

HAZARDS

Communication

THE WESTERN NEW YORK COUNCIL ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH NEWSLETTER



REMEMBERING DICK LIPSITZ, SR.

By Roger Cook (Former WNYCOSH Director)

We at WNYCOSH were saddened when Dick Lipsitz Sr. passed away this past May and we wish our deepest condolences to his family and close friends.

Dick was a special friend to WNYCOSH. Long before WNYCOSH was founded in 1978, Dick had championed the rights of working people for decades. Having founded one of Buffalo's most distinguished law firms in 1965, he worked

tirelessly on behalf of unions and their members. Dick argued and won a 1967 landmark free speech case on behalf of five university professors who refused to sign a loyalty oath as a condition of their employment. In addition to his legal advocacy for working people, Dick lent his support to civil rights, anti-war and economic justice activists and even ran for mayor of Buffalo on the Liberal Party ticket in 1953. (con't on page 2)

WNYCOSH RELEASES “RISKY BUSINESS” REPORT ON WENDT HEALTH & SAFETY CONCERNS

On July 12, 2018, WNYCOSH released its report on safety and health concerns at Wendt Corporation. WNYCOSH served as the designated representative for the Wendt workers of Ironworkers Local 576. WNYCOSH identified 34 hazards – 59% of which were major or potentially fatal hazards, including welding hazards, an unguarded plasma cutter, and hazards involving suspended loads. Many thanks to Assembly members Sean Ryan and Monica Wallace, Senator Tim Kennedy, and Cheektowaga town council member Brian Nowak for their ongoing support of the Wendt workers fight for a safer, fairer workplace. ■



REMEMBERING RICHARD LIPSITZ (CONT)

(con't from page 1) Dick gave freely of his time to WNYCOSH. In 1980, when WNYCOSH set up its Workers' Comp Reform Committee, Dick's workers' compensation division played a key role in our campaign. When WNYCOSH started New York State's first workers' clinic—the Union Occupational Health Center Co-op—Dick volunteered to serve as the clinic's attorney without pay. Dick attended many of WNYCOSH's membership meetings, including one at the old UAW Region 9 hall—Teamster drivers at UPS were on strike and we asked some of the members to talk about how WNYCOSH could help out. Dick came up after the meeting and said he was so fired up that he wanted to give

WNYCOSH a very generous donation—an act that was repeated over the years.

Dick continued to support grassroots causes well beyond the traditional retirement age. When the mayor refused to implement the Buffalo “Living Wage Ordinance” for city parking attendants, Dick used his legal skills to win the case for the Coalition for Economic Justice and the workers. This was one of the many times Dick engaged the city attorney or joined picket lines in support of the living wage after his retirement from the law firm.

Following Trump's election in 2017, I asked Dick what kept him going all these years after so many electoral defeats and reactionary policies. Looking me directly in the eye he said, “If we don't keep fighting for what's right, it will only get worse.” He was right, of course, and so perhaps the greatest tribute WNYCOSH can pay to Dick is to dedicate ourselves to continue the struggle for justice. ■



WNYCOSH Board Members Mark McDonald, Denise Abbott, and WNYCOSH volunteer Bob Bostwick, grilling, grilling, grilling



Wendt Workers -Ironworkers Local 576



Tom Roulley - Clean Air Coalition Board Member

OKTOBERFEST 2018

On October 6, WNYCOSH held its 9th annual Oktoberfest picnic. This year WNYCOSH honored Wendt Workers of Ironworkers Local 576 for their courageous ongoing fight to improve their working conditions and secure a first contract.

WNYCOSH also recognized the Clean Air Coalition of WNY for their successful campaigns around Battaglia Demolition and Tonawanda Coke.

Thanks to our attendees, and supporters for making Oktoberfest a success again this year! ■

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES CHANGES TO CHILD LABOR LAWS

The federal DOL has proposed a revision to the Hazardous Occupation Orders #7 (HO7) to allow healthcare workers under 18 years of age to operate power-driven patient lift devices without the assistance of another adult employee. According to NIOSH's 2010 review noted that "the physical demands associated with operating...lifting devices are likely to exceed the maximum recommended strength requirements for many 16- and 17-year olds". Young workers often underestimate their own limits, and may not seek assistance when working in busy healthcare facilities, out of view from more experienced staff. WNYCOSH is working with allies across the country to oppose this change,

comments close November 26. For more information please visit wnycosh.org/HO7 ■



Germain Harnden, *Executive Director*
Brian Brown-Cashdollar, *Program Director*
Dawn Hanavan, *Fiscal Administrator*
Rachel Terhart, *Staff Trainer*
Susanne Donovan, *Worker Center Coordinator*

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HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Nov 13 | Screen the documentary "The Fight for Fair Home Care" followed by on panel discussion on 24 hours shifts in home health care industry. Presented by Mary Lister, Ain't I a Women Campaign.

5:00 pm - 6:30 pm • UAW Region 9 • 35 George Karl Boulevard Amherst, NY 14227

WNYCOSH/PUSH FREE LEGAL CLINIC

November 15, & December 20

4:30 - 6:30 PM, Our Lady of Hope
Corner of Lafayette and Grant, Buffalo 14213

NYS SAFE PATIENT HANDLING CONFERENCE

October 30 & 31, 2018

Syracuse, NY. (Co-sponsored by WNYCOSH, NYS Zero Lift Taskforce, NYS DOL) • zeroliftforny.org for reservations.

WNYCOSH HOLIDAY PARTY

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

4:30-6:30 PM • WNYCOSH • 2495 Main Street, Suite 438 • Buffalo, NY 14214, ****FREE**** email dmhanavan@wnycosh.org for reservations.



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