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MEETING NOTICES

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NORTHWEST

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State, private contract bargaining abounds in 2011

A number of large union contracts will be coming up for renegotiation in Oregon in 2011.

To defend their living standards, union members will need to come together in support of their bargaining teams, as employers — both private and public sector — propose takebacks in a bad economy.

Contracts covering around 25,000 state workers will expire June 30. The two major unions representing state workers — Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503 and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) — will have their hands full just holding on. The state will be grappling with a projected shortfall of over \$3 billion during the next two year budget cycle.

Also expiring June 30 is a contract covering about 3,000 members of AFSCME Local 88 at Multnomah County. The county budget isn't in as bad shape as the state's. Bargaining is expected to start Feb. 1.

The state's largest private-sector union, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555, will be trying a new approach in pattern bargaining with its grocery employer group. Contracts covering over 600 grocery workers in Eugene expire Feb. 19. The Eugene units are the first in line in a

contract bargaining cycle that affects much of the region.

In the past, the big three unionized grocery employers — Fred Meyer, Safeway, and Albertsons — have pushed for the terms worked out in the Eugene contracts to be the model for contracts in other units. This time, Local 555 will be inviting representatives from all the other bargaining units to sit in on the negotiations — since they're affected by the deal reached in Eugene.

All told, about 5,000 members in Vancouver, Longview, Salem, Coos Bay, Newport, Medford, Roseburg, and Grants Pass have contracts coming up for renewal, and thus a stake in the Eugene negotiations.

Local 555 also continues to bargain a contract for 600-plus employees at Bay Area Hospital in Coos Bay and Lower Umpqua Hospital in Reedsport.

United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters (UA) Local 290 will be bargaining for 1,500 members employed by members of the Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors Association. The current contract expires March 31.

The contract between Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) and the local chapter of Associated General Contractors will expire on May 31.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 125 has been engaged in tough bargaining over a contract covering 417 workers at PacifiCorp that comes up for renewal Jan. 25. PacifiCorp, parent company of Pacific Power, is a multi-state electric utility and a subsidiary of Warren Buffett's Mid-American Energy Holdings Company. The company proposed a long list of takebacks, including: cutting the percentage it contributes to health benefits; eliminating bereavement leave and three family sick days; and shifting a group of older workers who still are in a traditional pension plan into a 401(k) instead.

The contract between Cascade General and the Metal Trades Council of Portland and Vicinity expires July 1. Cascade General operates the Portland shipyard, one of the world's largest ship repair facilities, and employs between 300 and 600 union members at any one time. Eleven unions are party to the contract. Bargaining is slated to begin in March.

At unionized hotels in the Portland-area, contracts covering about 400 workers will expire in June and July. UNITE HERE Local 9 will be pushing for wage increases in the negotiations.

UA Local 290 and Fire Fighters promote home fire safety

Apprentices and firefighters face off for 'broomball' at Winterhawks hockey game

Apprentices from Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 battled members of Fire Fighters Local 43 to a 0-0 tie in their annual "broomball" hockey game to promote residential fire sprinkler systems.

The game was held Jan. 8 between periods of the Portland Winterhawks-Seattle Thunderbirds hockey game at the Rose Garden. Local 290 and the Portland Mechanical Contractors Association are sponsors of the Winterhawks. Each year they, along with Local 43, promote fire safety through the broomball event. In broomball, contestants don tennis shoes and plastic brooms and try to slap a foam ball into the net. Local 290 is the defending champion, having beat the firefighters

last year 1-0.

And though the event was meant for fun and camaraderie, the more serious issue at hand was promoting home fire sprinkler systems.

According to a study by the Fire Protection Research Foundation, more than 8 in 10 fire deaths occur in homes, yet the likelihood of someone dying in a home fire is cut in half when sprinklers are present.

Studies by the U.S. Fire Administration indicate that residential fire sprinkler systems can eliminate hundreds of millions of dollars in property losses and, of course, make it safer for firefighters, too.

Members of Local 290 and their signatory contractors are trained to install home fire sprinkler systems.

"Local 290 provided classes on fire sprinkler code, design, calculations, and installation for well over 500 of our members," said Jed Scheuermann, assistant coordinator at the training center. "We have some 20 contractors well qualified to do installations. They include approximately 10 in the metro-

Portland area, 10-plus in Astoria, Bend, Coos Bay, Eugene/Springfield, Klamath Falls, Medford, and even Eureka, California."

As part of Local 290's Winterhawks sponsorship, the union promotes its state-of-the-art apprenticeship training center. For the past several years it has

held a "Local 290 Player of the Month" contest, whereby fans vote via the Winterhawks website for the hardest working player for the month. The winner is announced at a pre-game ceremony and an apprentice is selected by the Local

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Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 apprentices retained the broomball hockey trophy following a 0-0 tie against a team from Fire Fighters Local 43. Joining in the celebration with Winterhawks mascot Tomahawk are, back row left to right: Travis Henke, Shane Halifax, Carla Braun, Perry Wright, Kurt Cronin, David Allen-Schublin and Sean Gustavson. In the bottom row, left to right are: Andrew Cheney, Zach Reinhardt, Jimmy Myers, Akuila Ramaqa and Zach Wright. More than 10,000 fans watched the broomball match between periods of the Portland-Seattle hockey game Jan. 8 at the Rose Garden.

U.S.-Korea trade deal draws protests in Portland, Eugene

Several dozen opponents of the proposed U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement demonstrated Jan. 12 outside the Portland office of U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR).

In December, U.S. and Korean trade negotiators struck a deal that is expected to bring the Korea FTA to the floor of Congress early this year. It is the biggest free trade deal since the North American Free Trade Agreement passed in 1994, and it is opposed by the AFL-CIO and most labor unions.

Among the crowd of demonstrators in Portland was Kim Kyung-Ran, director of external relations for the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. Kyung-Ran was on a West Coast tour speaking out against the trade pact. The previous evening at the Machinists Hall in Southeast Portland she presented a slide show exhibiting the opposition that is building against the trade deal in South Korea.

Kyung-Ran said the same provisions in the agreement that encourage off-shoring of U.S. manufacturing jobs — such as special investor privileges, deregulatory requirements, and substandard labor protections — also weaken labor's hand in South Korea.

"FTA only brings us chaos," she told protesters at Wyden's office. "For laborers and common people, FTA cannot be hopeful. It will greatly reduce our jobs, and it will also reduce the social welfare of the people. We need to unite to fight against the FTA."

Wyden was the target of the protest because he chairs the Senate Subcommittee on International Trade. Many union officials are upset that — given the history of 5 million manufacturing jobs lost to free trade and outsourcing since the inception of NAFTA — he hasn't made any attempt to stop the deal with Korea.

The Economic Policy Institute predicts that if the trade deal passes, within seven years Korean imports will have displaced 888,000 more American jobs.

"We'll obviously gain some jobs, too, as a result of the agreement," said Arthur Stamoulis, director of the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign, "but any way you cut it, Oregon should expect thousands more job losses. What's worse, the jobs being lost pay much better than the jobs created."

Madelyn Elder, president of Communications Workers of America Local 7901, said the Korea FTA "gives investment and legal protections to large multi-national corporations that shift jobs off shore in search of the lowest labor and environmental costs — and the highest profits. These protections could overrule the common good of all people on Earth."

Kyung-Ran's West Coast tour also included stops in Eugene and Seattle. Her Portland and Eugene visits were co-sponsored by Machinists Lodges 63 and 1005, Portland Jobs with Justice, and the Lane County Fair Trade Campaign.



Madelyn Elder, president of Communications Workers of America Local 7901, addresses several dozen opponents of the Korea Free Trade Agreement during a protest rally Jan. 12 in front of the Portland office of U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden. In December, U.S. and Korean trade negotiators struck a deal that is expected to bring the Korea FTA to the floor of Congress this year. In the background, Carpenters Local 247 retiree Bruce Dennis dons a "Corporate Greed" pig costume.

Union pilots at Evergreen Airlines authorize strike

McMINNVILLE — Unionized pilots at Evergreen International Airlines — a cargo airline headquartered in McMinnville, Oregon — voted overwhelmingly to strike if an agreement is not reached with management. Bargaining for a new union contract has been going on, without success, for six years.

Evergreen International Airlines is a cargo airline, operating a fleet of Boeing 747s out of New York (JFK) and Travis Air Force Base, California. The company is a subsidiary of privately-held Evergreen International Aviation, which also owns Evergreen Helicopters, Inc.

The saga began when pilots at Evergreen International Airlines formed their own independent union, The Aviators' Group (TAG) secured a union contract in 1999. The contract ran through the end of 2004.

Bargaining on a new contract began in 2004, but went nowhere. Mediated talks began in 2005, supervised by the National Mediation Board (NMB) — the federal agency that regulates railroad and airline union issues. Still no progress. In 2007, TAG members voted overwhelmingly to merge into the much larger Air Line Pilots Association.

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At the Oregon Legislature

Union leaders will lobby on behalf of working people

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

SALEM — Oregon's citizen legislature convenes Feb. 1. The five-month session will be dominated by debates on how to deal with a severe state revenue shortfall. To make sure lawmakers remember working people when decisions are made, representatives of Oregon's labor union movement will be frequent visitors in the Capitol.

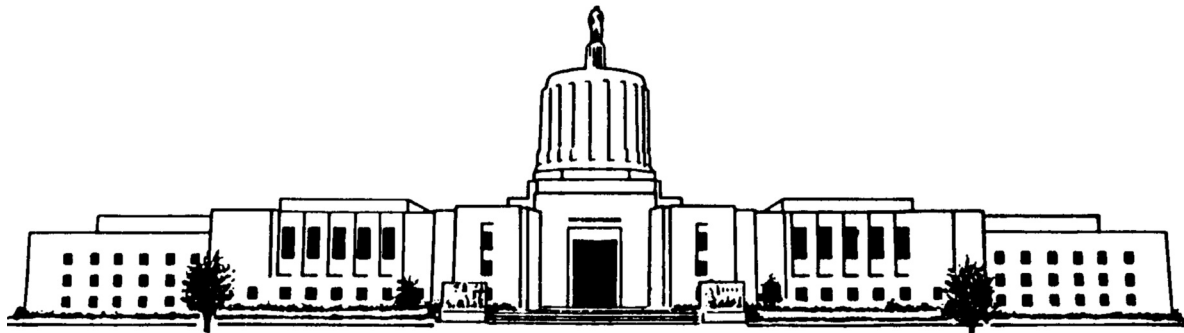
For the Oregon AFL-CIO, the number one legislative priority will be supporting good jobs, said spokesperson Elana Guiney — whether that means maintaining public services and public sector jobs, attracting manufacturing, or making additional public investments in construction or infrastructure.

The AFL-CIO won't be pushing bills to expand labor rights this year, Guiney said, because it would be difficult given the makeup of the House to get anything through. Republicans gained seats in the Oregon House in the November 2010 election, and the chamber is now split 30-30 between the two parties. The governorship and the Oregon Senate remain in Democratic hands.

Guiney mentioned two job-related bills the federation will support.

New officers elected at Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Central Labor Council

KALAMA — New officers have been elected to the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Counties Labor Council. They are: President Jeff Washburn of Plumbers and Fitters Local 26; Vice President Tim Pfeifer of Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers Local 580; Recording Secretary-Treasurer David Myers of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 970; Sergeant-at-Arms Steve Swarat of Service Employees International Union Local 925; and Trustee Linda Hart of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555. Hart will join Lowell Lovgren of AWPPW Local 633 and Dale Barto of Machinists Lodge W536 as trustees. The latter two were not up for election.



One would require that whenever prime industrial land is converted to another use, other industrial land be found to replace it. Keizer Station, near Salem, is an example of the problem: A parcel of land there had been reserved for industrial use, but instead was developed as a shopping center. [So instead of being a site for high-wage manufacturing, it's become an opportunity for big-box chains to employ low-wage workers to sell foreign-made goods.]

The other bill would allow developers of gas, water, and electric transmission lines to get a conditional permit before obtaining permission from landowners. Current rules bog down the permitting process, Guiney said.

Another bill that may get labor support is HB 2033, a bill Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian will be pushing to restore career and technical education to Oregon middle schools and high schools. It would expose students at up to 10 schools to high-de-

mand jobs in renewable energy, health care, and manufacturing.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555 will continue its legislative campaign to protect members from draconian penalties for unwitting sales of alcohol to minors. Last session, the union was able to win a law decriminalizing such sales (making it a civil, not criminal offense). But Local 555 Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Anderson said the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is undermining the intent

of the decriminalization by targeting cashiers with felony "furnishing alcohol to a minor" charges — even though that statute is aimed at intentional "shoulder-tap" type activity.

And State Rep. Brad Witt (D-Clatskanie), who is also a Local 555 union rep, is expected to propose a ban on alcohol and tobacco sales at self-checkout stations.

Oregon Working Families Party — a minor political party that has union support — will work to pass a bill creating a state bank. The idea — modeled on the Bank of North Dakota — is to take the billions of dollars the State of Oregon now deposits mostly in large out-of-state banks, and deposit the funds instead in a state-owned bank, which would partner with community banks and lend to Oregon farms and businesses.

Kitzhaber taps Shepard for labor adviser

Duke Shepard, Oregon AFL-CIO political director since January 2006, has been hired by newly-sworn-in Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber.

Shepard worked for Kitzhaber once before as a field coordinator of Kitzhaber's 1994 campaign for governor. Now Shepard, 38, will be labor and human services adviser to the governor.

The Oregon AFL-CIO won't hire a replacement. Instead, Shepard's responsibilities will be divided between President Tom Chamberlain, Field Director Graham Trainor, and Communications Director Elana Guiney.

Shepard has a bachelor's degree in political science from University of Oregon. Before he was hired by Chamberlain, Shepard managed the 1996 ini-

tiative campaign that raised Oregon's minimum wage, served as policy adviser to Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn, worked on Congressman Peter DeFazio's 2004 re-election campaign, helped create a regional business plan at the Portland Business Alliance, and spent time as an organ-

izer with the Oregon Nurses Association.

Twice elected to the Mt. Hood Community College Board of Directors, Shepard also ran for a seat on the Metro Council in 2010, but dropped out of the race after finishing a distant second in the primary.



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Local Motion

December 2010

A list of Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces deciding whether to be union-represented – as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Voting in union elections

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Yes	No	
12/13	Samaritan Pacific Hospital (Newport) SEIU Local 49	23	3	👍
12/17	Fred Meyer all depts but meat (Bend) UFCW Local 555 DECERT	29	10	👍
12/28	City of Newport Public Works Dept (Newport) Newport Emp Assn	11	1	👍
12/29	Baycrest Village nursing home (North Bend) Teamsters Local 206	8	2	👍

Unionizing by majority sign-up

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
12/10	City of Aurora Police (Aurora) Laborers	2

Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
First Student school bus drivers (Grants Pass) Teamsters Local 962 DECERT	126

LEGEND

- 👍 : workers will be union-represented
- 👎 : workers will be on their own
- DECERT** : unionized workers vote whether to keep the union

Fired teacher at Portland French School reinstated

Patricia Raclot was let go for supporting a union organizing drive

A federal judge has ordered a private French language school in Portland to reinstate a teacher who was terminated last year after she supported a union campaign. Portland French School will offer French citizen Patricia Raclot her job back, and will renew legal work on the H-1B visa she needs in order to be employed legally in the United States. Raclot will also receive back pay.

The decision resolves a set of unfair labor practice charges that were filed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)-Oregon in protest of management misconduct that tainted a union election held at the school. The April 16, 2010 election resulted in a 12-12 loss for the union among teachers, but that result was set aside in light of the labor law violations, and the union could ask for a re-run election at any time. AFT organizer Eben Pullman said the group will wait at least until Raclot is returned.

Last October, Raclot refused an employer offer of two years salary if she would settle out of court and give up

her right to reinstatement.

Federal Administrative Law Judge William G. Kocol presided over a four-day hearing on the charges in October. In his written decision dated Dec. 27, Kocol found that school management had committed numerous unfair labor practices — including forbidding employees from discussing work conditions; warning that the union would bring “stigma” to the school; predicting school closure; and threatening unspecified reprisals against employees if they supported a union.

SEIU #49 wins at St. Charles Medical Center

BEND — Workers at St. Charles Medical Center voted Jan. 5 by a narrow margin to unionize with Portland-headquartered Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49. The tally was 255 to 251, but 34 other ballots were cast by workers whose right to vote was challenged. That’s enough to affect the outcome.

The National Labor Relations Board won’t certify Local 49 as the workers’ representative until the challenges are resolved.

Local 49 said on its web site that St.

National Labor Relations Board gives boost to majority sign-up

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — By a 2-1 vote, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has given strong written support to the use of “majority sign-up” for union recognition — ironically in a case involving the same company and union which the then GOP-dominated Board used in 2007 to weaken majority sign-up.

The latest NLRB ruling, just before the Christmas holiday, upheld the right of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Dana Corp., an auto parts firm, to come to a “letter of agreement” about majority sign-up — also called card-check recognition — before the union election at the firm’s St. Johns, Mich., plant.

UAW started an organizing drive in 2002 among the 305 workers there, and negotiated a letter of agreement with Dana a year later. The NLRB’s general counsel, along with three anti-union Dana workers, challenged the letter, claiming it constituted illegal company aid to the union.

Dana and the UAW were upfront that company neutrality and majority sign-up is what they agreed to, for the good of both.

“Dramatic changes in the domestic automotive market created new quality, productivity and competitiveness challenges for the automotive component supplier,” their letter said. “These challenges will be more effectively met through a partnership that is more positive, non-adversarial and with constructive attitudes toward each other.

“Employee freedom to choose is a paramount concern of Dana as well as the UAW. We both believe membership in a union is a matter of personal choice and acknowledge that if a majority of employees wish to be represented by a union, Dana will recognize that choice. The union and the company will not allow anyone to be intimidated or coerced into a decision on this important matter. The parties are also committed to an expeditious procedure for determining majority status.”

Their agreement then set forth the company’s neutrality promise, other ground rules for the organizing drive, and that an independent outside firm

would have to verify whether UAW won the majority or not. Dana called the letter a “partnership agreement.”

Majority sign-up with outside verification is a key component of the now-dead Employee Free Choice Act, designed to help level the playing field between workers and bosses in organizing and bargaining. The NLRB majority’s decision, by chair Wilma Liebman and board member Mark Pearce, agreed with the UAW. Brian Hayes dissented and Craig Becker recused himself due to a potential conflict of interest because he had written a brief supporting the practice prior to joining the Board.

NLRB Administrative Law Judge William Kocol tossed out the complaint by the dissenters and the Bush Board’s general counsel’s office. The board’s majority backed Kocol. “The complaint should be dismissed on the merits,” Liebman and Pearce said.

Kocol said a company breaks labor law when it recognizes a minority union, but Dana didn’t do so. And Kocol said that while the Dana-UAW letter set out subjects for bargaining, and even agreed to submit disputes to a neutral arbitrator, they did not agree in advance on any particular contract term, such as wages or benefits. Kocol and the Board called the letter “a far cry from a collective bargaining agreement.”

Then, providing further backing for majority sign-up, the Board majority gave its own general counsel’s office — which at that time was responding to the Bush NLRB — a written tongue-lashing.

“The general counsel’s position is rooted in the assumption that any employer conduct having the potential to enhance an unrecognized union’s status in the employees’ eyes is unlawful. But that is contrary to our law,” they said in the Dana case.

“For example, an employer ... may agree to remain neutral in an organizing campaign, may agree to voluntarily recognize the union upon proof of majority support, and may state its preference for unionization. In each of those scenarios, the employer’s cooperation ... could enhance the union’s prestige, yet none is unlawful. The UAW has not claimed

majority status, let alone presented proof to Dana, and neither the UAW nor Dana claims that recognition has taken place. Adopting the general counsel’s position would mean extending existing law in a truly novel way.

“Card-check/neutrality agreements, long upheld by the Board and the courts, would be categorically prohibited if they also addressed any substantive issue for future bargaining, despite disclaiming exclusive recognition and despite a context free of unfair labor practices. We decline, as a matter of labor policy, to take that step.”

NLRB: Federal law pre-empts state secret-ballot amendments

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) took steps to enforce workers’ rights as guaranteed by U.S. law. The Board advised the attorneys general of Arizona, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah that so-called secret ballot amendments to their state constitutions are pre-empted by the National Labor Relations Act, which offers workers two paths to choosing a union.

The Board also has authorized its acting general counsel to file federal lawsuits, if necessary, to stop the states from enforcing the laws. Voters in the four states passed measures Nov. 2 to ban the “card check” method of unionizing. The amendments have already taken effect in South Dakota and Utah and are expected to become effective soon in Arizona and South Carolina.

Under the federal law, workers may choose a union by voting in a secret-ballot election conducted by the NLRB or they may persuade an employer to voluntarily recognize the union after a majority sign authorization cards. Because the state amendments in question prohibit the voluntary recognition option, they “interfere with the exercise of a well-established federally protected right,” the NLRB said in a release.

“Governors and state legislators are trying to eliminate unions and the voices of working families as payback to the corporate CEOs that funded their campaigns,” said Eddie Vale, a spokesman for the AFL-CIO. “This letter simply and clearly states the law: The rules for how workers choose to join a union or not is governed by federal law.”

Jonathan Johnson, president of Overstock.com and a backer of the Utah initiative, told Bloomberg News that an NLRB lawsuit won’t block the state measure. “We paid lawyers to research if this would be pre-empted, and it will not,” he said.

(Editor’s Note: James Parks of the AFL-CIO Now news blog contributed to this report.)

ATU dispute with TriMet persists; conciliator called in

Members of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 757 employed at TriMet are planning an informational picket Wednesday, Jan. 26, from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Portland Building, 1120 SW 5th Avenue, Portland. TriMet's board of directors is scheduled to meet at that location starting at 9 a.m.

Drivers and mechanics have been embroiled in a lengthy labor dispute with the transit agency since Nov. 30, 2009. That's the day the union contract covering 2,000 bus and rail operators, mechanics, and support staff expired. State law prohibits transit workers from striking. Contract disputes are settled by binding arbitration. As the two sides waited for the arbitration process to play out, TriMet maintained the terms of the previous contract, covering all scheduled wage and insurance increases. That all changed Jan. 1, 2011, when the transit agency halted cost-of-living wage increases and started taking money out of workers' paychecks to cover a portion of their health insurance costs.

Tri-Met General Manager Neil McFarlane had forewarned workers of the change in a letter to them last September.

Shortly after that announcement, ATU Local 757 President Jon Hunt filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) complaint with the Oregon Employment Relations Board, accusing TriMet of retaliation. [After bargaining over the required 150-day time period, an impasse was declared between the two sides on July 13, 2010. When the sides submitted their "last best and final" offers to the arbitrator, TriMet's proposal contained issues that were never raised at the bargaining table. The union filed an unfair labor practice complaint, charging the

agency with bad-faith bargaining. The ULP delayed the arbitration process.]

ATU held informational pickets outside TriMet board meetings in November and December, and protested at McFarlane's home Dec. 8.

Hunt has told the board, and anyone who will listen, that TriMet would be breaking the law by making changes to the contract without union member agreement.

Union members also testified at board meetings to illustrate how the changes would impact them financially.

At one board meeting, director Lynn Lehrbach (an officer of Teamsters Joint Council No. 37) made a motion that TriMet not implement the costs on workers and retirees while awaiting the arbitrator's decision. The motion failed to get a second.

"As I pleaded with the board to take time to discuss this issue and reflect on the stories they had heard, board mem-

ber Tiffany Sweitzer walked out on us," Hunt said.

The union then reached out to the governor, congressmen, and U.S. senators, all of whom have sent letters or made phone calls to McFarlane encouraging him to return to the bargaining table to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.

Before leaving office, Gov. Ted Kulongoski asked state conciliator Robert Nightingale to "clear his schedule" in order to assist the sides in resolving the dispute. A meeting has been set for Friday, Jan. 28.

"We have been put in a very difficult position by McFarlane and the TriMet board, who seemingly do not care about the laws in the State of Oregon, the wishes of the state's top government officials, adhering to past practice, employee relations or health and welfare of their own employees, retirees, and their families," Hunt said.

Hunt is asking union members, their families and friends to join him at the rally Jan. 26. He said a large crowd will help send a loud message to McFarlane and the TriMet board to reach an agreement.



ATU's Pepper, the greed-fighting possum, walks an informational picket line prior to a TriMet board meeting.

Below are TriMet board members and their contact information.

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...Evergreen Airlines pilots authorize strike

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tion, becoming ALPA Local 118.

ALPA, the world's largest pilot union, represents nearly 53,000 pilots at 38 airlines in the United States and Canada. But bargaining similarly failed to achieve liftoff under ALPA.

In April 2010, the union submitted a tentative two-year agreement to members that was largely a continuation of previous terms, without raises or improvements. That agreement was a compromise, after management — citing the company's heavy debt load — demanded concessions. ALPA held a ratification vote on the agreement in August 2010: 92 percent of members took part in the vote, and the result was 96 percent against the agreement.

In October, the ALPA executive council at Evergreen passed a resolution declaring a lack of confidence in airline upper management and flight operations management. An ALPA press statement said Evergreen pilots are near their limit of frustration and dissatisfaction with management.

ALPA held the strike authorization vote, and ballots were counted Jan. 7. The vote was 97 percent in favor of strike authorization, with more than 86 percent of the company's pilots and flight engineers participating in the polling.

"We certainly want a contract, not a strike," said flight engineer William

Fink, ALPA's Evergreen unit chairman, in a press statement. "That has been our goal since day one more than six years ago — but the new agreement must provide our members with industry-standard wages, work rules, and benefits. We deserve no less."

The parties are tentatively scheduled

to go back to the negotiating table in February. ALPA can request arbitration from the NMB at any time. If the NMB agrees, either party can reject arbitration. In that event, a 30-day cooling-off period would commence, after which crewmembers could legally strike at Evergreen.

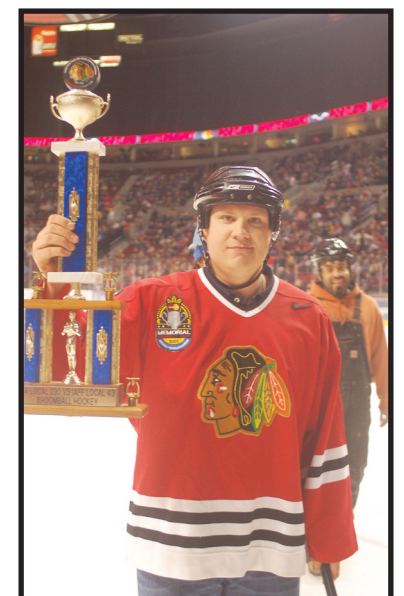
...Unions promote fire safety

(From Page 1)

290 training center staff to present the player with \$100 and be honored themselves. On Jan. 8, apprentice Seathl Ollgaard presented \$100 to Winterhawk Sven Bartschi.

"This ceremony is another great way for the public to see who we really are as people and to educate them about the exciting innovations our trade is developing," Scheuermann said.

The promotional campaign appears to be working. Former Winterhawk Shane Halifax is a first-year apprentice plumber. He played broomball, and was brought in for the ceremonial puck drop prior to the Portland-Seattle game, which the Winterhawks won, 2-1.



Former Winterhawk player and first-year plumber apprentice Shane Halifax hoists broomball trophy that Local 290 retained by virtue of their 1-0 victory last year. Local 290 and Local 43 have been facing off in broomball for the last decade.

Retired Carpenter staying busy

Carpenters Local 247 retiree Merle Ehlinger shows off walking canes he made using old handsaws. Ehlinger, 76, is a 55-year member of the union who regularly attends the monthly Carpenters Retirees meetings, along with more than a dozen other retirees. The group meets the second Monday each month at 11 a.m. at Izzy's Grill, 1307 NE 102nd Ave # T, Portland. John Jackson is chair of the retirees group.



Official Notices

AUTO MECHANICS 1005

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 16. Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 19, preceded by a 9 a.m. shop steward training class. Shop stewards must attend training class and regular meeting to be compensated. All meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** Rochelle Conrad will be available from 8 a.m. to noon during the regular lodge meeting to answer any questions you have concerning health, welfare and pension plans.

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 205, Portland.

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

BOILERMAKERS 500

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 12, at 2515 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 31, at UA 290 Training Center, 2161 SE 1st St., Redmond.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 25 and Feb. 1, at Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, in the Meeting Hall. General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 pm Wednesday, Jan. 26, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:30pm for sandwiches. Your Business Manager Meeting, Saturday, Jan. 29, in the Meeting Hall. Call Kierstan at 503-889-3662 for an appointment. Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 2 and Feb. 16, in the Executive Boardroom. Electrical Workers Minority Caucus meets 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, in the Executive Boardroom. Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, at Northern Wasco County PUD, 2345 River Road, The Dalles. Sound and Communication Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, in the Meeting Hall. Residential Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, in the Dispatch Lobby. Vancouver Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at Round Table Pizza, 5016 NE Thurston, Vancouver. Coast Unit meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria. Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 21, in the Executive Boardroom. Meetings are at 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, unless otherwise noted. **DEATH ASSESSMENTS:** There are no death assessments for January.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 32969 Hwy. 99E, Tangent. Bend Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at the IBEW/UA Training Center, 2161 SW First St., Redmond. Joint Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at 33309 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** There will be nominations for delegates to the convention at this meeting.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

GLASS WORKERS 740

PLEASE NOTE: The following meetings are "Special Call" to vote on allocation of membership funds. Executive Board members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3, at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at Best Western Grand Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way, Springfield. **NOTE DATE CHANGE.** Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 1, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE, Salem. **NOTE DATE CHANGE.**

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9. Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 11. Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #200, Portland.

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., Portland.

LABORERS 483 MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7, preceded by a 6:15 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc., Wash.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

LANE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 26, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 26, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, preceded by a 6:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 1400 Salem Ave., Albany.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7, at the Union Office 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 24, at the Union Office, 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MACHINISTS 63

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 12. **PLEASE NOTE:** Nominations for two Executive Board positions will take place at this meeting. Executive Board meets 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9. Meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland.

MACHINISTS 1432

Swing and graveyard shift members meet at noon Wednesday, Feb. 9. Regular membership meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9. Meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, followed by a 7 p.m. general meeting at 2110 State St., Salem.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25. Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 10. Meetings are at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MOLDERS 139B

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, preceded by a 6 p.m. Executive Board meeting at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 N. Lombard, Portland.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at the AFSCME union office. General membership meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 16, preceded by 6 p.m. stewards meeting. Meetings are held at 6025 E. Burnside St., Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OPERATING ENGINEERS 701

District 1 & 5 members meet 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 4, at 555 E. First St., Gladstone. District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at North Bend/Coos Bay Labor Center, 3427 Ash St., North Bend. District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, at Holiday Inn Express, 285 Peninger Rd., Central Point. **NEW LOCATION** District 2 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at the Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way, Springfield. District 1 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at Longview Electricians Hall, 1145 Commerce Ave., Longview. District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 16, at the Hermiston DTC Office, 148 Main St., Hermiston. District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at The Comfort Inn, 351 Lone Pine Dr., The Dalles.

OFFICE & PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES 11

Membership meets 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 8, at Laborers/Teamster Hall, 2212 Andresen Rd, Vancouver. The purpose of the meeting: Conduct the general business of the local and accept nominations for open Officer & Executive Board seats.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 16, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd. 2nd Floor, Portland.

PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25. Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8. Meetings are held at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3. Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10. Meetings are at 5032 SE 26th Ave, Portland. (Phone: 503 232-4807)

SALEM BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 3, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Portland area VOC meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland. Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9, Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford. Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at 1887 Laura St., Springfield. Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 21, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

SOUTHERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at the ILWU Local 4 Hall, 1205 Ingalls St., Vancouver, Wash.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 21, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin. Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria. Bend area members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at the Local 290 Training Center, 2161 SW First, Redmond. Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 1, at Curry County Search and Rescue, 517 Railroad St., Brookings. Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay. **NOTE TIME CHANGE.** Eugene area members meet 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield. Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at 4816 S. 6th St., Klamath Falls. **NOTE TIME AND DATE CHANGE.** Medford area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 950 Industrial Cir., White City. **NOTE DATE CHANGE.** Salem area members meet 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, at 1810 Hawthorne Ave. NE, Salem. The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles. Humboldt-Del Norte Co. area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 25, at the Eureka Training Center, 634 California St., Eureka, Calif.

UNITED STEELWORKERS 1097

Members meet 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, preceded by a 5:45 p.m. Executive Board meeting, in the union office building, 91237 Old Mill Town Rd., Westport.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, followed by an 11 a.m. General Membership meeting, in the Northwest Oregon Labor Council board room, at 1125 SE Madison, Portland. **Please note date change.** All retirees are welcome to attend.

INSULATORS 36

Retiree breakfast 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 3, at the Dockside Restaurant, 2047 NW Front Ave., Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retirees, wives and friends meet 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, at Elmer's Restaurant (Parkrose), 10001 NE Sandy Blvd, Portland. For additional information, please call Glenn Hodgkinson at 503 656-0028.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Retirees meet between 11:45 a.m.

and noon Monday, Feb. 14, at Home-town Buffet on Lancaster in Salem, near Lancaster Mall. If you have any questions, please give Don Ball a call at 541-327-3388.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Retirees and wives meet 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at Denny's Restaurant, 15815 SE 82nd, Clackamas.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 11, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

MACHINISTS

Retired machinists meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland. For more information

contact Gay Lincoln at 360-693-5051.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR RETIREES COUNCIL

Business meeting from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 14, in the Northwest Oregon Labor Council board room, at 1125 SE Madison, #100G, Portland.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E. Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information at 1-800-521-5954 ext. 226.

TRANSIT 757

Retirees meet 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Conyers to speak at single payer forum in Portland

Supporters of a "single payer" public health insurance system are gearing up for a daylong Jan. 29 conference in Portland at which they'll hear from the leading single payer advocate in Congress — and strategize how to support a single payer bill that will be introduced in the Oregon Legislature.

The United States has a government-provided single-payer health insurance system for those 65 and older, known as Medicare, and it's extremely popular among seniors. But private insurance companies and their political allies have fiercely opposed proposals to extend Medicare to all Americans, such as HR 676, a bill introduced by U.S. Rep. John Conyers (D-Ill.). Conyers will talk at the conference about his bill, which President Barack Obama and Democratic leaders in the House and Senate refused to consider during the 2009-2010 deliberations over health insurance reform.

Also headlining the event will be Dr. Margaret Flowers of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP). Flowers, a Maryland pediatrician, was arrested during a 2009 hearing of the Senate Finance Committee for demanding that the committee hear testimony on Conyers' bill. Committee Chair Max Baucus refused during weeks of hearings on health care reform to allow testimony from any supporter of a single payer system, even though Conyers' bill had 87 Congressional cosponsors and a companion bill in the Senate sponsored by Independent

IBEW's Malbin to co-chair prevailing wage advisory panel

Norman Malbin, in-house counsel for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48, has been named labor co-chair of the Prevailing Wage Advisory Committee (PWAC) by Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian.

Shawn Miller, counsel for Associated Builders and Contractors and the Independent Electrical Contractors of Oregon, was named management co-chair.

PWAC was created by legislative action in 2003, directing the commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries to appoint an equal number of representatives from management and labor in the building and construction industry who perform work on public works contracts. The committee is charged with advising the labor commissioner on matters regarding the prevailing wage rate laws that apply to public construction projects.

Previous co-chairs Don Kool of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters, Local 290 (retired), and Jim McKune, chief operating officer of Emerick Construction Co., completed their terms at PWAC's Jan. 20 meeting.

Malbin and Miller will take charge Feb. 1.

Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Such universal government-provided health insurance is common throughout the world.

The Portland conference, paid for by the Presbyterian Church USA, has the endorsement of the Oregon AFL-CIO and 10 other labor organizations. It will take place Jan. 29, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the First Unitarian Church, 1211 SW Main St., Portland.

Activists, including Portland Jobs with Justice, hope to use the conference as a springboard to build support for a bill to be introduced in the Oregon Legislature the following week by State Rep. Michael Dembrow and State Sen. Chip Shields.

Though single payer wasn't considered as a nationwide option during the Congressional health care debate, Sanders and U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) were able to win a provision in the final version of the health reform legislation that gives states some latitude to experiment with single payer. Section 1332 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act allows states to implement alternatives to the private insurance market exchanges, with a federal waiver, as long as they provide coverage at least as comprehensive and affordable for a comparable number of residents. That opens the door to states that want to try a single payer system.

Besides Oregon, campaigns are under way to propose single payer this year in Vermont, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and California.

To register for the conference, visit www.SinglePayerOregon.org or call 503-262-4970.

Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



Oregon's unemployment rate has hovered at 10.5 percent since 2008, and while there are some signs that our economy is beginning to rebound and that the spring unemployment numbers may show some improvement, it will not be enough to give relief to the 200,000 Oregonians who are unemployed.

Those 200,000 Oregonians are either trying to make ends meet on their meager unemployment benefits or have exhausted those benefits and rely on odd jobs, help from family and friends, or our social safety net, such as food stamps, welfare and — if they are lucky — Medicaid.

And while they face the daily struggle of trying to stay in their house, keep their car, and feed their family, they also face full days feeling unproductive and alone without the satisfaction of putting in a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

There are a number of organizations that have established unemployed support groups: Machinists, Jobs with Justice, Labor's Community Service Agency, Working America, and others have had some success in reaching and providing needed support for the jobless.

But these programs still aren't reaching enough people.

That's why the AFL-CIO has selected five pilot cities, including Portland, to expand support and resources to the unemployed. In Port-

land, we will be working with the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, Labor's Community Service Agency, and Working America, among other community partners. We will combine several established unemployment programs so that we can access more resources and develop more opportunities for the unemployed — both union and non-union.

Anti-union forces continue to try to portray unions as being concerned only with our own members. But in doing that, they take away the voice of so many American workers — because when it comes down to it, we, along with Working America, are the only groups giving voice to all working people. It's time, though, that we reach out beyond our role in supporting working people in Oregon and help those who used to work find their voice as well.

In Oregon alone, our community affiliate, Working America, has a membership of over 135,000 members who do not belong to a union. Many of them are unemployed. Within our own ranks there are hundreds of union members on the books who are not working. And thousands more Oregonians were union members before they lost their job and their union. These Oregonians are our brothers and sisters, even if they are not union members.

It's high time that union membership does not stop with a paycheck.

Moving forward, we will treat participants in our unemployed program just like members of any other constituency group — Young Emerging Labor Leaders, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Pride at Work, or Labor Council of Latina American Advancement.

In mid-February we will hold the first meeting for unemployed Oregonians and work with them to create an Oregon Jobs Jump Start Express, as the program is being called nationally. At that meeting we look forward to finding out what unemployed Oregonians need, and how the participants think they can join together to raise their common voice. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in this group, call the Oregon AFL-CIO office at 503-585-6320 and we'll get you more information as it gets closer to the event.

Meantime, spread the word to former co-workers and your fellow union members who are out of work.

Because, moving forward, Oregon's union movement is on your side — even after the paycheck stops, whether or not you're a union member.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

Representing workers at OHSU

Raahahn retires after 34 years with AFSCME

Longtime union field rep Dave Raahahn, 61, retires today, Jan. 21, after 34 years in American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

When he settled in Portland in 1970, Raahahn was an anti-war long-hair who'd grown up outside Rochester, New York.

On Oct. 1, 1976, he started working at the Hooper Detox Center, a Multnomah County agency that treated the severely intoxicated. Raahahn did laundry, then food service, then drove the van that picked up alcoholics in need of medical detoxification. The job paid the minimum wage, but Raahahn began going to AFSCME Local 88 union meetings. His testimony at a late 1970s union contract bargaining session helped the union double the wage.

In 1980, county workers went on strike. Raahahn remembers it as the first public workers strike after Oregon's passage of the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. For six weeks, county offices were closed. Raahahn was the strike captain for his building — the detox center. He ran a union soup kitchen and served on the strikers assistance committee, which helped members in special financial hardship.

After the strike, Raahahn's union involvement continued to deepen. He served on his local's bargaining



DAVE RAAHAHN

team. He took leaves from his job to do political work for the local, state, and national AFSCME — including a six-month stint as driver for then-gubernatorial candidate Ted Kulongoski during his 1982 primary campaign. Kulongoski won the primary but lost the November general election to Vic Atiyeh.

In the early 1980s, Raahahn's county department was privatized. [Today, Hooper Detox and its Chiers vans are run by the non-profit Central City Concern under a county contract.] Raahahn took a job in 1984 as a parking enforcement officer in the Transportation Department of the City of Portland. He wrote tickets for parking violations, making the rounds on foot or by scooter. And he got involved in his new union local, becoming Transportation Department chapter chair (kind of like a chief steward) for AFSCME Local 189.

He took classes through the Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) of the University of Oregon and graduated from its U-LEAD leadership training program. And he served as an AFSCME delegate to the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

When a union rep position became vacant in Ontario, Oregon, in 1999, Oregon AFSCME Executive Director Ken Allen asked Raahahn to fill in for a few weeks. The few weeks became a few months. In 2000, a position opened up as rep for his former local at Multnomah County, and Raahahn applied and was hired.

Later, he was assigned to represent members at Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) Local 328, Oregon AFSCME's largest.

Union political efforts are Raahahn's passion. He's proud of his record at OHSU recruiting members to contribute to PEOPLE, AFSCME's political program. Support for PEOPLE tripled at OHSU, from 6 percent to 19 percent.

"We as public employees have the unique ability to elect our own bosses," Raahahn explains, "and once they're elected, to influence the way that public employees are treated, and in a larger sense, how all workers are treated."

Raahahn would continue on, he says, but a chronic pain disorder has begun to make the long hours of a union rep difficult to maintain. Look for him instead behind the wheel of his restored Milano Maroon 1965 Corvette roadster, on the golf course while his back holds up, or fly-fishing one of the Northwest's great rivers.

Iron Workers #29 re-elects Jensen, Pauley to top posts

Kevin Jensen was sworn in Jan. 6 to a third term as financial secretary-treasurer and business manager of Iron Workers Local 29. Also re-elected to a third term as president and business agent was Jim Pauley.



KEVIN JENSEN



JIM PAULEY

Pauley and Joe Bowers were the top two vote-getters in a three-person race for business agents. Thommye Dew finished third.

Pauley ran unopposed for president;

Jensen was unopposed for his post; and Bowers was the lone candidate for vice president and District Council delegate.

Others re-elected were Robert Camarillo, Examining Committee/District Council delegate; Kevin Soto, recording secretary; and Michael Newton, sergeant-at-arms/Executive Committee/Examining Committee.

Joining Newton on the Executive Committee are Shane Nehls, Kevin Crocker and Neal Ryan.

Robert Stoecklein also was elected to the Examining Committee.

Trustees elected were Trini Iglesias, Steve Mahoney and John Winters.

Joseph Fields and Pauley also were elected to the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee.

Elections for all union offices were held Dec. 2. All terms are for three years.

Learn something new at Oregon Labor Law Conference Jan. 28

Find out how changes in labor law affect unions and workers at the 15th annual Oregon Labor Law Conference Friday, Jan. 28, at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

National Labor Relations Board Regional Director Rich Ahearn and Oregon Employment Relations Board Chair Paul Gamson will give updates of what is new — new case decisions etc — at the NLRB and ERB.

“The conference is always worth at-

tending because the law keeps changing,” said Norm Malbin, general counsel of Local 48 and program coordinator. “The goal is to provide training to help officers and staff of unions serve their members better.”

Participation is limited to 260 and is on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration is \$90 and includes all materials and lunch.

For more information, call Kristi at 503-889-3660 or Malbin at 503-889-3669 or e-mail to kristi@ibew48.com.

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"IF I DO NOT STOP TO HELP THE SANITATION WORKERS, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM? THAT'S THE QUESTION. LET US RISE UP TONIGHT WITH A GREATER READINESS. LET US STAND WITH A GREATER DETERMINATION. AND LET US MOVE ON IN THESE POWERFUL DAYS, THESE DAYS OF CHALLENGE TO MAKE AMERICA WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE."

From Martin Luther King's speech to Memphis sanitation workers, 1968

Oregon AFL-CIO to hold legislative summit Feb. 5

The Oregon AFL-CIO will hold a legislative conference for unions from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

The conference is an opportunity for union leaders and active members to discuss the many challenges lawmakers face — an enormous budget shortfall, continuing high unemployment,

and an evenly divided Oregon House.

The conference will review organized labor's priorities for the session and explore opportunities and strategies, as well as meet and talk with labor-friendly legislators and elected officials. Gov. John Kitzhaber has been invited.

Registration is \$25 and covers tuition and materials, lunch, and refresh-

ments. Registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 28. Registration received after that date will be accepted on a space available basis.

For more information or to register, call the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon at 503-412-3721 or from Eugene call 541-346-5054.

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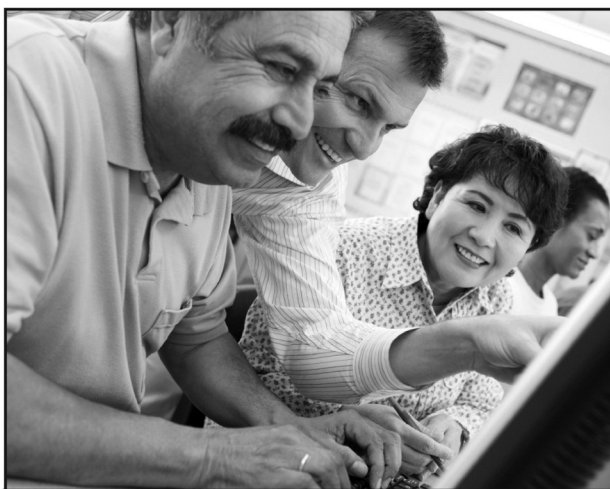
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Keeping calm at 30,000 feet:

Portlander Veda Shook rises to top job in flight attendants union

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

“Just about every flight attendant gets hired thinking they’re going to do it for a couple of years and see the world,” says Veda Shook, a 20-year Alaska Airlines flight attendant with ties to Portland. But some flight attendants discover a passion for the profession. They strive to make it a good career, not just a job.

Shook, on Jan. 1, took office as president of the 42,000-member Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) — 13 years after getting involved with the union. At 43, she’s one of America’s youngest national union leaders. She will steer a union that is straining to secure first-time contracts at newly-unionized airlines and mourning a spectacular union election loss among 20,000 flight attendants at Delta Air Lines.

Shook was living in a truck and camper when she first moved to Portland in 1991 with a degree in international affairs from University of Colorado Boulder. A friend suggested she apply for a job as a flight attendant.

“Flight attendants tend to have wanderlust in their personalities,” Shook says. That description fit her well.

Hired at Alaska Airlines, she fell in love with the job. But her co-workers

were at that time preparing for a high-stakes showdown with management. When contract bargaining broke down and a strike cooling-off period ended in June 1993, management imposed significant cuts in pay and pensions and declared Alaska Airlines a nonunion employer. To serve as strikebreakers in the event of a walkout by union members, Alaska trained hundreds of its office workers as flight attendants.

AFA needed a strategy, or all would be lost. So it tried something new: a campaign of picketing and intermittent strikes that it called CHAOS (Create Havoc Around Our System). Flight attendants would strike individual flights anywhere and anytime without notice. Management would never know, until a plane was about to depart.

“The public went bananas,” Shook recalls. “Bookings dropped.”

Union flight attendants committed civil disobedience and were arrested at Alaska’s Seattle headquarters. Several months into the CHAOS campaign, Alaska management agreed to a new contract — with raises of up to 60 percent.

Shook learned about solidarity on her strike picket line. But deeper involvement in the union was to come later. Low in seniority, she was fur-



Veda Shook, then AFA-CWA International Vice President, testifies before the antitrust subcommittee of the U.S. House Judiciary Committee, at an April 24, 2008 hearing about the impacts of the merger of Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines.

loughed, and when she returned to work, she got very few shifts. A union rep fought to keep Shook from losing her health benefits, and not a moment too soon. At an annual training, Shook began to feel weak. Her skin had turned yellow. She was diagnosed with an

auto-immune blood disorder. Doctors had to operate to remove her spleen. Union-won health insurance kept her from financial ruin and maybe even saved her life.

Not long after, an Alaska manager, plainly unfamiliar with Shook’s health problems, called her in to warn that her attendance record was not up to the airline’s standards. Shook said it became clear to her in that moment how important a union is. So when a union rep asked her to get involved, Shook accepted appointment in 1997 as president of the newly-created AFA Local 39 in Portland, and went on to become a member organizer on AFA’s 1999-2002 Delta Air Lines campaign.

“That work fundamentally changed who I am as a human being,” Shook said. “I started working with Delta flight attendants and saw the massive subjugation of those employees, and the fear. It shattered my world to see what the difference is [between unionized and non-unionized workplaces].”

AFA lost the 2002 vote at Delta, but Shook turned her newly-honed organizer skills to get members at Alaska ready for the next contract campaign. She became top officer of all the Alaska Airlines locals, facing management in a new round of tough bargaining. She formed a committee, VOICE (Volun-

teer Organizers for Information, Communication and Education), and got members to approve a \$3 monthly assessment to fund member mobilization. She nursed her new-born daughter at the bargaining table, and broke into tears in a meeting with Alaska Airlines’ CEO at one point. But in the end, she helped win a contract that contained wage increases and more family-friendly work rules — during the post-9/11-period when other union groups were agreeing to across-the-board cuts.

In 2003, AFA merged into 500,000-member Communications Workers of America, keeping its autonomy and its own identity.

Then, after 15 years of living on-and-off in Portland, Shook won election as AFA vice president in 2006 and moved to Washington, D.C. She was put in charge of AFA’s organizing program, and helped unionize flight attendants at Lynx Aviation, Ryan International and USA3000.

She wasn’t given direction of AFA’s third union campaign at Delta, however, and it pained her to see the union lose. When 20,000 Delta flight attendants turned down union representation in a close vote, the sub-group of 7,500 flight attendants that had worked at merged Northwest Airlines lost their existing union contract.

Regrouping after that loss will be a task for the new leader, along with unionizing other airlines, and negotiating acceptable first contracts at recently unionized carriers.

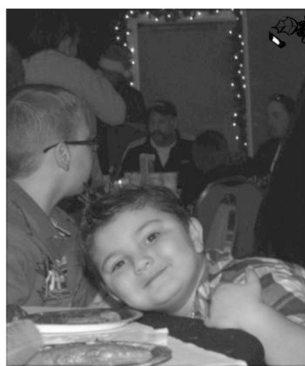
Shook also wants to push flight attendants to see themselves as first responders — not just high-altitude food servers.

“We’re paid to make our work seem effortless, to keep calm at 30,000 feet. And we’re so good at it that 90 percent of passengers don’t know when there’s been a medical emergency on a flight until we’ve landed,” Shook says.

Shook still works shifts sometime at Alaska, a habit which she says helps keep her connected to the job, and to AFA members.

“I love being a flight attendant,” Shook says. “This job is the best-kept secret.”

The AFA — Shook says — is what enables her and her fellow flight attendants to turn the job that they love into a career that can sustain them.



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Open Forum

Republicans ban word 'labor' from House committee

By Mike Hall
National AFL-CIO

Petty. Petty. Petty. With major issues like jobs and the economy straining for attention, House Republican leaders took a big step to solving the nation's problems when they boldly acted — drum roll, please — to change the name of the Education and Labor Committee to the Education and Workforce Committee.

Give me a bleedin' break. They so hate the word "labor" because after all, it's often followed by the word "union." OMG!

The Education and Labor Committee was founded in 1867 and retained that name — except for a brief time when it was split into separate Education and Labor committees — through both Democratic and Republican majorities for 122 years.

In 1995, the last time a group of swaggering, loud-mouthed extremists — remember Newt and his cohorts, the tea party forebears? — hit Capitol Hill, they stripped the word "labor" from the committee door.

In 2006, figuring 122 years of congressional history should be honored, the new Democratic majority restored the word "labor."

So here's another symbolic bird-flip from Republicans to working people over a concept that's clearly unfamiliar to them: Labor.

Disciplined unity gets results

To the Editor:

I agree with Brother Schell: "rioting in the streets" does not help build the labor movement in this country ("Rioting in the streets won't help cause," Jan. 7, 2011). However, disciplined unity in action does get results and increases our strength. When Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain called for "taking to the streets," I'm sure he was not advocating for the type of vandalism a few youth have exhibited on the streets of Europe in the past year.

I'm sure he was referring to the type of marches, rallies, strikes, blockades and sit-ins that millions of European workers employed — led by the union movement — to push back against em-

ployer-led attacks on their standard of living. These are the same tactics used by our own labor movement in the 1930s — which led to a huge increase the size of our movement and won us some of our most fundamental rights: to strike, to collectively bargain, to unemployment insurance, to a minimum wage, to social security.

Brother Chamberlain is suggesting that we are facing tough times where some of those fundamental rights are threatened. Tough times require tough tactics.

Jamie Partridge
Letter Carriers 82
Portland

House GOP cuts jobs, funding to highway and transit programs

(From the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO.)

The 112th Congress has convened, and the first order of business by the Republican majority in the House of Representatives was, incredibly, to cut jobs and funding to highway and transit programs.

Specifically, House Republicans changed a number of longstanding rules, including one that historically ensured that money raised solely for highway and transit projects through the federal gas tax be spent on those projects.

The new rule change by the Republican majority in the House will henceforth allow highway and transit funds that have already been raised to sit idle in a bank account, reducing investment in highways and transit, and subsequently destroying jobs.

Despite the best efforts of moderate Republicans like Steve LaTourette of Ohio to reduce the negative impact of this rule change, Republican leadership

refused to modify their new rule. Apparently, they are more interested in perpetuating a shell game where highway and transit funds are held back in order to make it appear that the deficit has been reduced in the short-term, thus allowing Congress to continue to spend money on pet projects and cutting one of the best job-creation programs in the history of the country.

Last November, the American people demanded that Congress make economic growth and job creation their top priority. For the millions of unemployed in the construction industry, cutting funding that would put them to work repairing or replacing our crumbling bridges, highways and transit systems is not a solution; it's a slap in the face.

We thank Congressman LaTourette for his efforts to prevent this rule from taking effect. We will need more voices like his, if Congress plans on getting serious about fixing the real problem facing our country; which is JOBS.

Dr. King's Legacy: Fighting for economic justice

In his latest book, "All Labor Has Dignity," historian Michael Honey brings together 16 of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches on economic justice, many of them unpublished until now. Honey, a professor at the University of Washington Tacoma, edited the speeches and wrote an introduction for the book. AFL-CIO Now senior writer James Parks interviewed Honey about King and his legacy of economic justice.

Q: In All Labor Has Dignity, you say King's dream called for "economic equality." What does that mean and how do we achieve it?

Honey: At various times he says he is not opposed to people having wealth, he's opposed to people having wealth at the expense of other people not hav-

ing wealth ... and ignoring the poor. His "Poor People's Campaign" was really about economic restructuring. His plan was to put pressure on Congress to shift its priorities from war and military spending to housing, health care, jobs and education, focusing especially on the people who were losing jobs because of automation of industry and outsourcing.

It was a two-pronged approach. One was that there were these people who were being thrown out of the economy to starve, and something had to be done about that. But secondly, the priorities of the country are all wrong.

Q: What do you think King would say about the current economic crisis, its effects on working people and the

attack on public employee unions?

Honey: In his speech to the AFL-CIO in 1961, King talked about the developing right-wing coalition that would threaten the labor movement and the civil rights movement. The quote is "the alliance between big military and big business or the coalition of Dixiecrats and militant reactionaries — whatever the form — these menaces now threaten everything decent and fair in American life. Labor today faces the greatest crisis. In the next 10 to 20 years, automation will grind jobs into dust. This period is made to order for those who would drive labor into impotency by viciously attacking it at every point of weakness."

His idea [to fight this developing

right-wing coalition] is to develop a mass coalition of labor, civil rights churches, anti-war, students — anybody who's moving in the same direction.

Q: What is King's legacy today and how can we best honor it?

Honey: King was a holistic thinker, and he said the problem is not just individuals; the problem is the system. The real evil is systematic. The three great evils are racism, militarism and materialism. Our country is under the control of those three evils, and we have to change the whole setup of the country to change that. If you look at him in that way, he's timely and timeless.

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Working Families Party to host forum on proposed Oregon State Bank

2011 Legislature will consider legislation to create publicly-owned bank

The Working Families Party of Oregon, in partnership with the Oregonians for a State Bank coalition, will hold a forum on Feb. 1, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at New Song Community Church, 2511 NE Martin Luther King Blvd., Portland.

Two years ago over 800 people gathered in Portland to strategize a unified, local response to the unfolding economic crisis. One idea to emerge from

that gathering was to work for the creation of a state bank modeled after the highly successful, 91-year-old Bank of North Dakota.

Currently the State of Oregon deposits billions of its tax receipts into the very same "too big to fail banks" that crashed the global economy. The Working Families Party proposal to create the Oregon State Bank would instead move that money into a publicly owned bank accountable to the citizens of Oregon, and which would partner with local community banks to get credit flowing to small businesses and family farmers once again.

"This state bank proposal is generat-

ing widespread, bi-partisan support," said Barbara Dudley, co-chair of the Oregon Working Families Party. "We can't afford to let our economy be held hostage to the whims of distant financial markets, and the Oregon State Bank is a huge step toward creating a local economy that serves working people, not Wall Street."

The forum will focus on the history and outline of the state bank proposal, discussing the need for a state bank, and looking at the path to creating such an institution in the 2011 legislative session. The event will feature speakers from the Working Families Party, Oregon Action/Main Street Alliance, and others.

Others forums are slated throughout the state over the next couple of months.

The first is in Medford, Tuesday, Jan. 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Medford Public Library, 205 S. Central Ave.

On Saturday, Feb. 26, a forum will be held starting at 2 p.m. at the Salem Senior Center, 2615 Portland Rd. NE.

Another forum will be held in Eugene on Thursday, March 3, at Harris Hall, 125 E. 8th Ave., starting at 6 p.m.

Additional information about the campaign can be found online at: <http://oregoniansforastatebank.org/>.



Rallying for jobs

Toby Green of Laborers Local 483 joined a dozen unemployed Oregonians and several community leaders at a rally Jan. 10 in downtown Portland to call on the new Congress to enact a federal jobs program and to extend unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless. Dubbed "the 99ers" because they have been unemployed for more than 99 weeks and have lost their insurance benefits, Green said workers cannot sit idly by and wait for help. He said it was the strength of unemployed workers in the 1930s that led to creation of public works programs that created hundreds of thousands of jobs building bridges and roads and restoring and developing natural resources. "This did not happen from some act of God or benevolence on the part of President Franklin Roosevelt," Green said. "These workers organized themselves to demand these programs." Loren Spencer of Portland said she has reached the 99-week limit on benefits and is now without an income. "I desperately want to work, but there just aren't enough jobs," she said. "I'm concerned that I won't be able to put a roof over my head, and Congress is talking about taking away safety net benefits from those who most desperately need them. We need a federal jobs program, since big business is no longer interested in investing in our economy." Rallygoers called on labor to organize massive demonstrations at cities across the country to demand that government create a jobs program, paid for by taxes on Wall Street and the super-rich, who now pay taxes at a far lower rate than average workers. "We must never forget that it was Wall Street that caused this crisis," Green said. The rally was sponsored by Portland Jobs with Justice and the Sunnyside Self-Help Employment Group.

'Solution to Resolution' topic of LERA breakfast

"The Solution to Resolution" will be the topic of discussion at the Jan. 25 breakfast program sponsored by the Oregon Labor Employment Relations Association. Labor attorney Mike Tedesco and management attorney Todd Lyon will answer questions and offer advice on how to prepare each side for a final settlement.

The breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. at Clackamas Community College in

Wilsonville, 29353 Town Center Loop East. Cost is \$35 — \$25 if you pay for a membership to LERA.

Questions and registrations can be directed by e-mail to info@oregonlera.org, or call Jim Bailey at 503-819-4071.

LERA is an organization that brings labor, management, neutrals and academics together to improve labor-management relations.

Porter appointed to Commission on Senior Services

Verna Porter of the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans, a partner organization of the AFL-CIO, has been appointed to the Governor's Commission on Senior Services.

The commission is charged with finding ways to enhance and protect the quality of life for older Oregonians, working to ensure that they have access to services that provide choice, independence and dignity.

Porter is a retired nurse and member of the Oregon Nurses Association who specialized in geriatric nursing the last few years of her career. She has served as secretary-treasurer of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union's Columbia River Pensioners and is a lobbyist for the Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens and United Seniors of Oregon.

Porter said her primary focus on the commission will be home health care. "The Service Employees organized home health care workers, and the state has put into place regulations so that now home health care providers must have some training and be licensed," Porter said. "Home health care is such a vital service and now seniors know who is giving that care."



VERNA PORTER



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Take precautions when booking meetings at Northwest hotels

UNITE HERE, the union that represents hotel workers, is trying to get the word out about the possibility of labor disputes when contracts expire this summer at Portland and Seattle hotels.

Unions and pro-union groups traditionally support union workers by scheduling meetings and conferences at unionized facilities. But that can get tricky if the workers end up on strike or boycotting their employer, as they have in several recent contract disputes with the Hilton hotel chain.

Karly Edwards, deputy trustee of Portland-based UNITE HERE Local 9, suggests that conference planners negotiate "force majeure" language in contracts with hotels. Depending on how they're worded, such clauses can prevent organizations from losing deposits or having to pay cancellation fees if they cancel because of a labor dispute. Sample language is available at www.unitehere8.org.

Inmex, a UNITE HERE-supported non-profit that was founded in 2006, can also help. Inmex, which stands for Informed Meetings Exchange, provides a number of resources for meeting planners at www.inmex.org, and helps users select socially-responsible hotels.

Contracts covering about 400 workers expire June 30 and July 31 at the four unionized hotels in the Portland-area: the Benson, Paramount, Hilton Portland & Executive Tower, and Hilton Vancouver, Washington. And contracts covering 1,400 workers at seven Seattle-area hotels and meeting spaces expire at the end of May, June, and July. Those are: The Westin Hotel Seattle, The Edgewater Hotel, Seattle Hilton, Washington Athletic Club, Space Needle Sky City Restaurant, Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport, and Hilton Seattle Airport and Conference Center.

In October 2010, UNITE HERE struck Hilton hotels in Chicago, Honolulu, and San Francisco before reaching agreements on new contracts.

"It's important that hotel workers not be locked into recession-era contracts, and locked out of the recovery," said Eric Van Rossum, secretary-treasurer of Seattle-based UNITE HERE Local 8.

As the recession took hold, hotel workers suffered layoffs, hours cuts, and workload increases, Van Rossum said, but hotel business has bounced back since its 2009 low point and is on track for full recovery in 2012 and 2013.

Shiprack seeks open Metro seat

Freshly retired union official Bob Shiprack has thrown his hat into the ring to fill an open seat on the Metro Council, the regional government that coordinates land-use and transportation planning in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

Shiprack, 60, retired Oct. 1 after 25 years as executive secretary-treasurer of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council.

In January, Metro Councilor Robert Liberty announced that he would be leaving before the end of his term — January 2013 — to take a job at the University of Oregon. Because fewer than two years remain in his term, the seat will be filled by appointment of the five remaining Metro councilors and Metro president.

“I’m seeking the seat because I would like to see a change in the style of leaders representing District 6,” Shiprack told the Labor Press.

Liberty, a former staff attorney for the environmental group 1000 Friends of Oregon, has often been at odds with construction unions because of his staunch advocacy for conservative land development. He also opposes the Columbia River Crossing, a huge job-producer for construction workers.

Immediately after Liberty announced his departure (effective Jan. 15), his next-door neighbor Bob Stacey, who lost the November election for Metro president, said he wanted the job. Stacey is a former director of 1000 Friends of Oregon.

Shiprack said residents of District 6, which includes portions of Northeast, Southeast and Southwest Portland, “know that jobs are still the number one issue in the Metro area, and value a new councilor with experience that can help bring more jobs to our region.



BOB SHIPRACK

They want a councilor who will be a uniter — someone who has experience building broad coalitions around controversial issues.”

Shiprack is a former six-term state legislator and past chair of the state’s Energy Facility Siting Council. He was born and raised in Southeast Portland, which happens to be in District 6, although Metro hadn’t been created yet.

The Metro Council is expected to declare a vacancy at its meeting Jan. 20 (after this issue went to press). Once it does, candidates will have four weeks to apply for the part-time post that pays \$37,774 year. After the application period ends, the Council will hold a public meeting, at which time councilors will interview applicants and invite members of the public to speak.

The current Metro Council is comprised of President Tom Hughes and Councilors Shirley Craddick, Carlotta Collette, Carl Hosticka, Kathryn Harrington, and Rex Burkholder.

(Editor’s Note: A month after retiring, Bob Shiprack was diagnosed with colon cancer. Because a colonoscopy caught the cancer early, doctors were able to remove it surgically, with no need for chemotherapy or radiation. He told the Labor Press last week that he is cancer-free and recovering nicely. He wants to remind everyone not to put off having a colonoscopy when they are of age, typically after turning 50 years old.)

Oregon Supreme Court hears two PERS cases

Arken and Robinson lawsuits are related to public employees who retired between April 2000 and April 2004

SALEM — The Oregon Supreme Court heard oral arguments Jan. 6 on two PERS (Public Employee Retirement System)-related cases.

Both the “Arken” and “Robinson” cases relate to the so-called “window retirees” — people who retired from PERS between April 2000 and April 2004. Those who retired within this time frame received a benefits boost when the PERS board credited 20 percent market earnings to their retirement accounts in 1999. The amount was retroactively reduced to 11.33 percent by Marion County Circuit Court Judge Paul Lipscomb. PERS has said those retirees must re-pay the overage, though other than a series of letters demanding payment, the agency has not been overly aggressive in pursuing the matter while awaiting final legal decisions, said Don Loving, public affairs director of Oregon AFSCME Council 75.

In the Arken case, the PERS Coalition — a group of unions that represents public employees — takes the position that the window retirees are entitled to keep the original allocation because, in essence, the 2003 Legislature said they could. In Robinson, the argument is that the Legislature limited the ability of PERS to recover from these retirees and that what PERS has

done is inconsistent with these restrictions.

Only five of the Supreme Court’s seven justices were on hand to hear the two cases: Chief Justice Paul De Muniz and Justices Thomas Balmer, Robert Durham, Rives Kistler and Virginia Linder. Justice Martha Lee Walters was absent; she gave no explanation for her whereabouts but said she would be weighing in on the decision. The other absent justice was Jack Landau, who was sworn into office on Jan. 5. Landau recused himself because his son is an attorney with the Eugene law firm that is leading the other side, Loving said.

Arken was the first case on the docket. Longtime PERS Coalition attorney Greg Hartman told the court that throughout the 2003 reform legislation debate in Salem, the “core principle” that lawmakers operated under was that no person who had already retired should lose any benefits. Noting that Lipscomb’s decision on the 20 percent vs. 11.33 percent account crediting had not been finalized by higher courts yet when the Legislature took action in 2003, lawmakers in effect let stand the 20 percent and intended that to be the baseline for the window retirees.

“The record clearly indicates that the Legislature was upset with PERS and the PERS Board, and in essence they said they were not going to wait for all of the litigation to settle out, that this is what we’ll do,” said Hartman. “Both the legislative record and your court’s decision in the Strunk case make clear that 20 percent was the amount for the window retirees.” Opposition attorney Bill Gary argued

that the Legislature’s intent was to codify 11.33 percent as the proper number; during rebuttal Hartman reiterated that could not be the case because the litigation surrounding the 20 percent vs. 11.33 percent debate, City of Eugene, had not been concluded at the time.

Robinson is not a PERS Coalition case proper, but is closely related. In a nutshell, Robinson ignores the argument regarding 20 percent vs. 11.33 percent and focuses on PERS’ ability to reach into retirees’ accounts and take money back. Opposition attorney Jim Malkin argued that if Tier 1 retirees (and virtually all of the window retirees are Tier 1) were held harmless for the overpayments, Tier 2 retirees were improperly hit by having to pay back the money indirectly by virtue of PERS making up the difference through “administrative expenses” — money that otherwise could be credited to member accounts.

“It’s a classic case of robbing Peter to pay Paul,” said Malkin.

Jim Coon, lead attorney for the Robinson case, countered that the Legislature understood what it was doing.

“They faced a difficult choice,” said Coon. “The money had to come from somewhere, and the Legislature chose to hold harmless those already retired. Remember, this was 2003 — some of them had been retired three years already, decisions based on the ‘promise’ made to them by PERS when they left their jobs.”

Decision in either case are not expected to be rendered until the end of the year, at the earliest.

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