



LOCAL 7901 The Grapevine

June 2009

Serving Oregon & Southwest Washington—Serving You!

June 2009

Communications Workers of America Local 7901

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CALENDAR

June

17th—Executive Board
6:30pm

Round Table Pizza

10070 SW Barbur Blvd

25th—Membership at 7pm

6401 SE Foster Rd.

July

16th—Executive Board
6:30pm

No July Membership Mtg

Combined July/August

Mtg is August 27th

Steward Applications

ORGANIZING

Mailroom workers are signing a petition to form a Union at the Oregonian newspaper. Management cut their pay by 28%--and they are the lowest-paid workers. In 1959, Oregonian workers went on strike. The strike lasted until 1964, when the NLRB declared the strike illegal. Their unions were disintegrated. Fast-forward to the 21st century. With TV news, Internet news, and blogs, print is rapidly disappearing as newspapers go bankrupt and close. While the Oregonian isn't at that point yet, all workers there took a major hit. Now, management is pulling workers into meetings, three at a time, with management so that management can tell them how terrible unions are. Not as terrible as employers cutting your pay by \$5 an hour!! Oregon Senate Bill 519, which would prevent employers from making such meetings man-



"Our anti-union message must be getting through. Nobody booded."

datory, passed the Senate and is on its way to the House. Please take the time to call your House representative to support SB 519 and to stop this kind of union busting tactic.

PERU (PUBLIC EMPLOYEES REPRESENTATIVES UNION) CWA 7901

Led by PERU member and SEIU 503 organizer Guillermo Galarreta, a complaint was filed with the National Labor Relations Board recently accusing a Portland nursing home of unfair labor practices for threatening, intimidating, spying on and punishing employees who were attempting to organize a union. In a complaint signed May 29th by NLRB Region 19 Director Richard L. Ahern in Seattle, the board put the Laurelhurst Village nursing facility on notice that it would be liable for back pay and interest in the case of one worker the board contends was fired as a result of her activity on behalf of an effort by employees to join Service Employees International Union Local 503 which represents workers at 26 Oregon nursing homes. Galarreta says that this employee's firing is part of an ongoing campaign of employee harassment and intimidation that is among the most blatant he has ever encountered in Oregon.

PERU members are getting ready for what looks to be a huge march and rally in Portland on Sunday, June 7th bringing attention to how the state's budget will cost more jobs and cut vital services for the most vulnerable populations in Oregon; children, seniors and middle-class families trying to make ends meet. The nearly \$2 billion in cuts, which affects human services, education and public safety, is the latest proposed budget under consideration in Salem.

Slated as the UNITED FOR OREGON march, thousands of workers and community, political and religious supporters will converge in Portland June 7th, meeting on the Eastbank Esplanade and then marching across the Hawthorne Bridge for a 2:00 p.m. rally at Terry Schunk Plaza. Supporters feel there are fairer and more responsible ways to help balance the budget and hope to encourage lawmakers to make profitable corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.

Our employer has made it clear that because the recession and looming layoffs are affecting the union's membership, there is concern about their budget as well. Membership pay cuts, furlough days and pay freezes are also a determining factor, as they adversely affect revenue. We have been asked to cut back where possible and a labor/management meeting was held so they could lay out their proposed income and expenses for 2010. The direct effects of the budget are yet to be determined, but we're monitoring it closely as we move forward.

QWEST TECH NEWS

LNO VP Bob Greenwood visited Portland at the beginning of June. He's all about safety in that if you have too many motor vehicle accidents, you won't have any more because you won't be working for the company anymore. The increase in discipline over MV accidents has not helped the rate to fall. It only helps to make life a little more stressful. The Local always supports our members working safely. Make sure you take the time to be safe in traffic, setting up and tearing down, parking and so on. Remember that your vehicle carries GPS. Your written diary of what happens is the most important defense you will have in the event of an accident. Please ask for a shop steward when you are in the investigatory meetings about any accident. It could make the difference between employment and unemployment.

LEGISLATIVE

We are in to the final month of our state legislature. We are awaiting action on initiative reform, retooling the tax structure and a myriad of health care reform bills. We are also awaiting the release of the Worker Freedom Act and other important bills from committees.

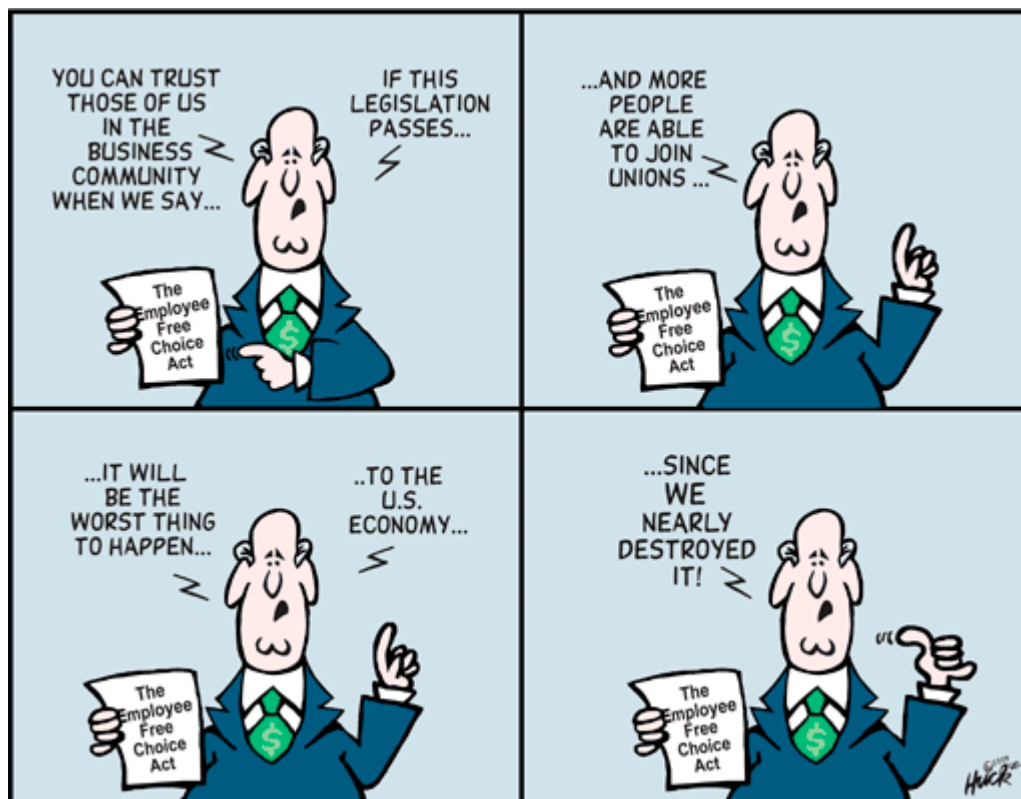
These are the times when emails and phone calls and visits can get someone off the fence and into the game. We need to insist that the state budget not be balanced on the backs of the workers and the people they serve. A provider tax for big hospitals could trigger a billion dollars in federal funds that could be used for children's health care, expanding the state health fund pool and a combo fund to allow small business to buy insurance cheaper.

The expansion of the earned income tax credit needs a yes vote for the working poor. In Washington D.C. the lobbyists are flexing their muscles trying to swift boat the Employee Free Choice Act or water it down to be ineffective. We are seeing big business try to exclude single payer health care from reform discussions and torpedo public option or anything that would regulate or control health care costs.

We are watching the auto companies lay off tens of thousands of American workers while the companies announce plans to increase foreign production since our failed trade policies allow it

Locally there are several groups of workers fighting to form unions and we should join with them.

We have an opportunity to affect change and we should seize that opportunity or be ashamed of ourselves. In Solidarity, Mark Sturbois



AT&T MOBILITY

Retail—Article 12 Section 1 allows the Company to determine emergency business needs for changing your schedule. Does that cover the early morning meeting on the new iPhone? Yes, that meets the criteria. Does that cover normal meetings? No. Does it cover inventory counts? No. Does it cover someone who calls out sick? No. In the situations not covered by Section 1, Article 12 Section 2. d. covers those types of changes. Volunteers first, 48 hours notice “whenever possible,” and then forced by inverse seniority of those available apply. Are you a key holder? Are you getting a 10% differential for those times you are opening or closing or acting as management? If not, please contact your shop steward or the Local.

Call Center—In the new contract, Letter of Agreement 12 requires that management must review with the employee the Call Quality Observation results within the employee’s next two scheduled work days following the quality observation. If this is not happening, please talk with your shop steward. Thank you to Cynthia Carpenter and Tony Colombo for volunteering to be Area Vice Presidents and members of the Local 7901 Executive Board.

LOCAL BUSINESS

We will be having our Executive board meeting in July at the Local office. We want to remind folks that the July and August meetings are combined into the August membership meeting per our Local 7901 bylaws. If you are interested in being editor of the Grapevine, now is the time to volunteer! You must have some writing skills, as well as being willing to call members up and get information for articles from them. This is a great opportunity for someone who is thinking about future alternative careers or writing for a hobby. It will look great on a resume. Please call Madelyn at the Local for more information.

DEX RHD

On May 29, DEX RH Donnelly declared Chapter 11 Bankruptcy and reorganization. While we were expecting this for some time (stock was below \$1/share), it was still a shock. CWA has a seat with the creditors in the judge’s chambers—which means that you as members also have that seat. All of those who have looked at their inquiries on commissions not paid and sent them to their shop steward are now covered. If you believe that you are owed commissions, please take a snapshot of the inquiries that you’ve sent, forward them on to the local and keep a copy for yourself. The Sales Support team needs your help—they are overworked and have been getting even more work piled on top of their other duties. Let them know that you back them up all the way. If you are scheduled for an operation or medical procedure that is less than 7 days in length, you are eligible for sick pay (dependant upon your seniority, etc.)

QWEST CPE

VICTORY! In a non-precedential settlement with Qwest, three CPE techs were upgraded to CSS based on the contract article 7.4 “A temporary work assignment greater than 180 days shall be accomplished through the Post and Bid Process as outlined in Section 21.8.” Congratulations to Ed House, Craig Baumann and Mike Resler!

The Grapevine is distributed by your Mobilization Committee and other dedicated volunteers.
Editor: Donna Allen Thanks to all who contributed articles!

The Grapevine is published monthly by Local 7901 of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) for the dissemination of information relevant to the interests and welfare of its members. Views and opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the Union, the Local, or the Editor.