



THE YEAR IN OREGON LABOR: Highlights and Top Stories of 2014

BY DON McINTOSH
Associate Editor

Some years will live forever in glorious memory. But for organized labor in Oregon, 2014 was not one of them. Here is a look back over 12 months of labor stories we reported.

ORGANIZING

There wasn't much union organizing in Oregon in 2014, at least as reflected in workplace unionization elections. According to our count, just 678 workers in 23 workplaces joined unions: 476 workers in 12 private-sector workplaces, and 202 workers in 11 public-sector workplaces. That's in a state with 1.7 million workers that added over 40,000 new jobs over the course of the year.

The two biggest union organizing gains were the 172 Portland airport food service workers who joined UNITE HERE under a nationally-negotiated card-check union neutrality agreement with contractor HMS Host, and the 45 workers at Douglas County public health department who joined AFSCME using Oregon's card-check law. The biggest union election loss was Metro Metals Northwest, where a group of 69 workers voted not to join the Teamsters. On the bright side, only one union workplace voted to go nonunion — a three-employee lottery deli in Wilsonville.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Over the course of the year, most large contracts we reported on either treaded water or made concessions.

The year began with one of the biggest union contract concessions ever made, to one of the world's most profitable companies: On Jan. 3, an eight-year contract extension was ratified that will eliminate the pension, increase out-of-pocket health insurance payments, and limit future wage growth for 32,000 **Boeing** Machinists in Washington, Oregon, and Kansas. The workers got a \$10,000 ratification bonus, another \$5,000 bonus in 2020, and additional dental benefits of \$500 per person. The extension (to a contract that wasn't due to expire until September 2016) came shortly after Washington lawmakers gave Boeing \$8.7 billion in tax concessions, the largest corporate tax subsidy in the history of the United States. In the wake of the vote, Fox and Friends' conservative TV host Steve Doocy called the contract a victory against organized labor, and Boeing stock reached a new all-time high on the New York Stock Exchange.

In the public sector, Oregon union workers agreed to contracts that mostly kept up with inflation. [Inflation has ranged from 1.5 to 2.0 percent the last few years.]

- 2,900 teachers at **Portland Public Schools** got annual raises of 2.3 percent, a promise to hire 150 teachers, and two days added to the school year, in a deal reached two days before a scheduled strike. Teachers are members of the Portland Association of Teachers/Oregon Education Association (OEA).
- 2,900 workers at **Multnomah County** will keep pace with

inflation in a new three-year contract with AFSCME Local 88 that also contains a phased-in \$15-an-hour wage floor for the least-paid workers.

- 2,000 members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 at **TriMet** will have somewhat reduced health care benefits in a new contract that included 3 percent pay raises Dec. 1, 2014 and Dec. 1, 2015.

- 1,600 workers at the **City of Portland** got raises of 0.9 percent the first year, and matching inflation after that, in a new four-year union contract with seven-union member District Council of Trade Unions.

- 1,400 members of **University of Oregon** Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (American Federation of Teachers Local 3544) won raises of 5 percent a year, plus a \$150,000-a-year hardship fund (in response to a proposal for two weeks guaranteed paid sick/parental leave) after striking for eight days with no loss of wages.

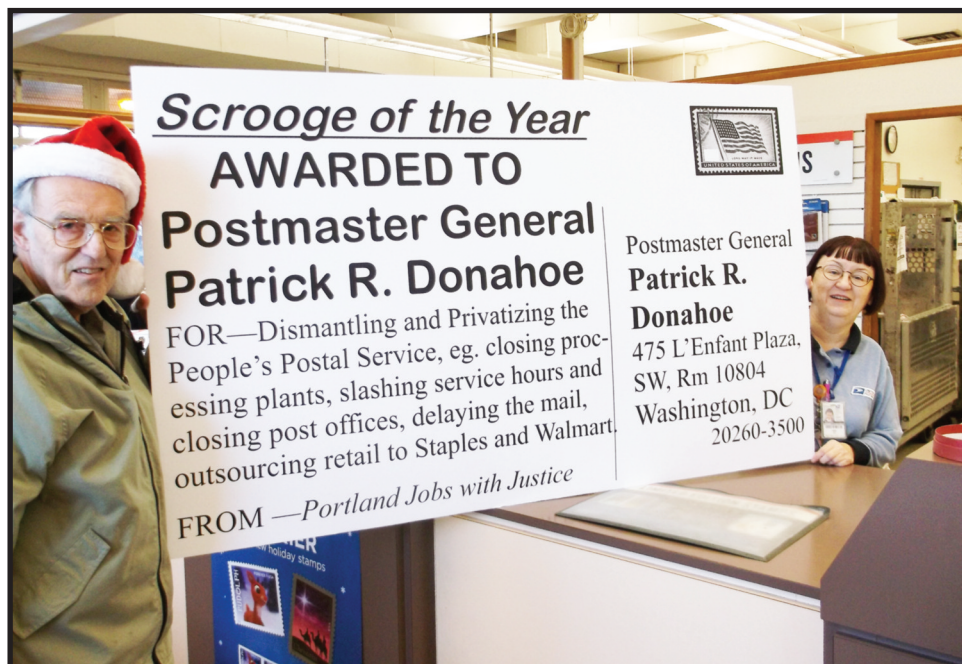
- 950 full-time faculty at **Portland State University** got raises of 1.5, 2.5, and 2.5 percent, a new salary floor of \$40,000, and modest improvements in job security, in a new contract with American Association of University Professors.

- 500 OEA teachers in **Medford School District** got annual raises of 1.9, 2.5 and 3 percent, after going on strike for 16 days.

- At **Metro**, a new three-year contract for 300 members of AFSCME Local 3580 increases the employee share of the health insurance premium to 8 from 6 percent, and gives a 2.8 percent

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Postmaster General named 'Scrooge of the Year' by JwJ



A huge postcard, announcing his "Scrooge of the Year Award" was mailed Dec. 22 to Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe. The award is given every Christmas to the worst boss by a vote of attendees at the Portland Jobs with Justice holiday fundraising party. The award accuses Donahoe of "dismantling and privatizing the people's postal service, eg. closing processing plants, slashing service hours and closing post offices, delaying the mail, outsourcing retail to Staples and Walmart."

USPS will lower "service standards" on Jan. 5 to virtually eliminate overnight mail delivery — including first-class mail from one address to another within the same city or town. All letters, periodicals and packages throughout the country will be delayed. Eighty-two mail processing plants — half of those remaining — will be closed during 2015, including those in Springfield, Pendleton, and Bend, Oregon.

Postal management says the closures are necessary because the USPS, which isn't funded by taxpayers, is losing money. Critics claim that a 2006

Congressional mandate, which forces the U.S. Postal Service to prefund retiree health benefits 75 years in advance, has created a phony financial crisis. Although the USPS has claimed a "loss" every year since 2006, due primarily to the pre-fund mandate, the postal service has not made an actual payment toward prefunding since 2011. The USPS has generated an operating profit for the last six quarters. USPS is a semi-independent agency that relies on postage — not tax dollars — for revenue.

In the photo at left, Rev. John Schwiebert, decked out in a Santa hat, hands the three-by-five foot postcard across the counter to postal clerks at Portland's Martin Luther King Jr. Post Office, while a holiday crowd of approving customers snapped photos as they waited in a line that stretched out into the street.

Donahoe announced in November that he was retiring effective Feb. 1. The U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors appointed Megan J. Brennan, the current chief operating officer of the Postal Service, as the 74th Postmaster General and CEO.

NLRB rules adjunct faculty can unionize at private, religious colleges, universities

TACOMA — In a groundbreaking decision with national implications, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled Dec. 19 that full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) can form a union with Service Employees International Union Local 925.

The ruling — backed by three of the five board members — comes months after PLU's administration blocked the counting of ballots, asserting that its religious affiliation makes it exempt from federal labor law. The administration also claimed that full-time contingent faculty (or adjunct faculty) were managerial employees under the 1980 Supreme Court decision *NLRB v. Yeshiva* and could not unionize.

The NLRB sided with the contingent faculty, ruling they can organize. In deciding the questions of religious exemption and managerial status, the Board established new tests for examining the role of faculty at universities. Under the new tests, faculty must carry out a religious function to be denied the right to collective bargaining, not merely teach at a religiously-affiliated college; and, they must exercise effective managerial control to be considered management employees.

The NLRB decision has far-reaching implications for religiously affiliated colleges and universities nationwide that have tried to keep faculty from unionizing.

"Today, institutions of higher learning look increasingly like big businesses because corporate boards and administrations have marginalized the most important job on campus — teaching," SEIU President Mary Kay Henry said in a statement.

In a statement, PLU said it will decide whether or not to appeal the ruling after the union election results are final.

Elliott elected director of Machinist District W24

Chip Elliott was elected president/directing business representative (DBR) of Machinists District W24. He ran unopposed in a delegates' election held Dec. 6.

Elliott has been serving in the post since July 2013, when he was appointed by the Executive Board to finish out the term of DBR Robert Wilson, who retired.

That term expired in December 2014. Prior to that, Elliott was one of three assistant directing business representatives of District W24.

Machinists District Lodge 24 and Woodworkers District Lodge W1 merged in January 2011 to create the International Association of Machin-



CHIP ELLIOTT

ists (IAM) District W24. Officers were appointed to their respective posts at the time of the merger.

Prior to the merger, Elliott was the assistant DBR to Wilson at Woodworkers Lodge W1.

This is the first outright election since the district lodges joined together.

In other election results, Noel Willet of Woodworkers Local 130 was elected assistant directing business representative. He defeated the incumbent, Robert Petroff of Machinists Lodge 63.

Petroff, who serves as president of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, was DBR of Machinists District

Lodge 24 prior to the merger. He served as an assistant DBR following the merger. He will remain on staff assigned as a business representative.

Marv Abbott of Woodworkers Local 157 outpolled three other candidates for secretary treasurer. Chris Taylor of IAM Lodge 1005 had been serving in that post since the retirement in July of longtime secretary-treasurer Dan Sass. Taylor, Pat Maloney of IAM Lodge 63, and John Hall of Lodge 63, ran for the full-time job.

Elected as trustees were Les Auman of Woodworkers Local 536 and Mike Hicks Jr. of Woodworkers Local 98, (representing Wood); and John Kleiboeker of IAM Lodge 63

and Ray Simonis of IAM Lodge 1005, (representing Metal). Other candidates running were Tom Thede of Woodworkers Local 246; Aaron Arnold of Woodworkers Local 38, Tim Timmreck of Woodworkers Local 38, and Jeff Wagner of Woodworkers Local 130; and Frank Rouse of IAM Lodge 1005.

Caryn Kaufmann of Woodworkers Local 261, Larry Hendrickson of IAM Local 1432, and Kelly Zink of Woodworkers Local 536, were elected to one-year terms as auditors.

All officers and trustees were sworn in Dec. 6 by IAM Western Territory Grand Lodge Representative Kevin Cummings.

Terms of office are four years.

Its first large carhaul company in decades

Teamsters organize Seattle-based Selland Auto Transport

SEATTLE — The Teamsters Union won an election Dec. 16 at Selland Auto Transport. The bargaining unit covers 240 drivers and shop workers in Washington, Oregon, California, Montana and Utah.

The workers will be represented by Teamsters locals 174, 63, 315, 690, 223, 222, and 190.

"The workers at Selland have made history," Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa said in a press statement. "This victory is historic because it is the first large carhaul organizing victory in decades. The Teamsters have been organizing in freight and now with this carhaul victory at Selland, we are growing our core industries."

Headquartered in Seattle, Selland contracts with 11 foreign and domestic automobile manufacturers to move new cars, by truck, from ports and rail yards to auto dealerships in the Western United States. Drivers performing the work operate out of eight terminals:

Seattle, Renton, Kent, and Spokane, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Bernardino and Richmond, California; Laurel, Montana; and Salt Lake City, Utah. Thirteen mechanics are in the bargaining unit.

Fairness, low pay and potential for improved benefits were the key issues in the campaign, said Teamsters Carhaul Division Director Kevin Moore.

"It feels great to be a Teamster," said Tim Vires, a driver in Portland. "Organizing with the Teamsters and negotiating a contract is the only way we can get the company to provide us with

what is important and not be able to take it away later."

The union calculates Selland workers earn about 70 percent of the industry average in overall compensation.

The owner challenged the bargaining unit, claiming 44 drivers were independent contractors. The National Labor Relations Board didn't buy it, and allowed the misclassified owner-operators to vote in the union election.

(Editor's Note: Press Associates Inc. Union News Service contributed to this report.)

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Bakers Local 114 re-elects Terry Lansing

Terry Lansing has been re-elected to a fourth term as secretary-treasurer of Portland-based Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 114.



TERRY LANSING

Lansing and all other previous officers and Executive Board members ran unopposed.

Lansing, 63, is a 37-year member of the union. He has served as the local's financial secretary-treasurer since 2005.

Also re-elected were: President Darren Hamann of Kroger Clackamas Bakery; Vice President Brian DeVal of Kroger Clackamas Bakery; Recording Secretary Alejandro Ahumada of Franz Bakery-Portland; and Business Agent Shad Clark. Clark has served in that job since 2009.

Returning to the local's Executive Board are: Tim Wiatt of Safeway Clackamas Bakery; Laurie Errend of Albertsons; Gene Beaudoin of Local 114; Steve Dade of Franz Bakery-Springfield; Tim Rathbun of Kroger Clackamas Bakery Sanitation; Lisa Fox of Bimbo Bakery/Oroweat; Denise Wisley of QFC; and Tami Mathews of Kroger Clackamas Bakery.

Andrew Stern and Armando Zavala of Bimbo Bakery/Oroweat, and Mario Aldaco of Franz Bakery-Portland were re-elected as trustees.

All officers and board members will be installed at the next union meeting Jan. 27. All terms are for three years.

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Official Notices

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 9 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, in the meeting room at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 300, Portland. Officers will be sworn in at this meeting.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at the Social Justice Center, 155 NE Irving, Bend.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 6 and Jan. 13, at Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

RENEW meets 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6, in the Executive Boardroom.

Executive Board Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, in the Executive Boardroom.

Washington Unit Meeting meets at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at Longview Hall, 1145 Commerce Ave., Longview, WA.

Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Tuesday, Jan. 13, meeting has been cancelled.

Residential Unit meets 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, in the Executive Boardroom.

Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Northern Wasco County PUD, 2345 River Road, The Dalles, OR.

Sound and Communication Unit meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, in the Meeting Hall. **NOTE TIME CHANGE.**

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

DEATH ASSESSMENTS: No. 2418, Glendon Bane. The Jan. 2015 assessment is \$1.50.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, 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, Jan. 7, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

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

GLASS WORKERS 740

No meetings will be held in January.

INSULATORS 36

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

IRON WORKERS 29

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

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8. Meetings are at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle #200, Portland.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

LABORERS 483

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

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5, 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, Jan. 28, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BCTC

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 28, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Pkwy., Springfield.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, preceded by a 6:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 1400 Salem Ave., Albany.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.
Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, followed by a 7 p.m. general meeting at 1400 Tandem Avenue, NE., Salem.



METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 8. Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27. Meetings are at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MOLDERS 139B

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, preceded by a 6 p.m. Executive Board meeting at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 N. Lombard, Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Website: www.iu-patlocal10.org.

PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13.

General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27. Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5. **PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE.** Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8. Meetings are at 5032 SE 26TH Ave., Portland (503 232-4807).

SALEM BCTC

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Monday, Jan. 5, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

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

Portland members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford.

Eugene area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at the Local 16 Hall, 4748 Franklin Blvd., Eugene. **PLEASE NOTE PERMANENT TIME CHANGE.**

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay. Women of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 (WOSM) meets 4:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16, at Beulahland, 118 NE 29th Ave., Portland. Children are welcome.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, followed by an 11 a.m. General Membership meeting at 3645 SE 32nd, Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retirees, wives and friends meet for lunch 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at Tebo's Restaurant, 19120 SE McLoughlin, Gladstone. For reservations and more information, please contact Glenn Hodgkinson at 503-656-0028.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Retirees ONLY meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Westmore-

land Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Retirees meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle, Portland for a catered lunch.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E. Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information at 1-800-521-5954 ext. 226.

SHEET METAL 16

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave, Portland.

TRANSIT 757

Retirees meet 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Rusty Pipe retirees meet 2 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

Salem area retirees meet 12 noon Wednesday, Jan. 14, at Almost Home Restaurant, 3310 Market St. SE, Salem.

Portland area retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

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SOUTHEASTERN OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at the Woodworkers Hall, 3836 Altamont Drive, Klamath Falls.

SOUTHERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL
Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, at the Southern Oregon Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL
Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

LABOR COUNCIL
Delegates meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, at Laborers Hall, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vancouver, WA.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin. The following locations will be able to participate remotely in the Regular Business Meeting at 7:30 on the 3rd Friday of every month: Bend, Eugene/Springfield, Eureka, Medford, and Salem.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20. Please contact agent Craig Spjut at 707-496-1767 for location confirmation.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 4816 S., 6th St., Klamath Falls.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

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ORGANIZED LABOR — Year in Review

Looking back on 2014, much of the movement in the U.S. labor movement took place outside of — but with crucial support from — traditional labor unions. Nonunion workers — fast food and WalMart workers, Los Angeles port truckers, even taxi drivers — conducted short strikes, sit-ins and labor actions. And labor-community coalitions pushed pro-worker legislation in city halls and state legislatures — because Congress wasn't responding to the needs of working people.

More than ever, labor is backing experimental strategies to escape a legal framework that gives employers the upper hand in union organizing and in collective bargaining. In 2014, that shift began to see results: Some big minimum wage wins were labor's top success story of 2014, but state and local paid sick leave mandates also spread, and in November, San Francisco became the first city to crack down on the inhumane scheduling practices of retail chains.

LOW-WAGE WORKERS ON THE MOVE

The progress began with a campaign among America's lowest-paid workers. About 1,200 fast food worker activists met for a first-ever national convention in Chicago in July 2014 — a year and a half after their movement began with strikes at 40 fast food outlets in New York City. On May 15, demonstrations took place at fast food restaurants in 150 cities, and on Sept. 4, the campaign upped the ante with restaurant sit-ins in about 150 cities. Service Employees International Union has spent more than \$10 million underwriting the fast-food worker movement, which has united behind demands for \$15 an hour and a union. In July, the campaign got a boost with a favorable legal development: The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) said it will hold McDonald's "jointly liable" for labor law violations by franchise owners. Since the strike movement began in November 2012, at least 291 charges have been filed against McDonald's alleging that it illegally fired, threatened or otherwise penalized workers for pro-labor activities. The NLRB found enough evidence to pursue the charges in at least 86 of those cases, and 71 other cases remain under investigation.

Meanwhile, labor activism continued in 2014 among Walmart workers in the group OUR Walmart, which is supported by United Food and Commercial Workers Union. In January, the online collective Anonymous leaked internal Walmart documents telling managers how to combat OUR Walmart activity. On Nov. 28, OUR Walmart reported protests at 1,600 Walmart stores, as well as the first-ever sit-in at a store near Los Angeles.

MINIMUM WAGE AND SICK LEAVE BREAKTHROUGHS

Demands by fast food workers for \$15 an hour really bore fruit in 2014. In June, the Seattle City Council passed an ordinance (unanimously) that will

raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour over the coming years. In July, San Diego City Council passed an increase to \$11.50 an hour. In November, San Francisco voters approved a measure raising the minimum wage to \$15. Voters also approved minimum wage increases in Alaska, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Arkansas. And in Oakland, voters raised it to \$12.25 — and guaranteed paid sick leave. Sick leave measures also were passed by the California legislature, Eugene, Oregon, city council, and voters in Massachusetts and two New Jersey cities.

Local action was necessary because Republicans in Congress prevented national action. House Republican leaders wouldn't allow a vote on a minimum wage increase, and in April, a Senate proposal to raise it to \$10.10 died when a motion to end debate failed 54 to 42 (it needed 60 votes).

The notion of \$15 as a new wage floor also caught on in public sector collective bargaining. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles International Airport, and Multnomah County in Oregon all incorporated \$15 minimums into their union contracts.

UNIONIZING THE SOUTH

2014 saw fights to unionize big employers in the South, often with substantial opposition from local politicians. In February, United Auto Workers lost a union election among

2014: Year of the robot?

They work without pay, never tire or complain, and are positively incapable of unionizing: Robots were on the rise in 2014.

In July, Daimler demonstrated a self-driving truck. The "Mercedes-Benz Future Truck 2025" can respond to traffic while driving completely autonomously down a freeway at speeds of up to 52 miles per hour. The idea, says the company, is that a driver sits in the cab to take over when something goes wrong. But who knows? Maybe that could eventually be done remotely, one worker overseeing multiple trucks.

Then on Nov. 30, Amazon opened its doors to reveal that its warehouses are now staffed by a reserve army of robots. Over the summer, the company put more than 15,000 robots to work in 10 U.S. warehouses. The robots bring shelving units to human workers, who pick items off the shelves and box them for shipping. The robots then return the shelves to their location in the warehouse.

And in December, a Lowe's home improvement store in San Jose debuted a customer service robot. The OSHbot greets shoppers, asks them what they're looking for, uses voice recognition to listen to their answer, and then tells them where it is in the store. It can even take them there.

1,500 workers at a Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga by 53 to 47 percent — after facing a high-profile opposition campaign from Republican politicians and outside political groups. But UAW moved ahead anyway, formed a union local, and in December was recognized by the company as a "minority" union, representing 45 percent of the plant's workers. UAW is also campaigning at a Mercedes-Benz factory in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Nissan plants in Canton, Mississippi, and Smyrna, Tennessee.

In March, the Machinists union

opened an office to talk to Boeing workers in South Carolina.

September saw the biggest union win in the South in decades: 14,500 American Airlines agents voted by 86 percent to unionize with Communications Workers of America and the Teamsters, and three-quarters of them are in Texas, North Carolina, Florida or Arizona.

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

In his sixth year office, President Barack Obama issued a number of ex-

ecutive orders that move the ball forward for working people. Some of the executive orders pertain to federal contractors — requiring them to pay at least \$10.10 an hour, banning them from discriminating against gay workers, requiring them to disclose previous violations of labor law, and barring them from requiring their employees to submit legal complaints to binding arbitration. In November, he issued an executive order allowing undocumented parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents to apply for work authorization and relief from deportation if they can show they've resided in the country for at least five years.

HOSTILE COURTS

2014 was a bleak year for workers' rights in the courts. In June, a California Superior Court judge tossed out a state law on teacher tenure in *Vergara v. California*. And the U.S. Supreme Court hit labor with a triple whammy. Its ruling in *Harris v. Quinn* created a "right-to-work" situation for home care workers. In *NLRB v. Noel Canning*, it invalidated years of pro-worker decisions by the National Labor Relations Board on the grounds that its members had been improperly appointed by the president. And in *Integrity Staffing Solutions v. Busk*, it said Amazon warehouse workers don't have to be paid for the time — up to 25 minutes — they spend waiting in line for security screenings before they can leave work.

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Do-Not-Buy Walmart policy extended

Portland City Council voted unanimously Dec. 17 to keep Walmart on its "Do-Not-Buy" list — because of its labor abuses, tax avoidance, and unhealthy market dominance.

In 2013, Commissioner Steve Novick learned that the City's asset portfolio included Walmart bonds, and in October 2013 he led passage of a resolution calling on the City to divest.

Under that ordinance, when \$10 million in Walmart securities matured in May 2014, the City sold them and did not reinvest in the company. The City still owns \$27 million in Walmart bonds, all of which will mature by

April 2016. The Dec. 17 Council vote extends the original resolution through the end of 2015.

The original resolution also authorized a five-member volunteer citizen committee to devise a socially responsible investments policy. That committee delivered a report to the City in August 2014. Service Employees Local 49 political director Felisa Hagins was the voice of organized labor on the committee, and Bernie Bottomly of the Portland Business Alliance was the voice of organized business (though he only came to one meeting). The committee recommended that the City form

a permanent, standing public committee to advise the City on socially responsible investment policies. A second resolution passed Dec. 17 does that.

The resolution declares that City Council has an ethical obligation to avoid adding to its portfolio any securities issued by corporations that damage the environment and health, engage in abusive labor practices, violate corporate ethical and governance standards, engage in extreme tax avoidance, or exercise such a level of market dominance as to disrupt normal competitive market forces.

For now, Walmart is the only company on the City's "Corporate Securities Do Not Buy List." As spelled out in the ordinance, that's because the company's "business model exerts considerable downward pressure on wages throughout the retail sector and the broader economy," and because "Walmart's anti-union posture has diminished the exercise of workers' rights."

Among other evidence, the resolution cites 39 complaints issued against the company by the National Labor Relations Board between 2000 and 2005, for illegal firings, disciplinary action and discrimination against union supporters. The complete resolution is available at <http://bit.ly/1r3YOjE>.

Minimum wage inches up in 2015

The minimum wage in Oregon and Washington inched up 15 cents an hour on Jan. 1. Oregon's minimum wage is now \$9.25 an hour, and Washington's is \$9.47 — the highest in the nation. The increases are the result of state laws that tie the minimum wage to inflation.

Washington's minimum wage applies to workers in both agriculture and non-agricultural jobs, though 14- and 15-year olds may be paid 85 percent of the minimum (\$8.05).

In the new year, the minimum wage increased in 19 other states. In Alaska, Arkansas, Nebraska and South Dakota, voters approved ballot measures to increase the minimum wage. In Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia, legislators approved the wage increases. Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia now have minimum wages higher than the federal minimum of \$7.25 an hour.



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...Oregon Highlights and Top Stories of 2014

(From Page 1)

raise, followed by annual raises matching inflation. Laborers Local 483 got the same terms in a Metro contract for 500 workers at the **Oregon Zoo** and regional parks, except it got 2.5 percent the first year, and it got some new rights for temporary workers.

Meanwhile, in the private sector:

- 600 workers at **NW Natural** got a rejiggered wage scale with one-time increases averaging 7.8 percent, plus at least 3 percent in the remaining four years — and a no-layoff guarantee — in a new five-and-a-half-year deal with Office and Professional Employees Local 11.

- 570 support workers at **Legacy Emanuel** got wage increases of 2.5 percent a year in a new three-year contract with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49.

- 300 hospital support workers, members of SEIU Local 49, went on strike two days in October at for-profit **McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center** in Springfield, but were still without contract at year's end — a year after their old contract expired.

JOBS

Unions fought to defend and expand work for members, but had some disappointments over the course of the year. On Jan. 8, the Port of Portland

withdrew plans to develop a deep water marine terminal on **West Hayden Island**. In February — after the Washington Legislature failed to act on providing its share of the funding for an **Interstate 5 replacement bridge** — a proposal by Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber for an “Oregon-only” project failed to win majority support in the state Senate. And in August, the Oregon Department of State Lands denied a removal-fill permit for the proposed **Coyote Island coal terminal** at the Port of Morrow near Boardman in Eastern Oregon.

Repeated protests and civil disobedience at the **U.S. Postal Service** failed to stop closures: 82 more mail processing plants are scheduled to close nationally starting Jan. 5, three in Oregon.

On the plus side, construction employment continues to pick up, and in October, **Vigor Industrial** completed installation of North America's largest floating dry dock on Swan Island, with the promise of hundreds of good union jobs repairing and maintaining large cruise and cargo ships.

And in February, **Parkrose School District** rejected plans by the district superintendent to outsource bus operations, after an energetic community campaign by Oregon School Employees Association.

POLITICS

No game-changing labor-related legislation passed in the Oregon Legislature's month-long legislative session in February. But in May, Portland unions helped defeat a badly-written **Water District** ballot initiative drawn up by big polluters and water users. And in July, Eugene became the second Oregon city to pass a requirement that employers provide **paid sick leave**. 2014 was also the year organized labor dodged a bullet (or at least a very expensive defense campaign) when Gov. Kitzhaber persuaded backers to withdraw a “**right-to-work**” ballot measure that would have made union dues strictly optional for public sector workers — in exchange for labor dropping ballot measures that would have raised taxes on big corporations and the wealthy.

In the November general election, labor helped defeat a “**top-two primary**” measure placed on the ballot by millionaires and billionaires, and helped add Democrats in the state house and senate, a victory that holds great promise for pro-worker legislation in 2015.

Labor also got involved early on to re-elect Democrat **Jeff Merkley** as U.S. Senator from Oregon. Merkley, who proved to be a real voice for working people in the Senate, easily defeated his Republican challenger.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

There's also a side to local labor that doesn't get much fanfare though it goes on throughout the year: building a better community through voluntarism and charitable giving. In 2014, there were many examples locally. Members of **Iron Workers Local 29** volunteered to build an indoor practice facility for Oregon City High School baseball programs. Bowlers from 13 unions raised \$11,000 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Union letter carriers collected 1.3 million pounds of food in Oregon and Southwest Washington in **National Association of Letter Carriers'** annual food drive. Some 279 motorcycle riders raised \$75,000 for Doernbecher Children's Hospital through the **Unions for Kids** motorcycle poker run and chili cook-off, and a second motorcycle poker run organized by local **Machinists** raised nearly \$3,500 for Guide Dogs of America. Over 300 union volunteers led by **Oregon School Employees Association** prepared and handed out more than 40,000 children's books to school districts and nonprofits in east Multnomah County. And 100 volunteers helped 300 children of unemployed parents pick three gifts each at the annual “Presents from Partners” holiday party put on by **Labor's Community Service Agency** and the **Northwest Oregon Labor Council**.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

The local labor movement lost a number of prominent figures in 2014, including AFSCME Local 3327 president **Steven Fritz**, husband of Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz, killed in a car crash Sept. 24. The list also includes notable labor union retirees: former Oregon AFL-CIO political director **Lloyd Knudsen**; former Iron Workers Local 29 business manager **Tom Worley**; Albany barber and longtime United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555 member **Garner Pool**; Carpenters business agent **Jerry Krahn**; UFCW Local 555 union rep **Jim Zuffrea**; IBEW Local 48 officer **Phil Parker**; Pacific Northwest labor historian **Ed Beechert**; Machinists union rep **Jerry Greer**; United Auto Workers activist **Ralph Rigdon**; and University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center professor **Jim Gallagher**. We ask that you remember them and their dedication to the labor movement. In the words of union martyr Joe Hill: “Don't mourn. Organize.” That same slogan — “Don't Mourn. Organize.” — could be applied to the year that ended Dec. 31. If 2014 wasn't all that we hoped, let's not lick our wounds, but commit in 2015 to organize and fight together for a better life for working people.

This is what a Labor of Love looked like in 2014



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