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NORTHWEST

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Portland, Oregon

To settle legal claims

Umatilla demilitarization workers get \$3.7 million

It can really pay to be union — up to \$20,000. On Dec. 17 and 18, about 300 unionized civilian workers at the U.S. Army's Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility got checks totaling \$3,685,098.98 to settle claims over missed breaks and non-payment for putting on and taking off protective gear.

Workers at the 24-hour-a-day facility disassemble munitions and incinerate chemical agents like sarin nerve gas and HD mustard gas. They are members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 701 and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 112. The two unions bargain together as the Demilitarization Trades Council with their employer, federal contractor URS EG&G. The settlement was the backpay equivalent of 48 minutes of compensation for each shift worked from February 2007 to February 2009; checks averaged over \$12,000.

The settlement came thanks to the vigilance of stewards, and union persistence in pursuing apparent violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act and terms of the collective bargaining agreement. Nonunion employees, including clerks, supervisors, and subcontractors, also benefited; Local 701 Assistant Business



At the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, union stewards and reps stand before nearly \$3.7 million in checks going out to members. The checks cap a long campaign by the Demilitarization Trades Council (Operating Engineers Local 701 and IBEW Local 112) to get employer URS EG&G to pay for donning and doffing protective gear. From left to right: James Liles, DTC steward in Maintenance; Richard Herrera, DTC steward in Operations; Colin Winters, DTC steward in Maintenance; Mike Escobedo, DTC steward in Operations; J. Jon Shaw, DTC steward in Operations; Dave Davis, IBEW Local 112 business representative; Nelda Wilson, IUOE Local 701 assistant business manager and lead negotiator; Rod Osgood, IUOE Local 701 business representative; and Jonathan Donehower, IUOE Local 701 General Council. Not pictured are Victor Melling, DTC steward in Operations; and Adrian Skinner, DTC steward in Maintenance.

Manager Nelda Wilson said the total payout by the company was about \$4.2 million. Accepting the payment meant workers waived their individual right to sue the company for unpaid wages. Local 701 was also able to negotiate paid lunch breaks going forward, which had the effect of shortening the work day to 12 hours for most members.

Wilson expressed tremendous frustration, however, with the role the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) played in the settlement. The agency is supposed to enforce the law that was allegedly violated, but Wilson said the DOL had to be cajoled into doing its job, and then proposed to let the company off the hook with a lower settlement amount.

Union complaints led to a second DOL investigation and a larger settlement. Finally, months of bureaucratic foot-dragging by the DOL delayed approval of the settlement. Union stewards got members to call and write to put pressure on the agency, Wilson said, and Local 701 even appealed to the office of U.S. Sen. Merkley for help. A call to the DOL from the senator's office seemed to speed things up, and the workers got their due — just in time for Christmas.

Opponents of Measures 66 and 67 try to hide facts

On Jan. 26, Oregonians get to decide whether corporations and the rich should pay a little more in state taxes. But "No on 66 and 67" television ads, funded by corporations and rich individuals, make it sound like the tax increases affect ordinary people. "Tell state government to tighten its belt like the rest of us," says the latest. In another, an actor pretends to worry about "retroactive taxes."

The ads are paid for by a business-funded coalition that had raised \$3.58 million as of Jan. 4. After the Oregon Legislature passed the increases in June, the business group paid signature gatherers to refer them to voters.

But organized labor is defending the increases, which are the first major move toward tax fairness in decades. The increases amount to no more than 2 percent of a part of the incomes of the richest 2.5 percent of Oregon taxpayers — and \$150 for most corporations doing business in the state.

Labor's involvement is making it an even fight. No labor organization in the state is opposing the measures.

To crunch numbers and rebut opposing arguments, the labor-backed coalition Vote Yes For Oregon hired tax policy analyst (and former U.S. Senate candidate) Steve Novick. Novick, whose father and brother were union organizers, took time last week to answer questions from the Labor Press.

Will these tax increases "kill jobs?"

In terms of creating jobs, what you want is more money spent in the Oregon economy. The money raised by these tax measures, plus federal matching funds that we'll receive, will be spent by teachers, home health care workers, and nurses in the local economy. By contrast, rich people tend to spend some of their money on European vacations or investments in the New York Stock Exchange. On the corporate side, most of

the biggest checks will be written by large out-of-state corporations, from Eli Lilly to Proctor & Gamble, to Chase Bank.

Will rich people move away and take jobs with them?

What you have to imagine is that a friend of yours comes up to you and says, "Well, it's been nice knowing you, but I've been offered a job in another state with a pay increase of 1 percent, and I just can't turn that down." If you look at the hundred richest ZIP codes in America, 30 are in California or New York, some of the highest tax places. The fact is, rich people like to live in nice places. And Measures 66 and 67 will help preserve Oregon as a nice place.

What about the argument that state shouldn't be increasing spending during a recession?

Let's look at the ad they have on right now, which says that state spending has gone up by

\$4.7 billion: 75 percent of that is the federal government gave us more money for unemployment benefits, food stamps, and Medicaid for people who've lost their jobs and health insurance. What do they want us to do, throw the money back and let people go hungry?

What about the public employee salary increases?

Here are the facts: State employees are getting \$22 million in step increases, and giving up \$51 million by having furlough days. So state employee salaries are actually going down.

Will this hurt small businesses?

First of all, 93 percent of small business owners don't make enough money to be affected by Measure 66. Most of the 7 percent that are affected are people that don't actually make their money from the small business. If you're rich,

(Turn to Page 5)

Portland-area UFCW members dropped from Kaiser

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Nearly 2,000 Portland-area grocery, meat, and retail workers and their families — 5,700 people in all — were dropped from the Kaiser Permanente health system Jan. 1. Their union, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555, blamed employer-side representatives on the multi-employer health trust: Management trustees on the UFCW 555 Portland Area Employers Health Trust did not support renewing Kaiser as an option after rates went up 15 percent for 2009 and 19 percent for 2010.

That left union members and their families only one choice — a traditional “indemnity” insurance plan administered by Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield, in which the trust pays 85 percent if patients use doctors and hospitals on a preferred provider list. (It pays 75 percent if they go elsewhere.) Kaiser, by contrast, is a health maintenance organization, charging the trust a flat monthly rate per person for access to a members-only health care system.

Kaiser is also the region’s most heavily unionized health care provider, and it had been an option for Portland-area grocery union members since 1960. In fact, Local 555 represents about 800 Kaiser pharmacy and imaging techs, so union grocery workers interacted with members of their own union when they picked up prescriptions or got X-rays. [Those Kaiser workers get their health care through Kaiser under a separate agreement, so their coverage won’t be interrupted.]

At the time of the cancellation, about



Negotiators for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555 present 6,000 member signatures on petitions for affordable health care, at a Jan. 11 bargaining session at the Holiday Inn on Northeast Columbia and 82nd Avenue — the first day of a three-day bargaining session. Photo by JD Nyberg, courtesy of UFCW Local 555.

a quarter of the UFCW 555 Portland Area Employers Health Trust participants were enrolled in Kaiser.

“What we’re seeing is the national health care crisis being borne out in Portland, Oregon,” said Local 555 Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Anderson. “If we step back, it’s part of a much bigger problem in health care.”

Health care costs are rising everywhere, and how to share that burden is a key item of disagreement between Local 555 and the Portland-area multi-employer group that includes Fred Meyer, Safeway, and Albertsons. The health trust gets nearly all its funding from a per-hour employer contribution that is negotiated as part of a set of multi-employer collective bargaining agreements. The last set of agreements expired July 1, 2008, and their terms were

extended while a new set is negotiated. But that means employers aren’t obligated to increase their health care contributions, even though costs are rising. That gave the trust less room to maneuver when it was hit with Kaiser’s proposed price increases.

Kaiser is frequently the lowest-cost option offered by union health trusts, but in this case, it was more expensive, per member, than the alternative. Kaiser’s strong points — prevention and efficient management of chronic health conditions — may have made it more likely for members with chronic conditions to choose Kaiser over the trust’s indemnity plan. Compared to those on the indemnity plan, the trust participants who enrolled in Kaiser tended to be older, have larger families, and have higher utilization rates for

health care services. Cost-saving measures by the trust may also have contributed to Kaiser being the more expensive option. The trust made its indemnity plan the default for new employees in their first year, and those tend to be younger, healthier individuals.

And in August 2009, the trust moved to require members to contribute a portion of the premium if they wanted to remain in Kaiser. That may have led younger, healthier workers — who also tend to have fewer dependents and be at the lower end of the wage scale — to opt for the free indemnity coverage rather than stay in Kaiser for \$19.41 a week.

The 19 percent 2010 increase would have cost the Trust approximately an additional \$300,000 per month, according to a letter Fred Meyer sent employees. If participants were to pay the increase, that would have meant weekly contributions would rise as high as \$48.16.

For over a year, Kaiser and the trust held complex negotiations over prices and benefit levels, and disagreed over rates and what was owed. In the end they failed to reach an agreement.

Fred Meyer spokesperson Melinda Merrill told the Labor Press that Kaiser was asked to match the Regence rate for equivalent services, but did not. In a let-

ter to employees, Fred Meyer seemed to blame Kaiser for the separation, saying that the health care provider was asked to work with the trust to get benefits costs down, but refused and terminated the contract.

Kaiser spokesperson Dave Northfield, on the other hand, said it was the trust’s decision to terminate the contract, not Kaiser’s. The loss of the trust’s business won’t lead to layoffs at Kaiser, but it was not a move taken lightly, Northfield said: It was the fifth largest group in Kaiser’s Northwest Region.

Anderson said members were upset about the loss of Kaiser, but understood it was not an outcome the union wanted.

“UFCW is pro-Kaiser, very much so, and we look to the day that we’re able to go back,” Anderson said.

“These union employees have given up wages over the years as a trade off to keep their health care insurance,” said UFCW International Representative Jenny Reed. “For 19 months now, employers have been at the bargaining table trying to whittle away their employees’ health insurance and wages.”

On Jan. 11, day one of a three-day bargaining session, Local 555 presented a petition for affordable health coverage to the multi-employer bargaining team. Signed by over 6,000 members, it was meant to show that union members support their bargaining team.

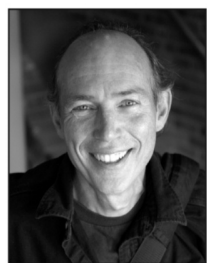
The petition was a key purpose of store-by-store visits like the Oct. 15 appearance by eight union representatives at a Hillsboro Fred Meyer. Reps entered the store and tried to talk to members about the petition, but a store manager ordered them out and called police, and three were arrested for trespass, including Local 555 President Dan Clay. The January court date was expected to be postponed to March.

A “treat us fairly” candlelight vigil is tentatively planned for Feb. 2 at 4:30 at Interstate Fred Meyer to show support for Portland-area grocery workers.

Participants will gather at the Carpenters Local 247 hall, 2215 N Lombard, and march to the Fred Meyer store.



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Local Motion

December 2009

Union certifications and decertifications in Oregon and Southwest Washington, as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board

Recognition elections

No union elections were reported in December 2009 by the National Labor Relations Board or the Oregon Employment Relations Board for Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Requests for recognition election

| Name of employer Name of union | Location Number of employees |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Oregon Housing & Associated Services (decertification) Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 | Canby 23 |
| Budget Car Rental (NE Airport Way) Teamsters Local 305 | Portland 33 |
| Ashland Parks and Recreation Department Ashland Parks and Recreation Employee Association | Ashland 24 |
| Labor Temple Cafe & Bar (decertification) UNITE HERE Local 9 | Astoria 7 |
| Willamette Graystone (decertification) Teamsters Local 962 | Roseburg |
| Umpqua Dairy Products (decertification) Teamsters Local 962 | Roseburg 134 |

After 18 months, Portland Public School teachers still without contract

Bargaining has been under way 18 months for a new contract covering 3,200 teachers, counselors, and librarians at Portland Public Schools (PPS), Oregon's largest school district.

The previous Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) contract expired June 30, 2008, but under the state's public employee collective bargaining law, contract terms are automatically extended. A state mediator has been working since September to help the two sides reach agreement on a new three-year deal that would be retroactive to July 2008. As yet, neither side has declared impasse, which would set a timetable for the district to impose its last offer or the union to give strike notice.

Union staffperson Nancy Arlington characterized negotiations as "dys-functional," with board members and human resources staff cycling in and out of the district bargaining team. In one recent bargaining session, Arlington said it appeared the employer representatives hadn't read the current contract — they demanded something that's already in it.

Sticking points in negotiations include health care, wages, workload, and layoff language.

The health care dispute is about what to do with any savings if PPS

joins a statewide insurance pool for school districts. PPS teachers get full-family health coverage through a jointly-run trust, but the trust could be terminated in May 2010 if the pool can provide comparable benefits at a lower cost. The current contract states that savings from such a move would be added to teacher salaries. This was a clause the union added to the contract in 2003 in exchange for union members agreeing to reduce benefit value by about \$100 per employee per month and start paying 7 percent of their health insurance costs.

Today they contribute \$96.66 a month, while the employer contributes \$1,104 a month. The District proposes to eliminate the contract clause that says savings from joining the pool should go back to raises; PAT's counter-offer is to use the savings and Trust reserves to reduce premium increases.

Meanwhile, teacher pay at PPS ranges from \$34,492 to \$68,884 with a 12-step salary schedule that takes education and years of experience into account; 51 percent of PAT members are at the top salary step for their education level, and the majority have a bachelors degree plus 60 post-graduate credits, the equivalent of a masters degree. In current negotiations, PAT is

asking for 2 percent raises in the first and third years, and in year two, a 2 percent raise for those at the top step. That's less than other PPS employees, and teachers in nearby districts, have received. PPS' counter-offer is 2 percent, 0 percent, and a 0 to 2.5 percent raise in the third year that would be tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Arlington said that third-year raise offer is disingenuous because it's based on the CPI for 2009, which is expected to be 0 percent, and PPS isn't proposing to use the CPI for 2007 and 2008 for the first two raises, because it would generate raises of 3.5 and 3.3 percent. In short, teachers would fall behind inflation under the PPS proposal.

"The district has been talking about shared sacrifice," says PAT president Rebecca Levison. "Our teachers feel like we've already sacrificed." PAT members agreed to work 10 days without pay in 2003 to help the district weather the last budget crisis, something no other district union group did.

PPS also proposes that teachers lengthen student contact time by 15 minutes a day. And the district wants to change layoff language in a way that would disadvantage experienced teachers who switch subjects. PAT rejects those proposals.

To show that members are unified in backing their bargaining team, PAT has held several large and well-attended rallies at school board meetings: About 1,500 frustrated and angry teachers and supporters came out at a Nov. 10 board meeting, and about 1,000 shut down a Dec. 14 Board meeting, at which Portland Jobs With Justice presented PPS Board its public sector "Grinch of the Year" award.

"[Our members] have been asked to do more with less, and they continue to step up," Arlington said, "but they don't feel respected or valued by the school board."



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Official Notices

AUTO MECHANICS 1005

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, preceded by a 9 a.m. shop stewards' training session. Stewards must attend steward meeting to be compensated.

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17. All meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland.
PLEASE NOTE: Rachel Conrad will be available from 8 a.m. to noon during the Regular Lodge meeting to answer any questions you Jan. have about Health and Welfare and Pension plans.

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, in the meeting room, at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 205, Portland.

BOILERMAKERS 500

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 13, at 2515 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CARPENTERS 247

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 NE Lombard, Portland.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at UA 290 Training Center, 2161 SE 1st St., Redmond.

CLARK, SKAMANIA & WEST KLICKITAT COUNTIES LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at the ILWU Local 4 Hall, 1205 Ingalls St., Vancouver, Wash.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BCTC

Delegates meet 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 19, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2, in Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Electrical Women of Local 48 meets 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at 5th Quadrant, 3901b N. Williams, Portland.

Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18, in the Executive Boardroom.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 20 and Feb. 3, in the Executive Boardroom.

Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, in the Meeting Hall.

General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:30pm for sandwiches.

Electrical Workers Minority Caucus meets 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, in the Executive Boardroom.

Sound and Communication Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, in the Meeting Hall

Residential Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, in the Dispatch Lobby.

Vancouver Meeting, 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Round Table Pizza, 5016 NE Thurston, Vancouver.

Coast Unit meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Bingen Meeting Rm., Pioneer Center, 971 NE Washington St., White Salmon, WA.

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

DEATH ASSESSMENT: Effective 1/1/10, the Death Assessments are \$1.50 per month per Active member. The following deaths were reported: James Ziegler; William C. Lucht.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Eugene Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at the UA 290 Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway,

Springfield.

Salem Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at Salem Heights Community Center, 3505 Liberty, Salem.

Executive Board meets 1 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, at 32969 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

Bend Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at the IBEW/UA Training Center, 2161 SW First St., Redmond.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland

EXTERIOR & INTERIOR SPECIALISTS 2154

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 1125 SE Madison, Suite 207, Portland.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Executive Board members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 8, at Best Western Grand Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way, Springfield.

Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE.

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10. Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12.

Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 4, 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. 28, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #300, Portland.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave.

LABORERS 483 MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 1, preceded by a 6:15 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc., Wash.

LANE COUNTY CLC

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 27, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN CLC

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, preceded by a 7 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 1400 Salem Ave., Albany.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Portland area members meet 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 1, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MACHINISTS 63

Executive Board meets 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10. Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 13, preceded by a 9 a.m. stewards' meeting.

Meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland.

MACHINISTS 1432

Swing and graveyard shift members meet at noon Wednesday, Feb. 10.

Regular membership meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10.

Shop stewards training session 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 16.

Meetings are at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland.

MARION POLK YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, preceded by a 6:30 Executive Board meeting, at 2110 State St., Salem.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26.

Executive Board meets 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 11.

Meetings are at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE

Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA CLC

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MOLDERS 139

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, 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, Jan. 20, preceded by a 6 p.m. stewards' meeting.

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3. Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OPERATING ENGINEERS 701

District 1 & 5 members meet 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5, at Gladstone Union Hall, 555 E. First St., Gladstone.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, at North Bend/Coos Bay Labor Center, 3427 Ash St., North Bend.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Marriott Courtyard, 600 Airport Rd., Medford. (NOTE NEW LOCATION)

District 2 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at the Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way, Springfield.

District 1 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16, at Longview Electricians Hall, 1145 Commerce Ave., Longview.

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17, at Comfort Inn, 351 Lone Pine Dr., The Dalles. (NOTE NEW LOCATION)

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18, at DTC Office, 148 Main St., Hermiston.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd. 2nd Floor, Portland. Each member has a chance to win payment of dues by attending the meeting each month. Omar Rios could have had his dues paid for 4 months if he had attended the November meeting.

PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26.

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9. Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside St., Portland.

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4. Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11.

Meetings are at 5032 SE 26th Ave., Portland. (Phone: 503 232-4807)

SALEM BCTC

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Coos Bay area members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

Portland area VOC meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Portland members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Medford area members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford.

Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at the Local 16 Hall, 4748 Franklin Blvd., Eugene.

SOUTHERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 1, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

TRANSIT 757

Charter members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at the Salvation Army Rose Center for Seniors, 211 NE 18th Ave, Portland (18th & Sandy Blvd, adjacent to the ATU office.) Charter day members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, at Schoppert Hall, 1801 NE Couch.

Salem members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, at the West Salem Branch Public Library 395 Glen Creek Road.

Eugene members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27, and Eugene day members meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at the Woodworkers Local Lodge, 1124 South A St., Springfield.

Corvallis members meet 7:45 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at Woodstock Pizza, 1045 NW Kings Blvd.

Medford members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at Bruno's Pizza and Pasta, 2105 Roberts Rd.

Portland School Bus members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at Rigler School, 5401 NE Prescott.

Vancouver members meet 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, at the Laborers Hall, 2121 NE Andresen.

Tillamook members meet 1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, at 212 Main Street, next door to Beach Pancake House.

AMR Northwest Josephine County, Bend Area Transit, LAMAR Advertising and Valley Transit See your liaison officers.

PLEASE NOTE: ATU members are invited to attend any of the above-listed meetings.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane, Astoria.

Bend area members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Local 290 Training Center, 2161 SW First, Redmond.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, at Curry County Search and Rescue, 517 Railroad St., Brookings.

Coos Bay area members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Eugene area members meet 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at 4816 S. 6th St., Klamath Falls.

Medford area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at 950 Industrial Circle, White City.

Roseburg area members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at 742 Roberts, Roseburg.

Salem area members meet 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18, at 1810 Hawthorne Ave. NE, Salem.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

Humboldt-Del Norte Co. area members 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Eureka Training Center, 634 California St. Eureka, CA.

STEELWORKERS 1097

Members meet 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, preceded by a 3 p.m. Executive Board meeting and 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, preceded by a 5:45 p.m. Executive Board meeting, in the union office building, Westport.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED

AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, at SEIU Hall, 6401 SE Foster, Portland.

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, in the Northwest Oregon Labor Council board room, at 1125 SE Madison, Portland.

CARPENTERS

Retired Carpenters meet for lunch 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 8, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retirees, wives and friends meet Tuesday, Feb. 9, for a trip to Spirit Mountain Casino. Raz Transportation leaves at 8 a.m. from the Milwaukie K-Mart, 13750 SE Johnson Rd., and returns at 4 p.m. Or leave from the Parkrose K-Mart at 8:15 a.m. and return at 4:30 p.m. 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. 8, at The Old Country Buffet on Lancaster in Salem. If you have any questions, please give Don Ball a call at 541-327-3388.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 18, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

INSULATORS 36

Retiree breakfast 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at the Dockside Restaurant, 2047 NW Front Ave., Portland.

MACHINISTS

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, at 3645 SE 32nd Ave., Portland for a brief business meeting and lunch at a restaurant to be determined at the meeting.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR RETIREES COUNCIL

Business meeting from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 8, in the Northwest Oregon Labor Council board room, at 1125 SE Madison, #103-A, Portland.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, 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. 3, at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.



Murray to lead ASSE

Ron Murray, a retired business agent for Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, has been elected president of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering. ASSE is a national code and standards-writing organization, developing American National Standards Institute guidelines for the plumbing and piping industry. Murray, of Sauvie Island, developed the residential fire sprinkler professional qualification standard, the only ANSI accredited residential sprinkler standard in the world. He took office Jan. 1.



Roofers hire rep

Portland-based Roofers Local 49 has hired Darrell Hopkins Sr. as a business representative and organizer. Hopkins is president of the local and has served on its Executive Board since 1998. For the past 18 years Hopkins has been an instructor for the Roofers Apprenticeship and Training Program. Local 49 represents approximately 450 roofers and waterproofers in the Portland metropolitan area.

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More Steelworkers laid off at Cascade Steel

MCMINNVILLE — Cascade Steel Rolling Mills, Inc., the largest employer in Yamhill County, laid off 17 employees — members of Steelworkers Local 8378 — Jan. 10. This brings the number of union members who have been laid off and are still out of work since December 2008 to 103.

Local 8378 once represented nearly 400 workers at Cascade Steel, a division of Schnitzer Steel.

“Every one of these layoffs hurts another hard-working family, and it also hurts the wider economy,” said union President Joe Munger Sr. “When family-wage jobs are eliminated, there’s that much less money for people to spend at local businesses, and a ripple effect is created. This is a painful situation for everyone involved. Our members and our community deserve better than this.”

During a slight uptick in business in July and August of 2009, Cascade Steel

brought back 41 employees, but that reversing trend has since reversed itself.

Last month, 71 union members who were laid off in December 2008 lost their recall rights and will not be returning to the mill. Several long-term management employees — including human resources director Mike Hereford, a former president of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555 — also lost their jobs.

Without any further economic recovery, an additional five union members will lose their recall rights in February and nine more in April after having been laid off for a year.

“One of the reasons we’ll continue to lose jobs across all sectors of the economy in McMinnville and nationally is because of imports,” said Munger, who also serves as president of the Marion-Polk-Yamhill Counties Central Labor Council. “Congress has passed trade policies that force local

businesses to compete with companies taking advantage of sweatshop working conditions and lax environmental and safety standards overseas.”

“Oregon workers lose out every time in that scenario,” Munger continued. “Our union is urging Congress to support comprehensive reform legislation that would finally allow local workers to compete on an even playing field.”

Munger is referring to the TRADE Act, a bill currently supported by over 130 members of Congress that would require review and renegotiation of existing trade agreements and set mandatory standards for future trade agreements. The legislation’s co-sponsors include Sen. Jeff Merkley and Congressman David Wu and Peter DeFazio, all Oregon Democrats.

...Measures 66 and 67

(From Page 1)

people ask you to invest in stuff: If you’re a Nike exec and your aunt Carol asks you to invest in her bakery, you show up on the books as a rich small business owner. Then there’s 2 percent of small business owners that are rich enough to pay the tax, and actually do make most of their money from their small business. But under the definition both sides use, that includes law firms like Stoel Rives. How could a small business owner make that much money [\$250,000]? They’re trying to confuse people into thinking that the small business owners are taxed on the gross income of the business. Actually, they’re only taxed on their share of the profits, which means what they take out after

they pay wages and other expenses. So the idea that this tax will cause them to lay people off is ludicrous.

But it’s retroactive. Is that fair?

The taxes were passed in 2009. The reason they’re not collected until 2010 is the opponents gathered signatures to force a vote. They have this argument that money hasn’t been withheld from paychecks. You’re talking about rich people, most of whom make the biggest chunk of their money from capital gains, not paychecks. They’re aware this is going on. They’ve got tax planners. It’s not like they’re going to be stuck at the end of the year with this huge tax bill that they can’t afford. The same goes for the corporations.

Labor and Employment Relations Association hands out ‘Maggies’

The Oregon chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) presented “The Maggies” at its 2009 annual meeting.

LERA is an organization that brings labor, management, neutral, and academic leaders together to improve labor-management relations. The Maggies, named in honor of Magdalena Jacobsen, founder of the Oregon chapter, recognizes individuals who practice good labor relations.

Jacobsen was a mediator with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service before being appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve on the National Mediation Board. That federal agency has jurisdiction over collective bargaining in the airline and railroad industries.

Jacobsen died in February 2008 following a battle with breast cancer.

In the category of labor, awards were presented to Bob Shiprack, executive secretary of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council and a 30-plus year member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48; Lisa Beasley, a member of Service Employees Local 49 and 19-year shop steward at Legacy Emanuel Hospital; and Larry Bartasavich, a member of American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees Local 88 and a shop steward at Multnomah County.

The management award went to Dennis Uniform Manufacturing Company and its owners John and Joan Shipley. In business since 1920, the company is one of the last remaining apparel manufacturers in the United States — designing, cutting, sewing, and finishing nearly 80 percent of their products. Employees are members of UFCW Local 555. “When bargaining begins, they don’t look at things from the perspective of what is the minimum they can settle for, but what can they do to show appreciation for their employees’ hard work, and to continue to remain competitive in the market. They promote open access and communications at all levels, which makes the resolution of issues, when they do occur, an easy and collaborative process.”

The Emerita Award, which goes to a “neutral,” recognized Sally Newton of Kaiser Permanente. Newton retired as national labor relations vice president. In that role, she was responsible for leading the development and coordination of labor relations strategy for all Kaiser Permanente regions.

The Academic Award was presented to Marcus Widenor, associate professor at the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon. Before joining LERC 25 years ago, Widenor taught in the labor education program at the University of Minnesota and also was an organizer with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

A Labor Practitioner Award was given to attorney Greg Hartman of Bennett, Hartman, Morris & Kaplan. Hartman has been practicing labor law for 35 years and has provided counsel to unions in several high profile cases.

For more information about LERA, contact President Connie Weimer, a mediator with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, at OregonLERA@aol.com.



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'Thank You Sen. Merkley'

Amendment in health insurance reform bill levels playing field in construction

The Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council is sending a letter to Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley thanking him for an amendment he attached to the Senate health care reform bill that requires construction contractors with over \$250,000 in payroll or more than five workers to provide employee health insurance or pay a \$750 penalty.

"This is a great victory for our union contractors, as it helps level the playing field with nonunion contractors who don't provide health insurance for their employees," said John Mohlis, executive secretary-treasurer of the CPBCTC.

"We commend Sen. Merkley for standing up to sponsor this amendment," said Lake Coulson, executive director, government affairs of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), in a press release. "Construction employers who fail to provide health care for their workers should not gain a competitive advantage."

The Senate's initial health care reform bill contained a small business exemption for companies with fewer than 50 employees. However, the construction industry is dominated by small employers (20 employees or less), so under that threshold up to 90 percent of contractors would have

been exempt. And because unionized construction contractors provide health insurance for their workers, the exemption would have written into law a competitive advantage for nonunion contractors.

Merkley's amendment was co-sponsored by Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Sen. Al Franken (D-MN) and had wide support throughout the Senate.

The Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council encourages all construction workers to contact Merkley's office and thank him for the amendment. In Portland, call 503-326-3386.

Daimler gets \$40 million to develop fuel efficient trucks

Portland-headquartered Daimler Trucks North America was awarded a \$40 million grant from the federal government to develop new technologies aimed at improving fuel efficiency for heavy-duty trucks.

In a conference call with Energy Secretary Steven Chu, members of Oregon's congressional delegation, and Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski, Sen. Jeff Merkley said he was told 85 jobs will be created in Portland the first year, researchers, engineers, and managers who will develop the new technologies, and more than 400 jobs long term.

The Daimler grant is the largest of nine awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy. Projects were selected nationwide to improve fuel efficiency for both trucks and cars. Awardees also committed to a 50 percent cost-share, which means Daimler will invest \$80 million in research, development and demonstration. Total funding is more than \$187 million and includes more than \$100 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Chu said the nine projects will create over 500 jobs initially, and as many as 6,000 jobs — many in manufactur-

ing and assembly — by 2015.

Daimler is currently in negotiations with four unions that represent roughly 600 employees at its truck manufacturing plant in Portland. Daimler had planned to close the Swan Island facility in June, but has since changed its mind.

The sides hope to have a tentative agreement by Feb. 1.

"I believe Daimler has every intention of staying in Oregon and growing," said Kulongoski, who recently met with top Daimler officials in Germany.

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Celebrating Martin Luther King Day

Voices from the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike

By JAMES PARKS
National AFL-CIO

In the fall of 1967, T.O. Jones and Joe Warren, the first two leaders of the effort to organize a union of sanitation workers in Memphis, Tenn., met with then-Mayor Henry Loeb to recognize and bargain with the almost all-black union, AFSCME Local 1733.

As Warren recalls: "He told us you can have it, but you can never get dues checkoff or recognition. When I told him we would strike, he told me I would be the first one fired."

But after a two-month strike in 1968, the sanitation workers, many of whom were standing up against white authority for the first time in their lives, won recognition of the union. That victory was the catalyst for change in the paternalistic racist environment in Memphis. Today, the city has a black mayor and county executive, and Local 1733 represents public workers across the city.

Warren joined seven other veterans of the strike and told their stories at the annual AFL-CIO Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration last year in Memphis. King, a longtime supporter of unions, went to Memphis in April 1968 to lend his support to the sanitation workers' strike, and was assassinated while he was there.

The Rev. Ezekiel Bell was the first minister to support the strikers and one of their strongest backers. The city's only black Presbyterian minister at the time, Bell had turned down a scholarship to Harvard to attend all-black Ten-

nessee State University. His father had been a Mississippi sharecropper and once worked as a sanitation worker, so Bell says he understood the workers' pain.

"I felt my place was out there with them. These men were working for substandard wages. For me not to be there would have been a denial of what I was preaching about every Sunday," he said.

Now retired, Bell says the strike was a key turning point in Memphis and the nation because it showed the power of being organized and determined.

"It was time for change. They helped people to see that we could make things better for us all if we worked together," he said.

AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy agrees. The sanitation workers recognized the importance of union membership to lifting black workers out of poverty, says Lucy, who was one of the organizers working with the Memphis strikers in 1968.

As Lucy says today: "The workers in the Memphis public works department, and I think workers across the South, recognized that their future was tied to their ability to organize a union and have a union represent them in the areas of wages, hours and conditions of employment. So no matter how bad the situation was, it would be worse if they were not able to form a union. And as bad as the strike got and as tough as life was, they were not about to give up until they achieved recognition of a union."

"Dr. King's involvement showed he



"The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress. Out of its bold struggles, economic and social reform gave birth to unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, government relief for the destitute and, above all, new wage levels that meant not mere survival but a tolerable life. The captains of industry did not lead this transformation; they resisted it until they were overcome. When in the '30s the wave of union organization crested over the nation, it carried to secure shores not only itself but the whole society."

—Dr. King's speech to the state convention of the Illinois AFL-CIO, Oct. 7, 1965

recognized the fact that you had people who worked every single day and yet were not able to raise themselves out of poverty ... and that the civil rights struggle and the struggle for workers' rights are intertwined."

Hattie Jackson says the strike happened because blacks in Memphis were tired of being treated like slaves. "You wake up one morning and say 'no more.' You just have to get on with it and not be a slave anymore," she said.

Jackson and her late husband, the

Rev. H. Ralph Jackson, were involved in the strike from the beginning. Ralph Jackson was one of the leaders of the strike. The strike was a family affair for the Jacksons, she says. Not only were she and her husband marching with the strikers, one of their daughters came home from college to march with them.

Contrary to the common perception that the strikers and marchers were all poor, Jackson says they had many middle-class black supporters. She was, at the time, the only black principal of an all-white school in Memphis, and her husband was a national officer of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination.

"A lot of teachers and principals came to the mass meetings and gave money to support the strikers, but they hid their faces because they were afraid

of losing their jobs," she said.

Jackson says the strike was good not only for black men, but for women as well. "You know that slogan 'I Am A Man,' well we wanted to let them know that 'I Am A Wo-man' and we deserve dignity and fair treatment as well," she said.

Bell, who says he was arrested more times than he can count during the strike, says he was enraged with the racism not only of Memphis' political leaders, but he was even more outraged at the racism of its white religious leaders. He recounts that on the day Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, he and a representative of the national Presbyterian church met with the white Presbyterian ministers in Memphis to deliver a \$10,000 check from the national Presbyterian Church to help support the strikers.

"They went on about how it was an illegal strike and they refused to take the money. So I got [the national Presbyterian staffer] out of there and we were on the way to the Lorraine Motel [where King was killed] to pick up his bags and take him to the airport. That's when the news came over the radio that Dr. King had been shot. Later they reported he was dead," he said.

"When we got to the Lorraine, those same ministers called to say they would take the check. I'll never forget that."

• *The 2010 National AFL-CIO MLK Holiday Observance will be held Jan. 14-18 in Greensboro, North Carolina.*

• *International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48 will host the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Convention Jan. 14-17 at the Benson Hotel. The caucus has been meeting for the past 20 years prior to the MLK Jr. holiday. For that reason, in addition to workshops, panel discussions, a banquet, and the awarding of scholarships, the conference also includes a day of community service on Thursday, Jan. 14. For more information, go online to www.ibew-ewmc.com or ewmc@ibew48.com.*

• *A daylong tribute to Dr. King will be held Monday, Jan. 18, at the Highland Christian Center, 7600 NE Glisan, Portland. The tribute starts at 11 a.m. and goes to 6:30 p.m.*

• *One of the largest MLK celebrations in the nation will take place in Seattle on Jan. 18. "Justice Now! Health care, Housing, Jobs & Education" is a daylong event featuring workshops, entertainment, and a rally and march through the streets of Seattle. Workshops start at 9:30 a.m. at Garfield High School, 400 23rd Ave at East Jefferson. At 11 a.m., a rally with speakers, poetry, and music will be held. Then, at noon, participants will march to the Jackson Federal Building, 2nd & Marion, downtown for a rally.*



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Machinists will oppose health reform bill if it taxes benefits

Obama tries to convince other union officials to drop opposition to the tax

WASHINGTON, D.C. —The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Executive Council voted unanimously Jan. 11 to oppose any national health care reform bill that is funded by taxing the value of workers' health care benefits.

"For decades, Machinists members exchanged substantial wage increases for the best possible health insurance," said IAM President Tom Buffenbarger. "Now, in a bizarre turn of events, their

insurance premiums will be subject to a 40 percent excise tax if the Senate version of health care reform becomes law. Democratic leaders have the power to stop this travesty and I urge them to do so, quickly and completely."

A key provision in the Senate's version of health care reform calls for taxing 40 percent of the value of workers' health insurance above minimums of \$8,500 yearly for an individual and \$23,000 for a family.

The House-passed health care revision does not tax health benefits.

President Barack Obama met with 11 union leaders Jan. 11 to try to convince them to drop their opposition to the tax. Buffenbarger was not

among the 11 to attend.

Labor has other problems with the Senate bill, including its lack of a public option to compete with the private insurance companies.

National AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka told the National Press Club prior to meeting with the president that "instead of taxing the rich, the Senate bill taxes the middle class." And it's "not just union members' health care. Most of the 31 million insured employees who would be hit by the tax are not union members," he said.

Trumka went even farther. "The Senate bill is inadequate and does not deserve the support of working men and women. We aren't going to accept a bad bill just to get an agreement."

The "bad bill" Trumka cited is presumably the basis for the final version of health care reform. That's because Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), had to make many compromises — including taxing workers and dumping the public option — to get the 60 Senate Democratic votes he needed to halt a GOP filibuster and pass the bill.

Buffenbarger said that no single issue brought more union members onto last year's presidential campaign trail than Republican threats to tax health care benefits, and the Democrats' pledge to protect those benefits.

"Like NAFTA, the health care excise tax is an issue with the potential to reverberate for years," he said.

Sheet Metal training center gets piece of \$5 million ARRA grant

Sheet Metal Workers HVAC & Metals Institute will get \$150,000 over two years to train workers in green jobs industries.

The money is part of a \$5 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) jobs stimulus grant awarded to Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP) by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

Sheet Metal Workers Local 16, Machinists District Lodge 24, and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council were

spotlighted as "key partners" in the grant award. Only Sheet Metal Workers is benefiting financially.

"Our goal in all this is to take our existing workforce and make it sustainable," said Dennis Boyd, training coordinator for the Sheet Metal Training Center. "We want to sustain the workforce as well as the environment."

Boyd said that if the training center can offer a program "that helps make our people more employable, that's what we'll do."

Local 16 is currently experiencing

25 percent unemployment among its 2,150 members. It has 150 apprentices in training.

Bob Petroff, directing business representative of Machinists District Lodge 24, is hopeful that some of the money will be used to introduce apprenticeship training programs at unionized companies such as Beaverton-based Integrated Power Services, where 11 employees are members of Local Lodge 63.

Over 37 companies have expressed interest in participating in the program,

and have projected 775 new jobs over the next two years. Interested companies include SolarWorld, Renewable Energy Composite Systems, Miles Fiberglass, SANYO, and GK Machine.

The grant award specifies that money is to be used to train and place unemployed and dislocated workers — with a focus on veterans, women, and minorities — in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties in Oregon, and Clark, Cowlitz, and Wahkiakum counties in Washington state in careers such as hy-

brid/electric auto technicians, weatherization specialists, wind and energy auditors, and solar panel installers.

OMEP will conduct an analysis of the skills and production requirements of the renewable energy industry and identify those manufacturers deemed to be good candidates for employee training to develop and/or manufacture new product lines to support the industry.

The grant is projected to preserve or create 1,700 jobs in the nine counties, with as many as 1,325 participants earning certificates or degrees.

You're committed to labor unions, and so is your bank.

Labor Trustee Robert Jennings has his work cut out for him. Between managing his duties as a trustee on his trust funds and with the local District Council, he could use extra help. Union Bank is the perfect fit. Our team of Labor Management specialists works together to provide Robert with customized treasury management services that automate his collections and disbursements, streamlining his administrative functions. The enhancements free up time for Robert and his staff, so they can focus on delivering unmatched service to members. For over 60 years, we've helped local labor unions operate more efficiently. No wonder Robert trusts us to get the job done.



Robert Jennings, Labor Trustee, Pipe Trades District Council 36

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