an increase year after year).

But what they wouldn't tell the American people is that they would allow a vote on a minimum wage increase ONLY if the legislation also included a multi-billion dollar tax cut windfall for a few thousand of the richest people in our country.

Billions for the ultra rich and what amounts to a few cents for the lowest-paid workers in our society. I have never seen a more cynical or shameless act by people who supposedly were elected to defend those in our society who cannot defend themselves.

It doesn't take much deep analysis to realize what has been happening to working people in this country as a result of recent elections. Every working person in this country is feeling the heavy pressure caused by the policies of those elected officials who are running this country.

Working men and women don't have to look at their neighbors' financial situation. They only have to look at their own.

On November 7, working people have an opportunity to change the course of our country by voting for men and women who have a proven commitment to our interests and not the interests of our employers whose only goal is to accumulate more wealth and power at our expense.

For the sake of future generations of working people and their families, it is my deepest hope that we will seize this historic opportunity.

As always in our democracy, the power is in the hands of the people. We will decide our future beginning on November 7. I urge all BCTGM members to vote for a better future for America.

Frank Hurt
BCTGM International President





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Santorum Gets Special Delivery from America's Seniors: **BCTGM-Made Donuts**

Marie Malagrecia, a 79-year-old retired union member, says the Medicare Part D prescription drug “donut hole” is “a fiasco and we’re just outraged.” Under the new Medicare Part D rules passed by Congress in 2003, out-of-pocket prescription expenses between the annual amounts of \$2,251 and \$5,100 are not covered. This nearly \$3,000 gap has been dubbed the “donut hole.”

Malagrecia is one of more than 600 members of the Alliance for Retired Americans who descended on Washington, D.C. in early September for the retiree activist group’s convention, including a rally and lobby day on Capitol Hill.

As part of the lobbying actions, a group of Alliance members delivered BCTGM-Local 3 (New York) made donuts to Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.). Santorum

has been a vocal supporter of the flawed Medicare prescription drug law that President George W. Bush signed. Santorum is also one of Bush’s strongest allies in his effort to privatize Social Security.

Top priorities of the three-million member Alliance include the failures of the Medicare Part D prescription drug program and the efforts by the Administration and Republican congressional leaders to renew their drive to privatize Social Security.

More than seven million of

the 11.8 million Americans with Medicare Part D drug coverage are expected to fall through the donut hole in the coming years. And, according to the Alliance for Retired Americans’ most recent congressional voting record, 170 House members and 40 Senators had a “0” score on seniors’ issues—meaning they

be a fortune to some of them. Where are they going to get the money?” reflects Malagrecia.

She adds that the drive to privatize Social Security and the donut hole combined, “threatens every part of what we expected to have. If I couldn’t have my Social Security, I’d drop right out of the middle class, and

I’m better off than most. We’ve got to do something about it,” says Malagrecia.

Several Congressional Republicans say if they maintain control of Congress after the fall elections, the Bush Administration’s plan to privatize Social Security is at the top of their agenda.

“We’re mad at the people who think that our Social



Alliance for Retired Americans members deliver BCTGM-made donuts to Capitol Hill on “Donut Hole” Day.

voted against the best interests of the nation’s seniors every chance they could.

Malagrecia, from Blawnox, Pa., near Pittsburgh, says her union retiree health benefits, together with her USW pension and Social Security, mean she personally isn’t threatened by the Medicare donut hole. However, “A lot of my friends are just starting to fall into it or already have. There was a lot of confusion at the start. People thought they’d pay their premiums and get their benefits. The donut hole could

Security money belongs to them...that they can just turn it over to their friends on Wall Street to play with, while we take all the risk and get our benefits cut,” notes Alliance for Retired Americans President George Kourpias.

Last year, BCTGM retirees and members mobilized to stop the Bush plan. Thanks to hundreds of thousands of e-mails, phone calls and letters from across the labor movement, combined with rallies and marches, the plan to privatize Social Security was derailed.

THE 109TH

DO-NOTHING CONGRESS

Working families throughout America are increasingly being squeezed—they are working longer today to pay for middle-class living than they had to 25 years ago. Nationally, today's families are facing a combination of stagnant incomes and staggering cost increases for health care, education, housing, transportation and, especially now, fuel. And it's a direct result of policy choices that have been made by our nation's leaders.

With just a few weeks remaining before adjournment, the 109th Congress is going into the history books as the country's least productive Congress in more than two centuries. In fact, the 109th Congress is on track to exceed the infamous "Do-Nothing Congress" of 1948.

"If the House sticks to its schedule, it will have worked 84 days this year when votes were scheduled, 26 fewer than the Congress that President Truman labeled 'do-nothing' during his 1948 campaign." [*Washington Post*, 7/30/06]

The following highlights some of the failures of the Republican-led 109th Congress.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

- **OVERTIME PROTECTIONS:** Congressional leaders have failed to support a measure to prohibit the Administration from taking overtime pay away from an estimated six million workers. During the Bush Administration, wages have stagnated or declined, even as the cost of health care, child care, and other essential expenses has continued to climb. The Administration's overtime regulations will mean millions in lost wages at a time when workers can least afford it;
- **MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE:** For the eighth year in a row, Congress has failed to raise the minimum wage. Minimum wage employees working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, earn \$10,700 a year, \$5,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. The current minimum wage fails to provide enough income to enable minimum wage workers to afford adequate housing in any area of the country.

HEALTH CARE

- **HEALTH CARE COSTS:** Congress has failed to pass legislation to hold down the unprecedented increases in health care premiums for American families. Employer-sponsored health insurance increased by 9.2 percent in 2005—more than three times the growth in wages and more than twice the rate of overall inflation. Premiums for family health coverage are now \$10,880, up from \$6,348 in 2000. These premium hikes are straining family finances, forcing businesses to drop coverage, and driving up the number of uninsured Americans;
- **COVERING THE UNINSURED:** The 109th Congress has failed to enact legislation to reduce the growing number of uninsured Americans, which now stands at 45.8 million. The number of uninsured Americans has increased by six million since 2000. People without health insurance have less access to health care, are in poorer health, and are at greater risk of premature death;
- **PRESCRIPTION DRUG IMPORTATION:** Congress has failed to enact drug importation legislation, which would give American consumers access to lower-priced drugs from abroad. The price of commonly prescribed brand name drugs has been increasing in the United States by more than twice the rate of inflation, creating a barrier to accessing needed medications;
- **MEDICARE DRUG COVERAGE:** The 109th Congress has failed to support efforts to address anticipated problems implementing the new Medicare drug benefit, such as transitioning some beneficiaries' drug coverage from Medicaid to Medicare. Also, Republican leaders continue to oppose legislation that would allow Medicare to use its purchasing power to lower drug prices;
- **MEDICARE PREMIUM INCREASES:** The Congress has not responded to recent increases in Medicare Part B premiums. Monthly Part B premiums have almost doubled since 2000—from \$45.50 in 2000 to \$88.50 in 2006;



EDUCATION

- **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FUNDING:** Congress has failed to fully fund No Child Left Behind (NCLB) education reforms. Even though school districts are facing increasingly rigorous academic standards and new requirements for highly qualified teachers, Republicans actually reduced funding for NCLB in Fiscal Year 2006. Funding for NCLB is about \$13 billion below the authorized level;
- **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT:** The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) was reauthorized at the end of 2004, but Congress underfunded the program by \$4 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 below the authorized level. For the first time in a decade, the federal government has scaled back its share of special education funding;
- **HIGHER EDUCATION ACT:** Congress partially reauthorized the *Higher Education Act* as

part of budget reconciliation. While the bill included some additional financial aid for students eligible for Pell Grants, the new aid fails to prioritize the neediest students and imposes new hurdles. Congress passed up an enormous opportunity to make college more affordable, instead using saving from greater efficiency in the student loan program to partially offset the cost of tax cuts.

It is time for our elected officials to recognize the burdens that working families live with every day and fight for working families' best interests—not the special interests. "Every union member and their families must register to vote and vote for change in November. Our very survival is at stake," notes BCTGM International President Frank Hurt.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LABOR 2006, VISIT WWW.BCTGM.ORG. YOU HAVE A VOICE—MAKE IT HEARD!

THE "DO-NOTHING" CONGRESS DID NOTHING TO HELP AMERICA'S FAMILIES:

- They **DID NOT** pass a raise in the minimum wage to help 6.6 American workers despite 10 years since the last increase [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 7/28/06]
- They **DID NOT** provide any oversight of the Bush Administration's commitment to a failed strategy in Iraq [The Philadelphia Inquirer, 7/16/06]
- They **DID NOT** do anything to help Americans facing sky-high gas prices [Energy Information Administration, Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update 7/24/06; Los Angeles Times, 7/11/06; EIA Spot Prices for Oil 7/18/05 and 7/18/06]
- They **DID NOT** fix problems with the Medicare drug bill forcing an estimated 3.4 million seniors to have additional drug expenses [USA Today, 7/26/06]

. . . BUT THE 109TH CONGRESS DID:

- Fight repeatedly to repeal estate taxes by \$1.4 million each for 8,200 Americans [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 7/28/06; MarketWatch, 7/27/06]
- Rubber-stamp President Bush's failures in Iraq [The Nation, 3/17/06]
- Increase their own paychecks by \$31,000 over nine years since 1997 [USA Today, 6/25/06]
- Pass a massive give-away to big oil [USA Today, 7/28/05; S. Amdt. 3046, 109th Congress]
- Cut funds for student loans, as college tuition fees increase by 57 percent since President Bush took office [CNN, 2/8/06]
- Cut Benefits for Insured Americans while Providing Give-Aways to Health Savings Associations [Families USA, 5/8/06]

BCTGM MEMBERS RAISE \$45K FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES



When BCTGM Local 167G (Grand Forks, N.D.) member Mark Froemke fully understood the massive funding crisis sweeping Minnesota and North Dakota public school libraries, he knew the labor movement could do something to help.

The public school libraries have faced increasing cuts to their budgets due to decreased aid from the state and federal governments. Many areas have been forced to cut costs by reducing material budgets and curriculum, with some school library programs being eliminated altogether. The grim situation caps years of lean budgets with most school book collections aged and inadequate.

Froemke, who also serves as the president of the Northern Valley Labor Council of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, came up with an idea to aid the schools nearly two years ago, pledging that children wouldn't be victims of government budget cuts. With the help of Local 167G Financial Secretary Scott Ripplinger and Local 167G Unit 264 Vice President Mel Morris, a special BCTGM-fundraiser was held to raise money for the area's school libraries.

Morris and Ripplinger, officers of the former Local 264G (*Local 264G is now part of the newly-formed Local 167G, see page 14*), held a "Month of Money" raffle. The Local printed

500 raffle tickets and sold them for \$20 each. According to Ripplinger, sales of the tickets were brisk due to the cause. Prizes were \$125 daily for the month of May, except for the 1st and 15th when the payout was \$400, and Memorial Day when the prize was \$600.

At the end of the "book drive," the Northern Valley Labor Council donated \$40,000 to three public school district libraries. BCTGM Local 264G donated an additional \$4,920 raised through their month-long raffle to increase the total donation to nearly \$45,000.

The generous donation was distributed between the Grand Forks, N.D., the East Grand Forks, Minn. and the Crookston, Minn. Public School Library Systems. According to Ripplinger, "The school administrators, teachers and library staff members were extremely grateful for this first of its kind donation to the school libraries."

Of the new books purchased by the school libraries, many were on workers' struggle for economic and social justice and the battles of labor unions in the 1800s and 1900s.

"This gift is not only a gesture of gratitude for all that public education has done for union members and their families," said Froemke. "It also signifies labor's continuing support for the

BCTGM Local 167G Unit 264 Vice Pres. Mel Morris (right) and Local 167G Fin. Secy. Scott Ripplinger (left) present Northern Valley Labor Council Pres. Mark Froemke, also a member of Local 167G, a check for \$4,920. Together, the group raised nearly \$45,000 for public school libraries.

teachers, administrators and staff who have made our public schools a wonderful success today. For working people, public education is one of the most important accomplishments of the labor movement. It'll be hard to find more labor books in public schools for K-12 than what we've purchased," he added.

Virginia Tupa, director of instructional services for the Grand Forks Public School System noted, "It is the largest single contribution the Grand Forks libraries have ever received. We're very excited and thrilled about this."

Tupa credits Grand Forks Public Schools Administrative Assistant Shirley Johnson with making the most of every dollar donated. Johnson ordered all the books and videos for the three districts and bargained with various publishers and distributors to get the best deals. Johnson estimates that she will be able to purchase more than 9,000 books and videos with the \$45,000. Each book will have a special sticker indicating it was donated by the labor movement.

BCTGM Secures Important Victory at *Fiesta Mart*

After months of intimidation and anti-union tactics by Fiesta Mart management, Houston bakery workers cheered the victorious results of the NLRB-ordered union representation election on June 30.

Shortly after midnight, BCTGM International Representative and Organizer Cesar Calderon proudly announced that the Fiesta Mart Inc. bakery commissary workers voted to join BCTGM Local 163 (Houston).

A lack of respect and harsh treatment on the job were the reasons they reached out to the BCTGM, said Calderon. The workers—primarily immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico—complained of verbal abuse, Calderon noted. Supervisors called them “stupid” and “good for nothing,” he said. Low wages were also an issue, “But respect to these workers for their hard work is very important,” said Calderon.

During the campaign, the BCTGM filed numerous Unfair Labor Practice Charges with the National Labor Relations Board against Fiesta Mart for illegal surveillance of employees with a camera, implementation of a gag rule and no solicitation rules for union materials and conversations, interrogations of workers by supervisors and a threat to fire employees for signing union cards or voting for the union. Another charge involved the employer threatening to shut down the plant if the union won the election.

A rally to support the workers efforts to organize was held on June 24 and Deacon Sam

Dunning of the Galveston-Houston Diocese conducted a prayer vigil the day before the election. According to Calderon, the outpouring of community support was vital to this organizing drive. “There was a tremendous amount of support. This really marked a turning point in the campaign as the encouragement the workers received from religious, community and government leaders gave them the courage to follow through and vote for union representation,” said Calderon.

In addition to Deacon Dunning, the bakers received support from Archbishop Daniel DiNardo of Our Lady of Guadalupe, U.S. Rep. Gene Green (D-29th TX), State Senators John Whitmire and Mario Gallegos Jr., State Representatives Dr. Alma A. Allen, Kevin Bailey, Senfronia Thompson, Hubert Vo and Jessica Farrar, the Houston City Council, as well as the Central Labor Council, the Texas AFL-CIO, and various other unions.

The Union is currently bargaining with Fiesta Mart over the workers’ first contract. Negotiations in Houston are being lead by BCTGM International Representative Dale Nichols, assisted by Calderon, Local 163 officer Donald Pierce and the Fiesta Mart Commissary Bakery workers represented by Arturo Nuno and Luis Herrera.

A key person on the union organizing committee, Nuno notes, “The workers and not management have made Fiesta



Mart a strong and profitable company. After twenty one years of service, I feel that I deserve to be treated with dignity and respect—which was the reason why we voted for the BCTGM,” said Nuno

Mario Luna, also a member of the organizing committee concluded, “I feel proud to have contributed to this cause which is not only mine, but of every worker at Fiesta Mart”

Local 264 Members Produce *Swe*



*F*OR MORE THAN 40 YEARS, members of BCTGM Local 264 have been making **jaw breakers, bubble Gum, chewing gum, and candies** in many different flavors, varieties and themes at the Oak Leaf Confections plant in Toronto. The manufacturing and distribution center has 20 lines and produces 42 million pounds of candy per year.

Some of the specialty candy made by Local 264 members is among kid's best loved treats. Union-made Oak Leaf candy includes such items as **Funny Bones Candy, Hockey Pucks Candy, Red Hots Jawbreakers, Banana Heads, Smiley Face Bubble Gum balls, Baseball Gum balls** and much more. Oak Leaf Candy is sold by the package, but also in bulk for use in vending machines.

Pictured here are the proud members of BCTGM Local 264 hard at work at the Oak Leaf manufacturing plant in Toronto.

Meet Delights at Oak Leaf Confections



Local 68 Holds Annual Stewards Training

BCTGM Local 68 (Baltimore) continued its long tradition of educating its shop stewards by holding its annual two-day training at the Maritime Institute of Technology in September. The training, which was facilitated by BCTGM

International Director of Research and Education Ray Scannell, was attended by more than 25 stewards from Schmidt Baking Company, Automatic Rolls, Weston Bakeries and H&S Bakery, among other companies.

The group was first addressed by Ernie Grecco, president of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO, on the importance of voting in the 2006 gubernatorial elections. He focused on the Maryland governor's race and discussed important issues facing working families in Maryland.

The main focus of the training was organizing new mem-



BCTGM Local 68 (Baltimore) Shop Steward's pose for a photo following the two-day training.

bers. Scannell gave a presentation that provided an overview of a traditional organizing campaign, examined different strategies and tactics to be used in campaigns, and focused on the importance of one-on-one communication between organizers and non-union workers and the role stewards play in identifying potential targets. Scannell also discussed the ways in which management tries to keep unions out of their workplaces.

Stewards also worked on exercises in small groups. One

assignment examined potential organizing targets in the Baltimore area. The groups analyzed each target, discussed what further information was needed, and gave recommendations.

In addition to the organizing training, a group of new stewards participated in a series of presentations and exercises that focused on the role stewards play in the workplace, communication strategies, grievance handling and labor law.



2007 BCTGM International Scholarship Program

The **BCTGM International Scholarship Program** will award ten \$1,000 one-time scholarship awards in 2007. One of the scholarships is reserved for a Canadian and up to three of the ten is designated for active members of the BCTGM. **The deadline for applications in January 31, 2007.**

To learn more about this special BCTGM membership feature, you will find the official rules and regulations for the 2007 BCTGM International Scholarship Program and the application (both in French and English) posted on the union's website, www.bctgm.org.

BCTGM Rallies in Support of Jailed Zimbabwean Unionists

The BCTGM was among trade union activists who gathered outside the Embassy of Zimbabwe in Washington D.C. on September 22 in support of jailed Zimbabwean union leaders.

Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) General Secretary Wellington Chibebe, recipient of the 2003 George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award was among the 256 Zimbabwean unionists and activists who were beaten and arrested at a peaceful September 13 rally calling for a response to the country's deepening economic crisis.

According to the AFL-CIO, Chibebe and ZCTU President Matombo were beaten so severely, they could not stand. The activists remain in custody, where they have been refused medical attention, access to lawyers and representatives of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

"The AFL-CIO is incensed by the violence unleashed on the



BCTGM Intl. Exec. Vice Pres. Joseph Thibodeau (left) was among the trade unionists who rallied outside the Embassy of Zimbabwe on September 22 in Washington D.C. to demand an investigation into the beating and arrest of the ZCTU union leaders.

workers of Zimbabwe," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. "We are deeply concerned for the safety and health of those in custody and strongly condemn the brutal repression of union activity."

At the demonstration outside the Embassy, protesters demand-

ed an investigation into the beatings and arrests and denounced the denied entry of a delegation of U.S. trade union leaders into Zimbabwe to meet with injured leaders of the ZCTU, following the brutal attack on them and their arrest on September 13.



Creative Political Action

When asked how they would urge their fellow union members to vote in the November 7 elections, BCTGM Local 25 (Chattanooga, Tenn.) members who work at White Lily Foods Co. in Knoxville, Tenn. took a creative approach. The workers pictured on the cover and in the photo here, took time during their breaks to pose for a photo to encourage their union brothers and sisters throughout the U.S. to get out and vote in November.

Pictured above are Local 25 members (from left to right) Robert Ivey, Jason Roach, Charles Galloway and Ernie Boling. On the cover are Local 25 members (from left to right) Robert Ivey, Aline Harris, Jason Roach, Anthony Dockins, Thurman Kinnebrew, and Hubert Gusby. Kudos to these hard-working Local 25 members for this creative idea!

BCTGM-PAC

Supporting Workers' Friends in Congress

While few worker-friendly laws have been enacted during the 109th Congress, BCTGM members throughout the U.S. have generously supported policy makers who continue to fight for working families. Pictured here are BCTGM representatives presenting pro-union Members of Congress with BCTGM-PAC donations.



◀ U.S. Rep. Bob Filner (D-Calif.) has served the people of Southern California's 51st District in Congress since 1992, compiling an impressive record of supporting labor. Pictured here presenting a BCTGM-PAC donation to Filner (right) to aid in his re-election campaign, is Local 315 Fin. Secy. Deborah Lacey-Zuelsdorf (left).



◀ Congressman George Miller is a leading spokesman in Congress on labor, education, the economy, and the environment. He has represented the 7th District of California in

Patricia Madrid is a Democrat running for the U.S. House of Representatives to represent New Mexico's 1st District. If elected, Madrid has said she will sign on as a co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act. Pictured



here is Madrid (center) during a recent visit to the Local 351 (Albuquerque, N.M.) union office with Sylvia Molinar (left) and Pres. Earl L. Reed (right).

San Francisco's East Bay since 1975. Miller is an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act that would strengthen protections for workers' freedom to choose union representation. Pictured here presenting Miller (left) with a BCTGM-PAC donation is Local 125 (Oakland, Calif.) Pres. Ken Young (right).



▲ BCTGM members from Michigan had the opportunity to meet with Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) during a "Power Breakfast" held in Detroit on Sept. 25. The Senator met one-on-one with the group to discuss issues of importance to the BCTGM. Pictured here, from left to right, are L. 326 (Detroit) member Evege James, L. 3G (Battle Creek) Rec. Secy. Mike Riffey, Stabenow, L. 66G (Battle Creek) Vice Pres. Dennis Martinovich, (back row) L. 3G Pres. Rocky Marsh, Local 326 Pres. Nickee Crane, and Intl. Vice Pres. Mike Konesko.



▲ Darcy Burner is a Democrat running for the 8th Congressional District of Washington State. Pictured here with Burner (left) is Local 9 (Seattle) Bus. Rep. Mary Trujillo (right), who presented Burner with a BCTGM-PAC donation to aid in her campaign.

Historic Pattern Agreement Reached *With Sara Lee*

In mid-September, a new contract was reached between Local 65 (Oklahoma City, Okla) and the Sara Lee Bakery Group which is to act as the pattern for all Sara Lee contracts in the 3rd and 4th Regions.

The BCTGM represents nearly 4,000 Sara Lee members in those regions.

The new three-year agreement features a total wage increase of \$1.30 over the life of the agreement as



Intl. Vice Pres. Jeanne Graham (standing, left), Intl. Vice Pres. Bob Oakley (standing, right), and Intl. Reps. Steve Bertelli (sitting, left) and Dale Nichols (sitting, right) meet for discussion during caucus.

The Local 65 (Oklahoma City) negotiating committee.



well as a healthy pension enhancement. In addition, local unions will have the right to purchase additional pension and/or P-Plan benefits from wages. Sickness and accident benefits were raised, as was the W-1 benefit plan.

The contract also contains an agreement that the company will provide and maintain all current healthcare plans, benefits and levels. According to lead negotiator BCTGM Vice President Bob Oakley, securing the maintenance of benefits was extremely important. "Our members want the peace of mind that comes with knowing you have set medical and prescription drug benefits," said Oakley after ratification of the deal.

International President Frank Hurt said he was pleased with the new agreement and commended the negotiating committee on a job well-done. "They were well-prepared and all on the same page. They knew what our members really wanted and knew that the company could afford it," stated Hurt.

Local Wins Grievance Against Sara Lee

On June 23, BCTGM Local 149 (Memphis, Tenn.) received the news it had been anticipating for over a year: that Arbitrator Elliot Shriftman had ruled that Sara Lee's implementation of a new prescription drug plan had violated the collective bargaining agreement between the union and the company.

The problem began after a new collective agreement had been negotiated in March 2004. During those negotiations the company and the union agreed to change medical plans, and also agreed to a new set of rates for prescription co-pays. However, the company agreed to maintain all health benefits.

Not long after the new agreement was in place, it came to light that the Company had stopped the practice of charging generic co-pay for brand name drugs without generic equivalents. Under the old plan, members could pay the generic co-pay price (\$5.00) for a brand name drug, if no generic drug was made available. Under the new plan, members were forced to pay the full brand-name co-pay adding a much greater expense onto the members.

In his ruling, the Arbitrator found that the company had agreed to "provide and maintain all current plans, schedule of benefits and pay the entire cost of maintaining those benefits." He continued that "all the Union had to do and all it needed to do was to win language which protected, that is maintained, all of the prior levels of benefits." The Company argued that all prescription drugs had an identical co-pay and that there had never been any exceptions. However, the Arbitrator stated that "the words 'generic co-pay for brand when generic not available' existed in the old plan and, by dint of that coupled with the express promise by the Company to maintain all levels of benefits, had to continue unchanged."

Thus, the Arbitrator ruled that the company had to reimburse all those members who were forced to pay the brand name co-pay when no generic was made available, and to cease and desist from that practice.

In the matter of the Arbitration between Local 149 BCTGM and Sara Lee Bakery Group (FMCS No. 05-52064) Arbitrator: Elliot D. Shriftman

LOCAL *View*



152 YEARS PROUD

The Maysey family celebrates 152 years of BCTGM membership this year, according to Retired BCTGM Local 4 (St. Louis) Pres. Bill Maysey. Maysey, who has been a union member for 40 years, says he is very proud of his family's union legacy. Pictured here with Bill Maysey (sitting), from left to right, is Jack Maysey (36 years, former L. 4 Pres.), Sheryl McLeroy-Maysey (31 years), Betty Maysey (15 years) and James Maysey (30 years).

BCTGM Local 342 (Bloomington, Ill.) once again brought joy to their community by passing out union-made candy during Bloomington's annual Labor Day Parade on September 4. Pictured here are members of Local 342 sharing candy with the crowd.



LABOR DAY

LOCAL UNION MERGERS

Since we last published a list of BCTGM local union mergers in the Jan./Feb. 2006 issue of the BCTGM News, the following locals have merged:

Local 482 (Jacksonville, FL) into Local 103 (Orlando, Fla.), with an effective date of July 1, 2006.

Local 405G (Wahpeton, Minn.), Local 326G (Drayton, N.D.), Local 266G (Moorhead, Minn.), Local 135G (Grand Forks, N.D.), Local 118G (Duluth, Minn.), Local 264G (East Grand Forks, Minn.) merged into a newly-formed Local 167G (Grand Forks, N.D.) effective August 1, 2006.

Local 327G (Bramalea, Ont.) into Local 264 (Toronto, Ont.) with an effective date of August 10, 2006.

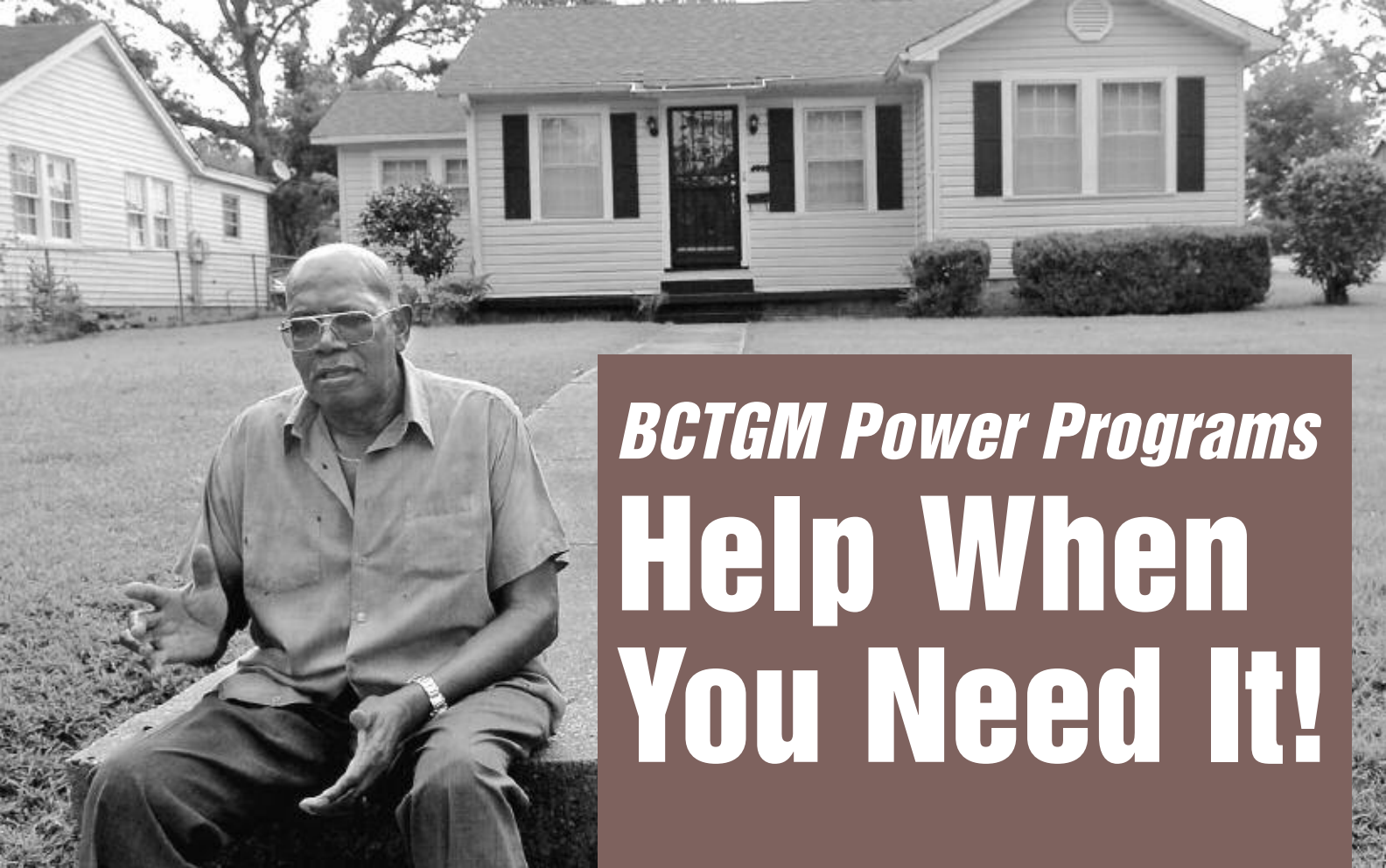


HAPPY RETIREMENT

Longtime BCTGM Local 232 (Phoenix) Pres. Estle Dwain Soards recently retired after more than 36 years of working for Holsum Bakery in Phoenix. A retirement celebration was held in his honor at the bakery. During his years at Holsum, Soards worked in the donut shop, hard roll dept., bun production and wrapping before retiring from the food safety dept. According to Local 232 Bus. Agt. Gregory Bell, his hard work and dedication have helped Holsum and the Union grow and improve. Holsum Bakery, Inc., was established in Phoenix in 1881, and is Arizona's oldest family owned business and the largest wholesale bakery in the Southwestern U.S. Pictured here congratulating Soards is Ed Eisele, the current owner and President of Holsum. Eisele is the grandson of the company founder. At right, is Soards (right) proudly displays an honorary plaque that commemorates his long career. He is pictured with his wife Nancy, who joined the celebration.



Pictured here is the Executive Board of the newly-formed BCTGM Local 167G (Grand Forks, N.D.). In the back row from left to right are Unit 264 Vice Pres. Mel Morris, Unit 135 Head Steward Kevin Jerik, Pres. John Risky, Unit 266 Vice Pres. Jim Knapper, Unit 326 Vice Pres. Don Staskivige, Unit 326 Head Steward Mike Bratlie, and Sec.-Treas. Scott Ripplinger. In the front row, from left to right, are Unit 266 Head Steward Tom Spieker, Unit 135 Vice Pres. Chad Boushee, Unit 405 Vice Pres. Richard Novotny, Unit 118 Head Steward Tom Nichols, Unit 405 Head Steward Ed Papa, Unit 264 Head Steward Chuck Hughes and Unit 118 Vice Pres. Dennis Tollers.



BCTGM Power Programs **Help When You Need It!**

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast last fall, the BCTGM Power Credit Card helped 800 union members by providing \$400,000 in assistance from the Credit Card Disaster Relief fund. BCTGM members who were impacted by the storms and applied for assistance through the fund were quickly sent \$500 checks.

Former BCTGM Local 1 (Chicago) member George Wheeler had moved to Laurel, Mississippi, five years after retiring as a mixer in Chicago. In the wrath of Hurricane Katrina, the union retiree's roof was torn off. Wheeler—a BCTGM Power credit card holder—needed help, and he needed it fast.

Fortunately for him, the Credit Card Disaster Relief Fund was offering direct and quick assistance to every cardholder in devastated areas. Wheeler received a \$500 check from the credit card program, which he promptly used toward the repair of his roof.

Whether a crisis comes as a result of a natural disaster or a workplace action, BCTGM Power is there to help.

The BCTGM Power Credit Card comes with features no other card can equal. Here's a sampling:

- No annual fee
- Exclusive member rates and benefits
- Money-saving balance transfer offers
- Scholarship program
- Free additional cards
- Money-saving discounts
- 100% protection against fraud
- Special safety net for disabled workers and others facing financial hardship
- Strike-payment protection
- Skip-payment options
- Grace period on new purchases
- Extended warranty
- 24-hour personal customer service by phone or online
- Online account management

**For more information on the BCTGM Power Credit Card,
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