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Union to TriMet: Cut managers, not drivers

ATU under siege as labor ally Lynn Lehrbach slated for replacement on the TriMet board

By DON MCINTOSH
Associate Editor

The union that represents bus and train operators and other TriMet workers picketed the transit agency's Jan. 25 Board meeting — after TriMet called its own employees pay and benefits “out-of-line” in a Dec. 15 e-mail to the public.

TriMet forecast a \$12-17 million budget shortfall in the e-mail, and asked for public input on fare increases and service cuts, explaining that those measures were necessary because the “union leadership” had “refused to consider reasonable changes to wage increases and benefits.”

But Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 757 President Jon Hunt dismissed those projections at the

Board meeting, saying TriMet's “oh, we are so broke” campaign is “merely a ruse to point fingers at TriMet union workers who TriMet claims are over-paid.”

Hunt told the Board that TriMet can avoid the proposed fare hikes and service cuts by adopting other money-saving measures. TriMet could save up to \$5 million a year by thinning management ranks down to the levels they were five years ago, Hunt said, and another \$7 million a year by canceling contracted-out paratransit service and doing the work in-house.

Currently, TriMet pays a contractor — United Kingdom-headquartered First Transit — to run its paratransit service, known as TriMet Lift. TriMet Lift provides point-to-point transportation, by reservation, to elderly and disabled people who are unable to ride regular bus and rail transit. Hunt said his cost estimate was based on a 2008 study the union and TriMet commissioned.

Hunt's statement got no response from the Board or from TriMet General Manager Neil McFarlane. But TriMet spokesperson Mary Fetsch disputes



Jon Hunt (right), president of ATU Local 757, chats with TriMet Board member Lynn Lehrbach at a rally prior to a Jan. 25 transit agency board meeting. Lehrbach, a Teamsters official — and Local 757's strongest ally — is slated for replacement after serving one term on the governor-appointed TriMet Board of Directors.

both claims. Drawing from data in the same study, Fetsch says bringing Lift in-house would *increase* costs \$7.5 million. And Fetsch says TriMet's ratio

of nonunion to union workers is lower in the current fiscal year than three years prior — in the Operations Division.

Hunt's Board testimony was a rare face-to-face with General Manager McFarlane. Local 757 picketed McFarlane's West Hills home Nov. 19. Hunt says McFarlane has refused to meet with him, instead referring him to Randy Stedman, who was hired Nov. 14 as TriMet executive director of Labor Relations and Human Resources.

Stedman's background is as a labor relations consultant. He takes credit on his web site for defeating a union organizing campaign. In 2011 he represented Mt. Hood Community College, where he won concessions from faculty after a near-strike.

Local 757 has picketed and testified at the TriMet Board for months, but hasn't persuaded the Board to intervene in its long-running contract dispute. And now the union may be about to lose its one reliable Board ally, Lynn Lehrbach. Lehrbach — political director for Teamsters Joint Council No. 37 and first vice president of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council — was appointed by former governor Ted Kulongoski to a term that expired Jan. 5.

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Union membership grows in Oregon

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Union membership in Oregon grew last year, adding 25,000 new members, according to new U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data released Jan. 27. That brings the total union membership in the state to 270,000, or 17.1 of the workforce.

At the same time, the state of Washington lost union members, going from 552,000 in 2010 to 517,000 in 2011. The Evergreen State's union density also dropped from 19.4 percent of the workforce to 19 percent.

Nationwide, union membership increased by 49,000 from 2010 to 2011, the BLS reported. An increase of 110,000 in the private sector was partially offset by a decline of 61,000 in the public sector, making the rate of union membership essentially unchanged at 11.8 percent, with some

14.8 million U.S. workers union members.

In 1983, the first year for which comparable union data are available, the union membership rate was 20.1 percent and there were 17.7 million union workers.

Public-sector union density increased from 36.2 percent to 37 percent through November 2011. Private-sector union membership remains at 6.9 percent. The largest increases in union membership were in construction, health care services, retail trade, primary metals and fabricated metal products, hospitals, transportation and warehousing.

The data show that among full-time wage and salary workers, the median weekly earnings of union members were \$938, compared to \$729 for

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Gov. Gregoire brokers deal that ends year-long dispute at Port of Longview

LONGVIEW, Wash. — A whirlwind week of negotiations Jan. 23-27 appears to have ended a year-long dispute between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and EGT at the Port of Longview's new \$200 million grain export facility.

On Monday, Jan. 23, Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire announced that she had brokered a deal between the two parties that settled pending legal issues, unfair labor practice charges, and fines. That announcement came a few hours before an administrative law judge was set to open hearings on unfair labor practice charges filed by the National Labor Relations Board against the ILWU for illegal picketing and other activities. During the course of the year, ILWU blocked trains from delivering grain and members clashed with police, leading to several hundred arrests. In August, a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order prohibiting members of ILWU from mass picketing at the facility.

“I asked EGT and ILWU to come together in a good faith effort to overcome their differences,” Gregoire said in a press release. “Both parties should be commended for their willingness to work together and compromise.

This framework reflects considerable effort to put the interests of the Longview community and the entire Columbia River basin first. I am confident an agreement can be reached that will satisfy both parties and allow the new grain terminal to become fully operational.”

The following day, Jan. 24, members of ILWU Local 21 ratified the settlement agreement. Then, on Friday, Jan. 27, Port of Longview's board of commissioners approved the settlement agreement before approving an amendment to its lease with EGT.

The ILWU protests centered on a decision by EGT to use an outside union contractor instead of ILWU members to staff the grain terminal. ILWU filed a lawsuit, arguing that its contract with the Port required EGT to hire longshore workers. The sides were awaiting a federal judge's ruling when the governor said a settlement had been reached.

Gregoire's announcement came as a surprise to Operating Engineers Local 701, which represents workers at General Construction — the contractor hired by EGT to staff the grain terminal. Local 701 asserts that ILWU

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'Sam, Sam, are you nuts? We won't have all these cuts'

Over 100 City of Portland workers protested a new round of expected budget cuts Jan. 30 outside the Portland Bureau of Transportation's Stanton Yard maintenance facility at 2929 N. Kerby Ave.

Workers, represented by Laborers Local 483, said Portland can't afford to cut back on road and sewer maintenance, as it will be more costly in the long run. Nor can their families afford the loss of jobs.

Jerry "JJ" Johnson (pictured above with bullhorn) returned to work on light duty in January after a fall on the job which caused a spinal cord injury. Johnson has been a city sewer worker for 22 years, and seniority rules make it unlikely he'll be laid off. But he said he's bothered by the idea that the City hired dozens of workers in 2011 only to propose laying them off in 2012.

"They act like they couldn't have forecasted this," Johnson told the Labor

Press. Workers facing possible layoff include Jens Peill, whose recent hire to a City job enables him to support wife Jessica and four children — Sebastian, Brianna, Sophia and Fiona — all of whom turned up at the rally and are pictured to Johnson's right.

Several political office seekers made an appearance at the protest, including Portland mayoral candidates Jefferson Smith and Charlie Hales and City Council candidate Mary Nolan.

After rallying outside Stanton Yard, workers marched through adjacent Legacy Emanuel Hospital, which is also laying off staff, and then held a public forum at nearby Matt Dishman Community Center. Dishman Center is named after a public employee, the City's first African-American police officer.



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At City of Portland

Unions start to weigh in on mayor's race

Unions representing workers at the City of Portland are starting to weigh in on the May primary election for mayor.

On Jan. 24, the largest union at the City — the 950-member American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 189 — endorsed State Rep. Jefferson Smith. A week before that, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48 announced its support of businesswoman Eileen Brady. Local 48 represents about 100 electricians at the City.

Both locals are part of the District Council of Trades Unions, a coalition of seven union locals representing some 1,800 City employees. The other locals include Laborers Local 483, Operating Engineers Local 701, Painters District Council 5, Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 and Machinists Lodge 1005. The DCTU has not yet endorsed a candidate in the mayor's race.

Smith and Brady are among 18 candidates running to succeed Mayor Sam Adams, who is not seeking re-election. Smith, Brady and former Portland city commissioner Charlie Hales are the front-runners.

In a press release, Local 189 said with the City's weak mayor structure, a mayor needs to be able to build con-

sensus with four other strong personalities. As a state representative, Jefferson Smith has a proven track record of consensus building, without compromising on important issues such as protecting voting rights and creating transparency in government. He has shown through his work to limit middle management and focus budgets on front line services that he is willing to challenge the status quo.

IBEW Local 48 Business Manager Cliff Davis said the union backed Brady based on her experience as co-founder of New Seasons Market, and for her work on the Oregon Health Fund

Board. "The next mayor of Portland needs to be a job creator," he said. "Portland needs Eileen's deep management and job creation experience in the mayor's office."

Currently, 18 candidates have filed to run for mayor (the deadline to file is March 6). One of them, Max Bauske, is a member of UFCW Local 555. Bauske, 22, works part-time at Fred Meyer and attends Portland Community College full time.

The primary election is May 15. If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, the top two vote-getters will face off in November.

AFSCME backs Nolan, Novick for City Council

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 189 added its name to a list of union locals endorsing Steve Novick and Mary Nolan for Portland City Council.

In December, IBEW Local 48, Portland Fire Fighters Local 43, the Portland Police Association, and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 8, endorsed Novick and Nolan.

Novick is running for Position 4. The seat is being vacated by Randy

Leonard, a former president of Fire Fighters Local 43. Leonard has held the seat since 2002 and is not seeking re-election.

Nolan left the Oregon House of Representatives to challenge incumbent Amanda Fritz in Position 1. Fritz is a 29-year member of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). Fritz has endorsements from ONA and Communications Workers of America Local 7901.

The AFSCME Local 189 endorsements were voted on at a general membership meeting held Jan. 24.

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Jobs will again top labor's agenda at Oregon Legislature

SALEM — Jobs — both private and public sector — will again top the union agenda in the one-month session of the Oregon Legislature that began Feb. 1.

Three bills this session aim to stop jobs from heading overseas. A bill sponsored by State Rep. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay), HB 4142, would require the State of Oregon to favor Oregon paper mills when it's purchasing recycled paper. A "Buy American" bill sponsored by State Sen. Laurie Monnes-Anderson (D-Gresham), SB 1556, would let transit agencies give preference to vehicles with over 60 percent U.S.-made components — when spending federal funds. And State Sen. Chip Shields (D-Portland) planned to introduce a non-binding referendum calling on Congress to pass the TRADE Act, legislation that would put a stop to further NAFTA-style trade agreements until existing agreements are evaluated.

Other bills could put building trades members to work. The Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council will support a bill (HB 4020) by State Rep. Mike Schaufler (D-Happy Valley) to increase lottery bonding authority by \$10 million to fund competitive grants for air, marine, and rail transportation infrastructure projects. Building Trades Executive Secretary John Mohlis said the group will



also back a proposal for \$60 million in bonding authority to assist construction of the Oregon Sustainability Center in downtown Portland, billed as the world's first "net-zero" high-rise office building because it would generate its own energy, collect its own water, and emit zero carbon in operation. The trades will also support Oregon Treasurer Ted Wheeler's proposed Oregon Investment Act, HB 4040.

Lastly, Mohlis said building trades unions will join with Oregon AFSCME to support a campaign by State Rep. Val Hoyle (D-Junction City) to build a second state mental hospital in Junction City.

Oregon AFSCME is also backing a bill (HB 4033) to withhold the names of Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) retirees from public disclosure.

The proposal is in reaction to a recent court decision.

The Legislature will need to rebalance the state's two-year budget. That discussion will start Feb. 8 when the state economist issues an updated revenue forecast. To make that easier, State Rep. Tina Kotek (D-Portland) has introduced a bill (HB 4132) to reduce tax breaks by the same proportion that state agency budgets are reduced. And State Rep. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland) has a bill (HB 4131) to thin management ranks at state agencies — a year earlier than a bill that was passed last year. Dembrow's bill speeds implementation of the goal of an 11-to-1 staff to management ratio at larger state agencies.

"We need to take advantage of retirements that are happening now,"

Dembrow explained, "so agencies can reduce administration now rather than laying people off later."

Dembrow is also sponsoring a bill (HB 4141) to better coordinate state-funded workforce training efforts with state economic development efforts to attract and grow businesses.

Noticing discrimination against the long-term unemployed, State Sen. Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland) will push a bill (SB 1548) to ban help wanted ads that limit applicants to persons who are currently employed.

And a union-supported campaign to divest from big Wall Street banks may get an echo in a bill (HB 4139) by State Rep. Margaret Doherty (D-Tigard) to deposit state funds in community banks to the extent practicable.

The session is scheduled to run 29

days. Oregon moved permanently to annual legislative sessions in 2010, when voters approved a constitutional change that mandates that the Legislature meet for up to 160 calendar days in odd-numbered years and up to 35 days in even-numbered years.

Don't expect major workers rights legislation this session, says Oregon AFL-CIO spokesperson Elana Guiney. "Concepts that didn't make it through last [five-month-long] session probably won't make it this session," Guiney said, "because it's the same people, with less time."

While Democrats have a 16-14 majority in the Oregon Senate, the Oregon House is split 30-30 between Democrats and Republicans.

Under the rules for the short session, bills had to be filed before the session began in order to be considered. Bills have less than a week to be scheduled for action in a committee, or they're effectively dead. And bills that have not been passed by their original committee by February 14 won't move forward.

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PHOTOSTOCK

Wisconsin unions in life or death fight to recall Gov. Walker

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Feb. 11 marks one year since Wisconsin's newly-elected Republican governor, Scott Walker, declared war on public-sector unions. Walker introduced what he called a "budget repair" bill, but its aim was to put an end to public employee unionism in Wisconsin. A year after it was introduced — and seven months after it took effect — public employee unions still exist in Wisconsin, but they've suffered a body blow, and are fighting to hold on while they mobilize for a life-or-death fight to recall Walker from office.

Eliminating collective bargaining was not part of Walker's 2010 election campaign. Nor was his election win — with 52 percent of the vote — a particularly strong mandate. But at a private meeting Feb. 7, 2011, Walker announced to his cabinet that he was about to follow in the historic footsteps of his idol Ronald Reagan, who famously fired striking public employees in 1981 and broke their aircraft controllers union.

Walker planned for his bill to be passed within weeks, but it was delayed when Democratic members of the Wisconsin State Senate fled to Illinois, leaving the Republican-dominated legislative chamber without the quorum it needed to pass budget-related bills. Meanwhile, a two-week-long people's occupation of the Wisconsin state capitol attracted worldwide attention. But on March 9, Senate Republicans determined that legally, the bill wasn't budget-related after all, which meant they could pass it without the Democrats present. Unions mounted challenges in court, but none of those challenges have succeeded so far. On June 29, the law took effect, as Wisconsin Act 10.

The only budget-related part of the so-called "budget repair" bill was a requirement that public employees pay a greater portion of the cost of their health

and retirement benefits.

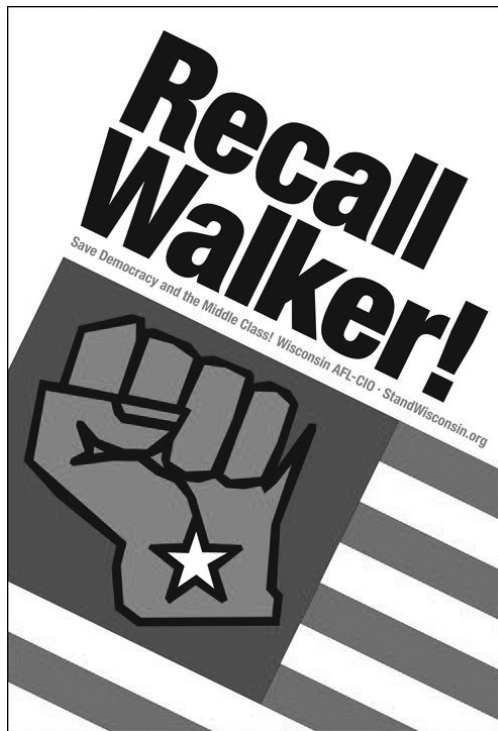
Act 10 eliminated union rights altogether for university employees, but left them intact for police officers and firefighters. For other public employees, strictly speaking, Act 10 didn't eliminate the right to collective bargaining; it just rendered it meaningless.

Under Act 10, in order to engage in collective bargaining, unions must be re-certified every year. To be re-certified, unions must pay a fee of \$200 to \$2,000, and then get "yes" votes — not just from a majority of those voting, but from a majority of the workplace.

Non-union workplaces don't vote every year whether to unionize; only unionized workplaces vote every year whether to stay union. And Act 10 bars school districts and local governments from voluntarily recognizing or bargaining with unions outside of the state framework.

Once a union is re-certified, it may bargain with an employer — but not about benefits, work rules, discipline, safety, or anything else — only about wages, and then only the base wage. Not only that, but public employers are barred from agreeing to raises higher than inflation without a public vote. Note that nothing prohibits public employers from giving higher-than-inflation raises to nonunion employees — only union employees face the cap.

Act 10 also takes away any leverage that public employee union workers could use to make employers agree to a raise. Under the previous law, the two sides had an incentive to agree to a reasonable contract, because if they failed



to, the contract would be resolved by binding arbitration: A neutral arbitrator would pick the most reasonable offer in its entirety. Act 10 eliminates binding arbitration, and at the same time mandates that workers be fired if they strike. With no right to strike and no requirement to arbitrate, collective bargaining is reduced to collective begging.

Finally, under Act 10, no contract can require any public worker to pay union dues. In fact, it bars public employers from deducting union dues from paychecks, even if employees request it.

And as if to put the final nail in the coffin, Walker put an anti-union lawyer in charge of the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, the agency that runs the re-certification elections.

Unsurprisingly, most Wisconsin unions opted not even to take part in the new system. Act 10's implementation set in motion a rolling series of "un-cer-

tifications." Union contracts that were ratified before the law took effect remain in force, but the terms of Act 10 take effect when they expire. Because they could see that coming, many local unions rushed to get agreements with cities and counties.

State workers weren't so lucky: Their boss was Scott Walker, and his first act upon taking office had been to cancel an extension of the state worker contract. So state employees were the first group to lose union certification. AFSCME Council 24 — the Wisconsin State Employees Union — had 22,000 state employee members a year ago. Not a single one of its units opted to re-certify.

AFSCME Council 40 — made up of AFSCME chapters at local governments — had just under 32,000 members a year ago. Now, says Executive Director Rick Badger, less than 17,000 remain under about 400 contracts that haven't yet expired, while about 3,000 more — in the formerly unionized units — have stepped up to pay dues (keeping their union membership, but without a contract). Staff dropped to 27 from 38 a year ago, and agreed to a 20 percent cut in pay and benefits. At some local governments where the union and employer had decent relationships, work rules and conditions stayed the same after contracts expired.

In Rock County, south of Madison, commissioners passed elements of the union contract as ordinance.

The Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), an affiliate of the National Education Association, had 98,000 members a year ago. WEAC isn't releasing current membership figures, but spokesperson Christina Brey said about a third of the union's contracts have expired. Union staff is down 42, including 22 who were laid off in October.

Unlike the other unions, many local WEAC chapters decided to seek re-certification, in part to send a message to

Walker. In late November and early December, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission conducted 213 union elections in school districts, and 189 (90 percent) resulted in re-certification. In only three cases did the union fail to get a majority of votes, though in 21 cases they failed to get the necessary majority of the workplace.

With the street protests of February and March dying down, the popular fight shifted to the electoral arena. Union members and others gathered signatures to recall state senators who voted for the bill. Enough were gathered that six state senate Republicans faced recall, and in August, two of them lost their seats.

Now, Walker himself faces recall. Opponents had to wait until he'd been in office a year, but on Jan. 17, the group United Wisconsin turned in over a million signatures — far more than the 540,000 they needed to trigger recall — and all the more remarkable in that it was an all-volunteer operation. Now a state agency will have 60 days to certify signatures before scheduling a primary six weeks later. A recall election could take place as soon as June.

Four more Republican state senators also face recall, and three of them are considered vulnerable.

But even in the best case scenario, it will take time to repeal Act 10. Walker could be out in June, if voters are presented with a Democrat they prefer. But the Wisconsin State Assembly would still be controlled 59 to 39 by Republicans until at least the November 2012 election.

Public employee union leaders have tried to focus on the bright side of the struggle — a re-animated rank-and-file, and mass public support of the idea of collective bargaining. But there's no denying that Wisconsin public employee unions are in a defensive fight, a fight for their very existence, and a fight that will have national significance.

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...Governor brokers deal ending dispute at Port of Longview

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doesn't hold a jurisdictional claim to the work.

"We weren't notified of any secret negotiations," said Nelda Wilson, assistant to the business manager of Local 701. In fact, in October the union sent a

letter to Gregoire and other politicians asking that they not get involved.

"This is a pretty slippery slope having a governor intervene in a labor dispute," said Wilson, explaining that workers have protections under the National Labor Relations Act and union jurisdictional issues have remedies un-

der the constitution of the national AFL-CIO.

"Think about it, what if Washington had a Scott Walker (governor of Wisconsin, who recently stripped public employees of collective bargaining rights) in the driver's seat? I think this is a very dangerous precedent to have set."

Wilson said employees of General Construction were laid off Jan. 23, the day of the governor's announcement.

In a written statement to the Longview Daily News, Local 701 Business Manager Mark Holliday said: "Local 701 members will continue to work for General Construction as we have done for almost 90 years, whether at the EGT facility or somewhere else. Our labor contract is with General Construction. We have never had and still don't have a relationship or contract with EGT."

The Port's amended lease with EGT states that the multinational company is no longer bound by the Port's "working agreement" with ILWU. In exchange, EGT agreed that ILWU will provide the labor for EGT's facility, and agreed to a union card-check procedure. If a majority of workers choose to be represented by Local 21, EGT and the union will start bargaining on a labor agreement for all land-side and ship-side operations.

According to the Longview Daily News and confirmed by ILWU, the settlement agreement with the Port contains language that ILWU must request that all outside groups — including other labor unions and the Occupy movement — refrain from picketing at

EGT. The Cowlitz Wahkiakum Central Labor Council had called for mass pickets of the first incoming ship to load grain at the EGT terminal, which is expected any day.

The union is allowed to resume its picket if collective bargaining talks break down. At press time, a union vote had not been held and bargaining had not yet begun.

Architects recognize #290's David Roberts with craftsmanship award

David Roberts, a member of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, received the 2011 Craftsmanship Award for steam and boiler pipefitters from the Southwestern Oregon Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

A second generation steamfitter from McMinnville, Roberts works for Gormley Plumbing & Mechanical. He was nominated for the award by SOLARC Architecture & Engineering of Eugene for his work on a difficult boiler retrofit improvement project at the City of Eugene's Echo Hollow and Sheldon swimming pools.

Roberts was the foreman on the project.

"Dave's work sequence and fine quality craftsmanship has been a pleasure to observe in the field," noted Steve Loges, project manager for the City of Eugene's Central Services-Facility Management Division.



DAVID ROBERTS

Gene Johnson, a principal at SOLARC, said Roberts displayed "a personal commitment to excellence in his work, which was an essential ingredient in the timely completion of the projects in these two facilities, involving tightly defined construction periods and critical pool re-opening dates."

Gormley project manager Douglas Mero called it "a great honor for both David and our company."

Roberts is a 39-year member of the union, starting out as an apprentice in 1973. He has worked for Gormley for approximately 18 years.

"It's nice to get the recognition from the architects and engineers," Roberts told the Labor Press. "For me personally, and for our company, it's just the way we do business. It doesn't take any more time or effort to do it right."



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Trade justice roadshow will talk about proposed Pacific Rim FTA

A massive new Trans-Pacific Free Trade Agreement currently being pushed by the Obama Administration will be the focus of a "trade justice roadshow" in February sponsored by the Oregon Fair Trade Coalition.

According to the coalition, the Trans-Pacific FTA is being negotiated behind closed doors between a dozen countries throughout the Pacific Rim at the behest of transnational corporations. Its targeted completion date is the end of this year.

Journalists, most members of Congress, and the people most likely to be impacted by the negotiations are barred from reviewing the U.S. proposals, but approximately 600 corporate lobbyists certified as official "citizen advisers" have regular access to both the negotiating documents and the negotiators, the Oregon Fair Trade Coalition said.

"Oregon cannot afford another trade deal that ships good-paying jobs overseas, reduces the tax base and puts a downward pressure on the wages and benefits in jobs we have left — all while handing new power to Wall Street to challenge financial, environmental and other public interest regulations," said coalition director Arthur Stamoulis.

The Trade Justice Roadshow is designed to inform citizens about the impact of past trade deals on communities and what actions they can take to help prevent the proposed FTA from becoming a "NAFTA of the Pacific."

The roadshow opens Sunday, February 12 in Redmond and concludes

Thursday, Feb. 23 in Salem. It will be in Portland Wednesday, Feb. 22.

For more info, or to get involved, contact Elizabeth Swager at elizabeth@oregonfairtrade.org or call 503-736-9777.

Following are dates, times and locations of meetings.

Sunday, Feb. 12
3 – 4:30 p.m.

UA 290 Training Center
2161 SW First
Redmond

Monday, Feb. 13

6:30 – 8 p.m.
Harris Hall
125 E. 8th St.
Eugene

Wednesday, Feb. 15

6:30 – 8 p.m.

Southern Oregon University
Stevenson Union's
Rogue River Room
1250 Siskyou Blvd
Ashland

Wednesday, Feb. 22

6:30 – 8 p.m.

AFSCME Building
6025 E Burnside St
Portland

Thursday, Feb. 23

6:30 – 8 p.m.

SEIU 503 Board Room
1730 Commercial St SE
Salem

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Official Notices

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 8:30 a.m. followed by a 9 a.m. general membership meeting Tuesday, Feb. 28, in the meeting room at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 205, Portland.

BOILERMAKERS 500

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 11, at 2515 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27, at UA 290 Training Center, 2161 SE 1st St., Redmond.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesdays, Feb. 7 and Feb. 14, at Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Residential Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, in the Dispatch Lobby.

Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, at Northern Wasco County PUD, 2345 River Road, The Dalles. Coast Unit meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Washington Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at Round Table Pizza, 5016 NE Thurston, Vancouver. Sound and Communication Unit meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, in the Meeting Hall.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 15 and March 7, in the Executive Boardroom.

Women of 48 meets 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 17, at Radio Room, 1101 NE Alberta, Portland.

Your Business Manager Meeting, Saturday, Feb. 18, in the Meeting Hall. Call Nancy at 503-251-9681 for an appointment.

Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 20, in the Executive Boardroom.

Electrical Workers Minority Caucus meets 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, in the Executive Boardroom.

General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 22, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for sandwiches.

Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27, the Meeting Hall.

Meetings are at 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, unless otherwise noted.

DEATH ASSESSMENTS: There are no deaths to report in February.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 7, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, WA.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 10, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego. PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6, at Best Western Grand Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way, Springfield.

Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE, Salem.

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8. Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10. Meetings are at 1145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 1, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #200, Portland.

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN'S 516

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle, #300, Portland. Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at the Ironworkers Apprenticeship Training Center and Union Hall, 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle, Portland, OR.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

LABORERS 483

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

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

LANE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Feb. 22, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Portland Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL

LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, preceded by a 6:30 Executive Board meeting, at 2110 State St., Salem.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 9. Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Meetings are at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MOLDERS 139B

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, preceded by a 6 p.m. Executive Board meeting at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 N. Lombard, Portland.



MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

General membership meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, preceded by a 6 p.m. stewards' meeting.

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, March 7.

Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES 11

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 13, at the OPEIU Local 11 meeting room, 3815 Columbia St., Vancouver. (From I-5 take exit 2 to 39th street, go west about 1/2 mile to Columbia St., 3rd light) The purpose of the meeting is to conduct general business and accept nominations for open offices. PLEASE NOTE: Nominees must be present to accept or have written acceptance of nomination submitted at this meeting.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the Asbestos Hall, 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Website: www.iupatlocal10.org

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9. Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, March 1. Meetings are at 5032 SE 26th Ave., Portland. (Phone: 503 232-4807)

SALEM BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Thursday, March 1, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Portland members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford. Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at the Local 16 Hall, 1887 Laura St., Springfield.

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

Portland area VOC meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 7, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 20, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

SOUTHERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, 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, Feb. 17, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Bend area members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the Local 290 Training Center, 2161 SW First, Redmond.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 28, at Curry County Search and Rescue, 517 Railroad St., Brookings.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Eugene area members meet 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 20, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Park-

way, Springfield.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 4816 S 6th St., Klamath Falls.

Medford area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 950 Industrial Circle, White City.

Salem area members meet 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 20, at 1810 Hawthorne Ave. NE, Salem.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

Humboldt-Del Norte Co. area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the Eureka Training Center, 634 California St., Eureka, Calif.

UNITED STEELWORKERS 1097

Members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, preceded by a 3 p.m. Executive Board meeting, in the union office building, 91237 Old Mill Town Rd., Westport.

Faith-Labor Breakfast sscheduled Feb. 29 in SE Portland

The 10th annual Faith-Labor Breakfast will be held Wednesday, Feb. 29, from 7:15 to 9 a.m. at St. Philip Neri Parish, 2408 SE 16th Ave., Portland.

The event, which draws clergy, union, and community activists, is co-sponsored by Portland Jobs with Justice, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

The theme of this years' breakfast is "Creating Communities of Hope and Equity."

"Our purpose is simple: to celebrate and build on the long history of our shared values and shared struggles for justice and to continue to build relationships," said Joe Rastatter, co-chair of the Jobs with Justice Faith-Labor Committee.

Cost for breakfast is \$10. For more information or to RSVP, call Marco at 503-236-5573.

Free tax prep service offered in Oregon

Labor's Community Service Agency is promoting a program that offers free tax preparation programs for low- and lower middle-income families in Oregon.

CASH (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Oregon is offered through a partnership with AARP Tax-Aide and has 145 tax sites throughout Oregon.

Last year the organization helped over 17,592 Oregon taxpayers receive \$20.9 million in federal tax refunds.

"Many tax services have predatory fees that cost families money," said Eryn Slack, office manager of LCSA. "This doesn't cost a dime."

CASH Oregon works with clients to aggressively claim every Earned Income Tax Credit. It also assists with financial programs that provide families and individuals with the tools and resources to start building solid financial futures.

To find a location near you, call 1-866-698-6158 or go to their web site at www.cashoregon.org.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED

AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, followed by an 11 a.m. General Membership meeting, in the Labor Services board room, at 1125 SE Madison #102B, Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

BAKERS 114

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at Izzy's, 1307 NE 102nd Ave, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retirees, wives and friends meet for lunch 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, at the Rhineland Restaurant, 5035 NE

Sandy Blvd., Portland.

FLOOR COVERERS 1236

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

GLASS WORKERS 740

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR RETIREES COUNCIL

Business meeting from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 13, in conference room of Labor's Community Service Agency, 1125 SE Madison

#103B, Portland.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information at 503-239-9858, ext. 124.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.



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Highlights from the 2011 BLS report:

- 7.6 million employees in the public sector belonged to a union, compared with 7.2 million union workers in the private sector.
- The union membership rate for public-sector workers (37 percent) was substantially higher than the rate for private-sector workers (6.9 percent).
- Within the public sector, local government workers had the highest union membership rate, 43.2 percent. This group includes workers in heavily unionized occupations, such as teachers, police officers, and firefighters.
- Private-sector industries with high unionization rates included transportation and utilities (21.1 percent) and construction (14 percent), while low unionization rates occurred in agriculture (1.4 percent) and financial activities (1.6 percent).
- Among occupational groups, education, training, and library occupations (36.8 percent) and protective service occupations (34.5 percent) had the highest unionization rates in 2011. Sales and related occupations (3 percent) and farming, fishing, and forestry occupations (3.4 percent) had the lowest unionization rates.
- 16.3 million wage and salary workers were represented by a union. This group includes both union members (14.8 million) and workers who report no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union contract (1.5 million). Government employees comprised about half of the 1.5 million workers who were covered by a union contract but were not members of a union.
- The union membership rate was higher for men (12.4 percent) than for women (11.2 percent). The gap between their rates has narrowed considerably since 1983, when the rate for men was about 10 percentage points higher than the rate for women. Between 1983 and 2011, the union membership rate for men declined by almost half (12.3 percentage points), while the rate for women declined by 3.4 percentage points.
- Among major race and ethnicity groups, black workers were more likely to be union members (13.5 percent) than workers who were white (11.6 percent), Asian (10.1 percent), or Hispanic (9.7 percent). Black men had the highest union membership rate (14.6 percent), while Asian men had the lowest rate (9.1 percent).
- By age, the union membership rate was highest among workers 55 to 64 years old (15.7 percent). The lowest union membership rate occurred among those ages 16 to 24 (4.4 percent).
- 15,000 new 16- to 24-year-old union members.

...Union membership

(From Page 1)

nonunion workers. Union women earned median weekly earnings of \$879, an amount 34.6 percent higher than their nonunion counterparts, who earned just \$653 by comparison.

"Prior reporting shows that union members have greater access to health care, retirement and leave benefits," commented U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis. "These numbers make it clear that union jobs are critical to a strong economy. And a strong economy depends on a strong and growing middle class."

Oregon's 17.1 percent union density ranked tied for seventh with California out of the 50 states and District of Columbia. California lost 52,000 union members last year.

New York topped the union density

list with 24.1 percent of its wage and hourly workers belonging to a union. Alaska followed with 22.1 percent; Hawaii, with 21.5 percent; Washington, with 19 percent; and Michigan, with 17.5 percent.

Seven right-to-work states had union membership rates below 5 percent in 2011, with North Carolina the lowest at 2.9 percent. The next lowest rates were recorded in South Carolina (3.4), Georgia (3.9), Arkansas (4.2), Louisiana (4.5), and Tennessee and Virginia (4.6 percent each).

The data on union membership were collected as part of the Current Population Survey, a monthly sample survey of about 60,000 households that obtains information on employment and unemployment among the nation's civilian population age 16 and over.

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Unions split on Keystone pipeline

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI)— Union leaders split on the Obama Administration's Jan. 18 denial of a federal permit to build a 1,700-mile Keystone XL oil pipeline from the U.S.-Canada border to the Texas Gulf Coast. Construction unions called the ruling a "job killer," while five other unions sided with environmental groups against the project.

President Obama said the controversial project could not be constructed as planned by its sponsor, TransCanada, because it would endanger a valuable underground aquifer in Nebraska. He said TransCanada could reapply once it worked out a new route around the aquifer. TransCanada said it would do so.

Environmental groups strongly opposed the pipeline, saying it would pump bitumen-laden "dirty oil" from Albertan tar sands to the Gulf Coast, increasing the pollution that leads to global warming. The Transport Workers, United Steelworkers, Communications Workers of America, United Auto Workers, and Service Employees sided with them.

Construction union presidents were particularly upset because four unions had signed a project labor agreement (PLA) with TransCanada several years ago assuring the pipeline would be built with union labor. At that time, the

unions calculated the pipeline's construction would employ 20,000 workers directly and many thousands more indirectly.

An environmental impact statement by the State Department, which evaluated Keystone since it crossed the international border, put the construction job figure at 5,000-7,000. Still, it meant jobs, and Obama's decision led Building Trades Department President Mark Ayers to blast the politics behind it.

"Today, the words 'We Can't Wait' truly ring hollow for skilled craft construction professionals across this nation," Ayers said, referring to Obama's pro-jobs theme and his chastisement of the GOP-run House for not passing jobs bills.

"With a national unemployment rate in construction at 16 percent, it is beyond disappointing that President Obama placed a higher priority on politics rather than our nation's Number One challenge — jobs," Ayers said.

Unions and environmental groups that praised Obama issued a joint statement lauding his decision to go slow — and blaming House Republicans for forcing the ruling by mid-February for political purposes, while ignoring or killing other pro-jobs legislation.

"In a cynical move, the House Republican leadership called for a rapid

decision on the pipeline in exchange for agreeing to keep the payroll tax cut in place," the union leaders said. "The payroll tax cut enacted last year has been an important part of efforts to turn around our struggling economy. While the House Republicans wrapped job creation rhetoric around their pipeline demands, they have rejected numerous opportunities to support programs creating good U.S. jobs.

"A project this far-reaching deserved better than the 'politics as usual' strategy of a do-nothing Republican Congress. Their job blackmail agenda is simply wedge politics," the union leaders added.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers President Ed Hill said his union is "disappointed" by Obama's decision, but he also cited the second chance Obama gave Keystone.

"We are treating today's decision as a temporary setback," Hill said. "We believe the decision-making process has been caught up in political gamesmanship. To Democrats who oppose the pipeline on well-meaning but misguided environmental grounds and Republicans who routinely vote against every jobs bill except Keystone, we pose this question: 'What are your plans to replace the 20,000 jobs that are now on hold?'"

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...ATU under siege at TriMet

(From Page 1)

Duke Shepard, labor liaison for Gov. John Kitzhaber, confirmed to Lehrbach that the governor doesn't plan to reappoint him. The plan is instead to replace Lehrbach with Gresham small business consultant Travis Stovall. If so, that would leave the seven-member Board with no representative of organized labor. Oregon statute doesn't mandate a labor seat on transit district boards, but it's customary to have at least one.

On Jan. 23, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council Executive Board directed that a letter be sent to Kitzhaber, asking for Lehrbach to be retained. Barring that, union officials would like the Board to continue to have a representative from organized labor.

Lehrbach said TriMet Board members typically serve two terms, and he'd like to serve a second four-year term.

"They're within their rights," says Local 757 lobbyist Jim Markee, "but we're somewhat disappointed in the governor's office that they would choose to remove the labor person on the Board."

For his part, Lehrbach says he serves at Kitzhaber's pleasure but asks

that if he be replaced, he at least get a phone call from the governor himself.

[The governor's office also plans to appoint Bruce Warner to replace Board chair Richard Van Beveren, whose term expires Feb. 24. Warner is a former executive director of the Portland Development Commission and of the Oregon Department of Transportation.]

Local 757 represents 2,000 bus and rail operators, mechanics, and support staff at TriMet. They've been without a contract since Nov. 30, 2009. But the union is defending its members' rights through legal action.

Markee was able to win a change in state law in 2007 putting public transit workers into the category of public employees who are barred from striking — but who may resolve contracts through binding arbitration instead. Under binding arbitration, a neutral arbitrator picks whichever side's final offer is more reasonable.

But that process has been delayed many months by legal charges the union filed with the state Employment Relations Board (ERB). ERB administers the state's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act, and in September, it agreed with Local 757 that TriMet wrongfully submitted a final offer

to the arbitrator that was different from the final offer it had presented to the union in mediation.

In a separate case, still pending, Local 757 charges that TriMet unlawfully denied cost of living increases and began deducting health insurance contributions from employee paychecks — without bargaining. TriMet's union workers until then didn't have to pay directly out of pocket for health insurance — something which used to be standard for workers. Total premiums are now \$1,500 a month.

Meanwhile, Hunt and others at Local 757 are concerned TriMet may try to change the law that requires binding arbitration. In a Jan. 16 editorial that Hunt says might as well have been written by TriMet management, the Oregonian editorial board warned that what the Legislature gives, it can take away. Markee, the Local 757 lobbyist, said TriMet tried unsuccessfully to get a pre-session committee hearing about it. Fetsch, the agency spokesperson, said TriMet doesn't intend to pursue such legislation in the February 2012 short session.

As for the long-awaited arbitration, Hunt said it could begin as early as March.

IBEW #48's Gilliam saves life of choking colleague using Heimlich

The IBEW Local 48 Safety Committee presented member Kim Gilliam with a special life-saving recognition award at the Jan. 25 general membership union meeting.

Gilliam, a general foreman for EC Company, is credited with saving the life of union brother Warren Tokuhisa on Nov. 7. The two were eating lunch in the general foreman's trailer at Intel when Tokuhisa began choking on a bagel after taking a drink of juice.

"He started choking really hard, then he slumped over and his head hit the table," said Gilliam, who yelled out to two other general foremen — Local 48 members Dave Parker and Allan Minor — eating lunch in the trailer.

Gilliam then picked Tokuhisa off his chair and immediately began administering the Heimlich maneuver in an effort to clear his airway. On the second thrust, a chunk of bagel dislodged from Tokuhisa's throat.

"He came right to and asked what

happened," said Gilliam.

Gilliam, Parker and Minor proceeded to tell him the whole story.

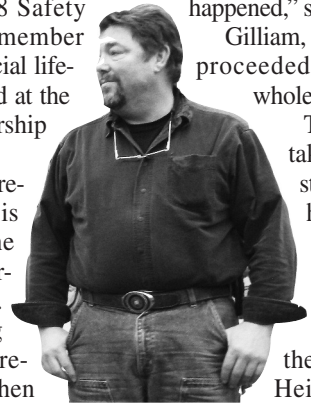
Tokuhisa was taken to the nurse's station, then sent to his doctor for a complete checkup. He is fully recovered.

Gilliam told the Labor Press the Heimlich maneuver was fresh in his mind because two weeks

earlier EC Company had conducted one of its regular first aid classes for foremen.

Gilliam has been a member of Local 48 for 28 years, starting as an apprentice in 1984. He has worked for EC Company since 1991.

For his lifesaving efforts, Gilliam received a \$200 gift certificate for Carhartt gear from Local 48's Safety Committee, and during their weekly safety meeting at Intel, Hoffman Construction presented him with a jacket in front of the entire 2,000 person workforce.



KIM GILLIAM

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(From Page 12)

foster commerce," declared U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) in a Jan. 20 press statement.

Merkley is one of 22 co-sponsors of a resolution from U.S. Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) that would amend the Constitution to overturn *Citizens United*. U.S. Sen Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) added his name as a co-sponsor Jan. 26.

On Jan. 10, U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) became the 12th co-sponsor of a companion bill in the House; his fellow Oregon Democrat Peter DeFazio is also a co-sponsor.

To amend the U.S. Constitution requires a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate and then ratification by three-fourths of the states.

Janice Thompson, executive director of the Oregon chapter of Common Cause, sees a Constitutional amendment as one of three approaches to address *Citizens United*. The other two are public finance, and public disclosure.

On public disclosure, there's been some movement. Last October, Center for Political Accountability reported that some of America's largest publicly traded companies are voluntarily mov-

ing to disclose their corporate expenditures on politics. Together with researchers at University of Pennsylvania Wharton School, the group reported that 57 of the largest 100 publicly traded corporations disclose direct corporate political spending on their websites, while 43 disclose some information about indirect spending through trade associations or other tax-exempt groups; and 24 have stated they will not make independent expenditures, even though *Citizens United* allows them to do so.

Some elected leaders, like Oregon State Treasurer Ted Wheeler, would like to make those disclosures mandatory. In October, Wheeler came out in support of a petition calling on the Securities and Exchange Commission to require public companies to disclose to shareholders the use of corporate resources for political activities. More robust reporting would increase accountability of companies to their shareholders, Wheeler said, including the state funds he's responsible for managing.

Last April, the Obama Administration announced it was considering an executive order to require companies with federal contracts to disclose their electoral spending. But the Administration backed off when the business lobby opposed it.

Delk, at least, remains undaunted. "I try not to involve myself in things that are impossible," he told the Labor Press.

"*Citizens United* is becoming a tipping point," adds Thompson. "Americans are really taking a look at amending the U.S. Constitution."

AFL-CIO launches new TV ad campaign

The AFL-CIO has launched a multi-million dollar television advertising campaign telling the country that union workers are just like everyone else — and that they deserve their rights.

The ads first aired in Austin, Texas, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and will soon be airing in Portland.

The cost of the initial ad campaign is pegged at \$1.5 million.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler said the ads are meant to rise above the daily controversies of the political world and show the connections of unions and unionists to the world of work — and how workers benefit from unionization.

"This campaign showcases the values that America's unions share with all working people: Hard work, quality work, and how every one of us is connected," she elaborated.

The ads feature workers from a wide range of occupations. The ads are accompanied by messages over social media, online advertising and an interactive website, www.WorkConnectsUsAll.org.

The ad campaign also emphasizes the divide between the 99% and the richest 1 percent of the population and emphasizes the decline of the middle class — while laying that development at the feet of the rich. The ads also refer to the new activism in the labor movement in response to Big Business/Republican schemes to rob workers of their rights and their livelihoods.

The ads' punch line, in English and Spanish, is: "As work changes, we change with it. Work doesn't separate. It's what binds us together. I teach your kid, you fix my car, he builds my city, she keeps it safe...work."

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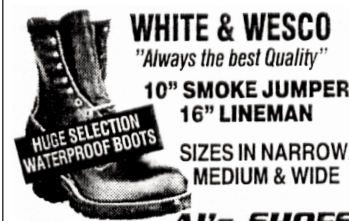
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Black History Month

The Gentle Warrior: A. Philip Randolph

By KEITH EDWARDS

Asa Philip Randolph was one of the greatest and most effective civil rights and labor leaders of the 20th century. Randolph was on the leading edge of social and political change. Although Randolph had many successes, he also had many failures.

By the early 1920s, he had run for political office on three different occasions only to be defeated every time. When Randolph arrived in New York in 1911, he put himself in the thick of the struggle for freedom and equality for Black Americans. A group of Pullman porters came to Randolph asking for his assistance in gaining the right to bargain for better wages and working conditions. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was launched Aug. 25, 1925. Through many attacks from the Pullman Company, lack of support by the law, failed mediation and arbitration, the workers prepared for a strike. The strike was called off at the last moment.

The Brotherhood was now in a struggle to survive without funds, little support from the outside, and in the

middle of the Great Depression. Randolph traveled on Brotherhood business with meager funds but with one strong message "Black men are able to measure up." This led to winning an election, in 1935, supervised by the National Mediation Board. That same year, the AFL reversed its position and granted an international charter to the Brotherhood. After two years of negotiations the Pullman Company signed a contract.

Prior to WWII, after being told by President Roosevelt to make him do something regarding the discrimination in American factories, Randolph traveled the country in an effort to unite Blacks against being shut out of well-paying factory jobs. All over the U.S., Blacks began forming committees to "March on Washington" in protest. Finally FDR signed an execu-



utive order in June of 1941. This was the beginning of 'fair employment practices.' Nearly seven years later Randolph persuaded President Truman to sign an executive order ending discrimination in the military and federal civil service jobs.

By 1955, A. Philip Randolph was well respected as a relentless advocate for justice and equality for Blacks, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and poor Whites — those who were disenfranchised. That same year Randolph became a vice-president of the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Randolph had put organized labor in a frontline role in the civil rights revolution. He believed that Black or White, workers and their labor unions are the key forces in any political effort to redistribute society's wealth more justly. Though Randolph was well aware that many unions discriminated, he continued in his convic-

OPEN FORUM

tion that only through the organization of the workers into unions could society be changed.

Randolph was approached by James Farmer (CORE), John Lewis (SNCC), Martin Luther King Jr. (SCLC), Roy Wilkins (NAACP) and Whitney Young (Urban League) to organize the 1963 March on Washington. Randolph agreed, if Bayard Rustin could assist him in the planning and mobilization. Somewhere between 250,000 and 400,000 marchers attended the event, where MLK Jr. gave his "I Have A Dream" speech. In 1964, Randolph was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Johnson.

(Editor's Note: Keith Edwards is an international representative of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and a former business manager of Portland-based IBEW Local 48.)

Eryn Slack hired at Labor's Community Service Agency

Eryn Slack has been hired as a part-time office manager for Labor's Community Service Agency.

Slack has been in the labor movement since 2007, where she left a job as a waitress and shop steward at the Portland Hilton for a position with UNITE HERE Local 9, which represents workers at the hotel.

Last year, UNITE HERE asked her to take a resource navigator workshop conducted by Labor's Community Service Agency. The program is designed to help union activists assist members of their union during any difficult times they may encounter.

"Because of this partnership, our union became stronger and our members healthier," Slack said.

Slack became "passionately involved" with the resource navigator program, joining its steering committee. "Our vision is to have trained staff and membership navigators at every union, so a union member in need doesn't have to look far for help," she said.

As office manager of Labor's Community Service Agency, Slack joined Office and Professional Employees Local 11.

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MONEY IS NOT SPEECH. Across from Pioneer Courthouse in Portland, about 150 gathered on a rainy Friday Jan. 20 to protest corporate money in politics. Two years prior, a 5-4 majority of the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that corporate political spending is protected by the First Amendment. (Photo by Jessika Brandt)

Citizens United gives rise to a citizens movement

Up to 80 percent of Americans oppose the Supreme Court decision.

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Two years after the U.S. Supreme Court took the lid off, corporate money in politics is surging, but so is a citizens movement to counteract it.

On Jan. 21, 2010, the Supreme Court struck down limits on independent corporate (and union) political spending — in a case called *Citizens United vs. FEC*. The decision provoked an immediate reaction, with polls showing two weeks later that 80 percent of Americans opposed the ruling. Though *Citizens United* also removed restrictions on independent political spending by unions, AFL-CIO president Rich Trumka condemned the decision for further tilting the playing field in favor of corporations.

But since Occupy Wall Street appeared in late 2011, a counter-movement has gained traction, declaring that money is not speech, and corporations are not people.

On Jan. 18 the national public interest group Common Cause launched Amend 2012, an online campaign calling for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. A two-minute video from former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich makes their case.

And on the eve of the decision's second anniversary, a group called Move to Amend — formed to overturn *Citizens United* — held rallies Jan. 20 at federal courthouses in 130 cities, including Portland.

"*Citizens United* is one more step for corporations to be able to dominate elections," says David Delk, an Executive Board member of AFSCME Local

3135 in Portland. Delk works for a public housing agency, enforcing requirements that contractors doing work for the agency pay their workers the prevailing wage. But in his free time for the past 15 years, he's led a local chapter of the grassroots group Alliance for Democracy, whose purpose is to end corporate dominance of politics and the economy. It's a big task, Delk admits, and it starts with education.

Most people — real people — don't think of corporations as persons. But the idea dates back to 1886, when the U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Santa Clara vs. Southern Pacific Railroad* that the word "person" in the 14th Amendment could refer to corporations.

Now, a growing number of municipalities are calling for a constitutional amendment to eliminate "corporate personhood" by clarifying that Constitutional rights are for people, not for corporations.

When the question goes before voters, it appears to be a no-brainer: Measures calling for a constitutional amendment to clarify that corporations don't have the same rights as citizens passed last year by 75 percent in Missoula, Montana; 74 percent in Boulder, Colorado; 84 percent in Madison, Wisconsin; and 78 percent in Dane County, Wisconsin.

City councils have followed suit. Duluth, Minnesota and Los Angeles, California passed resolutions in December. The New York City Council passed one Jan. 4.

Portland passed its version Jan. 12, sponsored by Mayor Sam Adams. It directs the City's federal lobbyist to call for a constitutional amendment to reverse the impact of *Citizens United*. [It passed 3-0; Commissioners Dan Saltzman and Nick Fish were absent.]

"Corporations are not people, they are legal entities created by our laws to

(Turn to Page 10)

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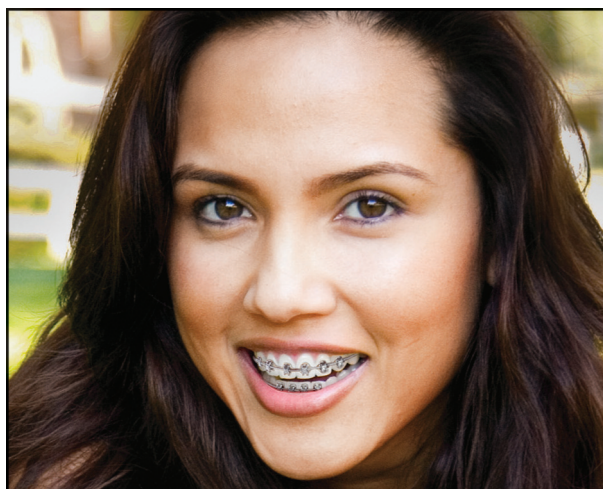


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