



**DAN CLAY**  
PRESIDENT

My work life seems to fill up with meeting upon meeting about every subject under the sun. Don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining, because good things do get done in these meetings. It's just that I much prefer to get out of the office in Tigard and visit with the members that this Union exists to serve.

## A Memorable 4-Day Road Trip Talking to Members in The Gorge, Central, and Southern Oregon

Last month I escaped. From Monday, Dec. 16th to Friday, Dec. 20th, Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Anderson and I were on the road visiting with members in Eastern Oregon. We started at the Hood River Safeway before heading over to Rosauer's, where I got to visit with Art. He has been a big supporter of Local 555's ABC program, which reminds me ... We have our Steward Summit/Lobby Day coming up in February on the 11th and 12th. Next up was The Dalles Safeway, where we had a great conversation with the folks in the Meat Department about retirement and strategies for making sure you are secure in your later years, which reminds me ... We are planning two retirement seminars this year to help members understand their benefits and get prepared for that big day.

Next up was The Dalles Fred Meyer, where we ran into Jim Sinclair, who is on your Executive Board. It was really nice to

see him when we weren't in a meeting.

Next up was Madras Safeway. Then Redmond Safeway and Albertson's. We were especially glad to run into Harry, who is sometimes quiet and sometimes loud, but always leading the charge for good contracts in and around Central Oregon.

In Bend, we visited both Safeway stores, the Albertson's, and the Fred Meyer. There were many great conversations, but a few stood out. First, Eldon Thorsen, who retired from Safeway and stepped down from the Executive Board, but remains involved and active in his Union — especially in the political arena. Eldon, Steve Williamsen, Jeff and I met with John Hummel and Jodi Barram, a couple of great folks who are running for office in the Bend area and are really in touch with issues effecting grocery workers. We were really impressed. We also visited with Frank in the Safeway break-room. We talked about bargaining. It's nice

to know that members like Frank are looking ahead to the next bargaining.

From there we headed out to Burns, where we saw Vern and Shonna in the Meat Department, and got to talk about health care and how it works.

Then we drove to Lakeview and visited everyone at the Safeway store. Then we were off to Klamath Falls. Again, we got to have meaningful conversations with everyone who was working. My conversation with the meatcutters from Safeway was especially important for me. In fact, it made my week.

It's weeks like this that remind me of what amazing, hard-working, and decent people make up UFCW Local 555.

Over dinner Thursday night in Klamath Falls, Jeff and I talked about the folks we met and the great people who built this union. There are too many to count. It was a week to remember.



### ACTIVE BALLOT CLUB WINNERS!

Mitchell Zuro (pictured left) of Albertson's Keizer Grocery Department, Lee Wagoner (pictured below left), a former Safeway Lincoln City member, and Jessica Jensen (pictured right) of Oak Grove Fred Meyer CCK Department, each won \$500 gift cards in a drawing among new participants of the Active Ballot Club (ABC). In the photo with Wagoner is Local 555 Union Rep Patrick Reed. Two others (not pictured) — Altaf Sayyid and Zachery Lampert — won an iPad and a TV. Two of the prizes were from the interntional union. Local 555-member names were entered into that drawing because Union Rep Mary Spicher had the most ABC sign ups within Local 555's Region. All of those who signed up for ABC were eligible to win.



#### What's this?

The outside pages are news from and about your union. The inside pages are produced by the Northwest Labor Press, and cover the labor movement as a whole. If you like what you see, visit [www.nwlaborpess.org](http://www.nwlaborpess.org).

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**OUR MISSION:**  
 Providing leadership, representation and education to better the lives of all working people

# COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REPORT



**Mike Marshall -**  
Director of  
Collective Bargaining

## FRED MEYER NON-FOODS

The Fred Meyer Non-Foods Unity Bargaining team met with representatives from Fred Meyer on December 2, and again on December 20 to continue negotiations for successor agreements for the Coos Bay, Longview, Newberg, Portland, and Salem area contracts.

On December 2nd the committee expected to see an economic proposal from Fred Meyer, however Fred Meyer was not yet ready, and need clarification on some of the Union proposals.

On December 20th, the committee received the first economic proposal from Fred Meyer. After reviewing the employer's proposal, the

Union committee responded with a counter proposal, delivering to the employer what they believe to be the framework to build a settlement around.

Additional bargaining dates are scheduled for January 21-23.

## BAY AREA HOSPITAL

After bargaining sessions in October, November and December, the Bay Area Hospital bargaining committee reached a tentative agreement with the hospital on December 9th, and the bargaining unit voted on the offer January 9th, ratifying the new one-year agreement. The one-year contract provides for a 1.6% wage increase, a \$0.25 per hour increase to

the night shift differential, an increase in pension contributions, and a 50% increase in the Professional Development Fund.

## POINT ADAMS PACKING COMPANY

On December 16 the members at Point Adams Packing Company in Astoria ratified a new three-year contract. Their new contract had improvements in funeral leave, vacation, and pay during the holiday week, as

well as gave the employees a new option to participate in the UFCW Investment Savings Plan & Trust (a 401(k)-type plan) if they choose to supplement their Union pension and Social Security for retirement.

Members here also received a \$0.75 per hour wage increase effective January 1st, 2014, a 1% increase in 2015, and a 1.5% increase in 2016, increasing their wages by around 9% during the term of the agreement.

# First Day Sick Pay, Anti-Worker Ballot Measures our Top Priority

As we begin 2014, the Legislative and Community Affairs Department is staying very busy. We continue to work on jurisdiction wide First Day Sick Pay (FDSP), decriminalization of unintentional sales of alcohol or tobacco to minors, fighting anti-worker ballot measures, and the OUR Walmart and Making Change at Walmart campaigns.

The Department also started working with the Active Ballot Club (ABC) committee on the candidate interview and endorsement process for the 2014 elections. So far, the ABC committee has made several statewide endorsements, including Brad Avakian for Labor Commissioner, Brad Witt for House District 31, and Rob Nosse for House District 42. The committee has also made endorsements in a few local races. They are Dan Saltzman for Portland City Council, Nick Fish for Portland City Council, and Jim Bernard for Clackamas County Commissioner.

We will continue to interview and endorse worker-friendly candidates. We will keep you all updated on the decisions of the committee.

The department is working with larger coalitions on the FDSP campaigns. In Oregon, we are focusing on several cities whose councils we believe will be receptive to passing FDSP ordinances. The overall goal is to pass a statewide FDSP law through the Legislature. This is a great opportunity for you to help get FDSP for everyone. If you are interested in learning more about the campaign and meeting your local legislators please contact me at 1-503-598-6326 or

**Kevin Billman-**  
Director of  
Legislative &  
Community Affairs

[man@ufcw555.org](mailto:man@ufcw555.org) and I will share the specific opportunities with you.

In Washington, we are working with other UFCW locals and a broad coalition towards the same goal of getting a statewide law passed. We will keep you updated on the progress in both states.

The Walmart campaign has continued into the winter season, and we keep working with OUR Walmart (Organization United for Respect). We are looking for current or former Walmart workers throughout our jurisdiction that we can talk to about this campaign. If you know someone who works at Walmart please contact, or ask them to contact, Bob Marshall at

503-701-2636, or you can give their contact info to your Union Representative. We will continue to support Walmart workers in their struggle to attain respect.

On Black Friday, Local 555 — along with other organizations, including Jobs with Justice — supported Walmart workers at three different locations in Oregon. In Portland there was a rally that featured several wonderful speakers at the Walmart located at 4200 SE 82nd Avenue. The Albany Walmart was the location of another event. In Albany, OPB was on the location with cameras and interviews. In Eugene there was an event at the Walmart located at 4550 W 11th Avenue.

All of these actions are important for working people and help the public understand the terrible business model that Walmart uses.

One thing we want you to be aware of that we are planning for the future is an Oregon Lobby Day on Wednesday, February 12. The day will be spent at the Oregon State Capitol meeting with elected officials and educating them on our issues, including First Day Sick Pay and banning alcohol and tobacco sales through the self checkouts. It will be a fun and effective day, and a chance to meet with your legislators in Salem.

We are also working with the Washington UFCW locals on a Washington Lobby Day.

Please let me or your Union Representative know if you are interested in participating in a Lobby Day.

Happy New Year!

# UFCW Scholarship Packets Now Available

Are you, your spouse, children, or grandchildren looking for higher educational opportunities? There are several scholarship opportunities out there that are available to UFCW members. Each scholarship opportunity has similar criteria, but its own specific criteria to qualify.

UFCW Local 555 scholarship packets are available after the first of the year.

Local 555 sponsors a golf tournament where providers and employers make a charitable contribution to participate. The proceeds go to fund our scholarship and to help find a cure for Leukemia.

To access UFCW Local 555 scholarship applications, go to [UFCW555.org](http://UFCW555.org).

If you have been a member for at least a year from the due date of the application, you, your spouse, children, or grandchildren are eligible to apply. You will want to check for the information needed. The due date for the application is April 25, 2014.

Another opportunity is through your International Union. You can access the applications for the International Scholarship applications by going to [UFCW.org](http://UFCW.org). Check the criteria for eligibility on their website. The applications will not be accessible for a few months. Last



**Lisa Dupell -**  
Staff Director

year, it was open after March 31st. Checking back now and then would be beneficial.

Union Plus Scholarship applications are available now, and can be found at [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org). Again, please check the eligibility requirements and deadlines for entry.

These are fantastic opportunities for UFCW members and their families. They are out there for the benefit of working members, so take the time to apply.

## Executive Board Vacancy

People interested in serving as an Executive Board Officer need to submit a letter to the Vacancy Committee.

You may fax letters to: 503-684-0555; email to: [shumphrey@ufcw555.org](mailto:shumphrey@ufcw555.org).

Subject: Vacancy Committee; or mail to: Vacancy Committee, UFCW Local 555, PO Box 23555, Tigard, OR, 97281.

Deadline is Jan. 31 at 5 p.m.

# Vacation Sign-up and Weingarten rights

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. If you had to work either of those days, I hope that you were at least able to enjoy a nice dinner with family and friends.

We had another great year in the Grievance Department. In next month's article I will give you all of the totals.

I want to remind you all once again about your seniority rights under the contract with regard to scheduling your vacation for the calendar year 2014. Union members have until March 1st in many of our contracts, and until March 15th based on past practice to sign up for vacation. You can still request and receive your vacation, however, if a junior employee has been approved for their vacation and the company says that only one person can be off at that time, then the senior worker will not be able to bump the junior employee after March 1st.

I want to advise all of you to get confirmation of your vacation dates in writing. As you know, many hotels and airlines do not give refunds once they have been booked. If you are experiencing any trouble or concerns with regard to scheduling your vacation, please contact your Union Representative as soon as possible.

In late December, Safeway made us aware that they believe that they have the right to schedule your vacations if we do not sign up by December 20th. It is their position that if our members do not sign up for their vacation, then Safeway will schedule the vacation for them. In the Portland Area Meat Contract Article 8.7 Scheduling states, and I quote: "Vacations may be arranged at any time during the year that is mutually agreeable to the employee and the Employer." Mutual means "by each of two with respect to each other." We are not mutually agreeing to allow the company to schedule your vacations. We strongly believe that the company has no right to schedule employee vacations prior to March 1st each year. Safeway claims that they have been doing this for years. We were not aware that this has happened before now. We would have grieved this then — as we are grieving it now — as we just found out about what Safeway is attempting to do.

We have filed a number of grievances in the past protecting our members' vacations. Some companies were telling them that if they did not use their vacation by their anniversary date, they would forfeit their vacation.

The current issue with Safeway is different than the company attempting to take earned vacation away. UFCW Local 555 considers vacation to be a work-earned benefit and that under no circum-

stance should members lose their vacations! I want to encourage all of you to utilize your seniority and to sign up for your vacation so that hopefully you will be able to go on vacation when you want to.

I'm also writing to remind you about your Weingarten rights!

We talk about this every year. Members should always be aware of their Weingarten rights. Too many times members call us up after the fact and after management had called them into a meeting. These members failed to request that the Union be present prior to answering any of management's questions. Management includes loss prevention and/or store security personnel. If you are called into a meeting and security from either the store or from the corporate office are present, you should stop and immediately tell the company that you will not be answering any questions without your union representative being present.

Security personnel are not your friends. Make no mistake about it. They will try to lure you into a false sense of security. They will say things like, "if you will only tell me the truth, I will help you." We have had several cases where security people have told our members that, "if you cooperate with me, I can save your job." In the vast majority of cases, security people do not have any input into the process at all. Never sign a promissory note. Always consult your union representative before you sign anything! In addition, do not write or give the company a written statement without consulting your union representative. Remember, the Union is there for you. Only a fool represents themselves — don't be a fool!

We print the Weingarten Rights on the back of all UFCW Local 555 business cards.

*"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any question."*

## EXERCISE YOUR RIGHTS. CALL THE UNION!

The Union office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. for lunch. The daytime phone numbers are 503-684-2822 or 1-800-452-8329. The after-hour emergency number is 1-800-

761-3914.

As employees, you cannot refuse to go to a meeting that management wants you to attend. It would be insubordinate to not go. However, and most importantly, you do not have to answer any questions that you could be disciplined for, or that could lead to discipline. The best approach is to simply ask: "Is this a disciplinary meeting or could it possibly lead to discipline?"

Management cannot refuse to answer the question. If management says "no" then proceed with caution. If management says "yes" then please demand that your Union Representative be present before answering any questions. Too many members do not ask the question and then find themselves in trouble because they did not request their Union Representative prior to questioning.




**UNION CONTRACT  
ENFORCEMENT THROUGH  
DECEMBER 2013:**

**Grievances Filed: 518**

**Members Returned to Work: 189**

**Monies Recovered: \$227,525.05**

# Are You Being Paid Correctly?

By Mary Spicher & Ida Baumer

How do you know if you are being paid correctly? Do you check your paycheck stub every week? Do you get a paper copy of your check stub if you have auto deposit? If you answered "NO" to any of these questions you may be losing money each week on your check. Companies make mistakes, and you need to double check your paycheck.

Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries has adopted a rule fleshing out the statute of addressing electronic delivery. The regulation states:

Except for employees who are specifically exempt under ORS 653.020 (none of our Union members fall under this), employers must furnish each employee, each time the employee receives a compensation payment from the employer, a written itemized statement of earnings. The written itemized statement must include: (a) The gross payment being made; (b) The amount and a brief description of each and every deduc-

tion from the gross payment; (c) The total number of hours worked during the time of the gross payment; (d) The rate of pay; (e) If the worker is paid on a piece rate, the number of pieces done and the rate of pay for each piece; (f) The net amount paid after all deductions; (g) The employer's name, address and phone number; (h) The pay period for which the payment is made.

Pursuant to the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (Chapter 535, Oregon Laws 2001), the itemized statement may be provided in an electronic format if: (a) The employee agrees; and (b) The employee has the ability to print or store the electronic itemized statement at the time of receipt.

In Oregon this means that the employer delivering an electronic pay stub must also insure that the employee has the means to print and store the pay stub. I have found this to be the problems. Too many of our members do not have computers or

have a computer and no printer. After talking to members at one of our chains, they are not able to print the stubs at their store because of the sensitive information on the check stub; your store may be the same way.

## In Washington, WAC 296-126-040 states:

(1) Every employer shall furnish to each employee at the time of payment of wages an itemized statement showing the pay basis (i.e., hours or days worked), rate or rates of pay, gross wages and all deductions for that pay period.

(2) An itemized pay statement means a separate written statement from the paycheck issued to employees on each payday. Pay periods shall be identified on the pay statement by month, day, year, and payment date.

(3) The pay statement may be furnished or made available electronically provided each employee has access to receive and copy it on the payday. If an employee cannot receive an electronic pay statement at work

or at home on the established payday, the employer must provide a written pay statement to the employee on the payday.

If you are an apprentice and don't track your check stubs and keep track of your hours, how do you know if you got your step raise when you were supposed to? Did you work hours that have a premium amount paid because of the time of day you worked? How do you know that was calculated correctly? If you are fairly new and don't know what all to look for, how do you know if something is missing if you don't check your stub?

Here are a couple of real examples that happened to long term employees that only checked their check stubs after they received an auto deposit that was substantially smaller than they thought it should be: (1) A long term 40 hour person about ready to retire cuts back to 20 hours a week. He puts in for his Birthday holiday (which is calculated the same way as vacation) and when he gets his check

he is missing 4 hours. The company said it is because he only works 20 hours a week. That was wrong; he had worked 40 hours a week the entire prior year. We were able to recover the 4 missing hours. What if he had never questioned it? That is 4 hours that he would have lost because he didn't have his check stub to look at. (2) Another long term employee (a meat wrapper) worked 6 days in a week. The company decided since they were all 8 hour days to make Sunday the overtime day even though she worked every Sunday, thereby not paying the Sunday premium because she received overtime for that day. I fought and won her Sunday premium for her but if she hadn't had a paper copy of her check stub she would have lost that money. Do you see a theme here?

What can be done to resolve this? You need to inform your employer that you would like a paper copy of your check stub even though you have auto deposit and they must provide it for you. If you ask and don't get a paper copy then please call your Union Representative, we can help you. It is the LAW.

# Hit the Ground Running in 2014



**JEFF ANDERSON**  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

## NON FOODS BARGAINING:

Fred Meyer non food bargaining has stalled around the company's proposed takeaways. At a time the Kroger Company is making record profits, they want to gut the employee's sick pay and not provide a realistic wage proposal. We need to stand together and send a loud message that this will not stand. We must reject the takeaways and secure a fair wage proposal for our members.

## ORGANIZING IN 2014

Organizing is looking up. We have been receiving more leads from non union workers who want to have the benefits and protections of a union contract. We completed successful card check elections at Dallas Safeway Deli and Lancaster Safeway Deli, while also gaining successful elections at Bales Deli and our newest victory at Fred Meyer Wilsonville Meat and Seafood Department.

As the overall economy continues to strengthen, employees are more willing to fight off the scare

tactics some employers use to hinder union elections.

2014 will be a watershed year as we move more resources into direct union organizing. If you know employees in our represented industries who want to the protection of a union contract, call your union representative or the main office.

## OREGON WORKING FAMILIES PARTY GOES ON THE OFFENSE

With the prospect that Earned Sick Days legislation will go forward in the 2015 legislative session, the Oregon Working Families Party (OWFP) has started canvassing in communities to expand the map. Portland was just first to make the move. Now, additional cities in Oregon and Washington have begun efforts to expand Portland-style measures. We will keep you up to date on those efforts as they move forward.

OWFP made national news when they passed "Debt Free Higher Education," a program to make

college a reality rather than a debt machine for life. We will support efforts to fund these programs at the Legislature. I support the OWFP, and you should too. Learn more at [oregonwfp.org](http://oregonwfp.org).

## HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING: OPPOSE ANTI-WORKER BALLOT MEASURES

The New Year looks to be as challenging as the last. Oregon and Washington are being visited by the same outside corporate groups that have attacked Midwest states in the last few years.

They come into the state with their anti-worker agenda and buy their way onto the ballot. This year they are targeting the public sector, while trying to divide private-sector unions. This will not stand.

We are gearing up to oppose these ballot measures. The infamous Koch Brothers are funding much of this anti-worker agenda. They and their corporate friends want to silence workers from having a voice in the workplace. We will meet this challenge head on.



## Oregon, Washington minimum wage increases to \$9.10/\$9.35 an hour

Oregon's minimum wage increased to \$9.10 an hour starting Jan. 1, 2014. (In Washington the state minimum wage increased to \$9.35 an hour.)

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) issued the following five things to know about the state's minimum wage:

1) Nearly 100,000 Oregon workers saw wage increases starting Jan. 1.

Oregon's minimum wage will increase from \$8.95 to \$9.10 for 98,000 minimum wage employees.

2) The 2014 increase for Oregon's minimum wage will boost consumer purchasing power and is expected to generate more than \$20 million in new economic activity for the state.

The minimum wage adjustment will mean that directly-affected employees working 30 hours a week will have \$234 more to spend on goods in 2014.

3) Oregon's minimum wage is tied to inflation to help employees keep pace with

the rising cost of goods and services.

In 2002, Oregon voters passed an indexed minimum wage that increases based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a figure published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics to track prices for a fixed market basket of goods.

4) Most minimum wage workers are at least 20 years old.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, roughly 80 percent of all minimum wage workers living in states with an indexed minimum wage last year were at least 20 years old. In addition, about two thirds of all workers across the country earning a minimum wage or less are women, according to the National Women's Law Center.

5) Employers can download 2014 minimum wage posters for free.

Oregon employers can download free minimum wage posters from BOLI's website at [www.oregon.gov/boli/WHHD/pages/minimum\\_wage\\_posters.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/boli/WHHD/pages/minimum_wage_posters.aspx).



LEFT TO RIGHT: Brenda Romero-Villa, Briana Gentry, and Chris Vandembroeke were among those workers at the Lancaster (Salem) and Dallas Safeway deli departments to join Local 555 via card-check recognition election.

## Safeway Delis Become Union

By Lucy Carrier, Organizer

In the July edition of The 555 Leader, you heard about the struggle of the Safeway deli departments that were trying to gain Union representation, only to run into resistance from management.

The company had been disputing the way the card-check procedure should be conducted. Our long-standing practice has been that when a majority of workers in a department or a store sign authorization cards, the names on the schedule for the week that we request the card-check are used to determine the eligible employee list.

After many exchanges, that agreement has withstood the pressure from the employer to change it.

On October 2, 2013, the union

and the employer met with a neutral third party. The third party was given the cards and a list of eligible employees and he then went into a separate room to verify the authenticity and majority of the cards. When he returned, he announced that the Union (the workers) had won!

UFCW Local 555 is proud to announce that the card-check has been completed and both the Lancaster (Salem) and Dallas Safeway Deli departments have added their voice to yours and finally have their Union!

Thanks to the tenacity, patience, and perseverance of those activist workers, they finally have the union contract that has covered their co-workers in the rest of the store for so many years!

The workers in these delis withstood the countless meetings that Safeway scheduled them to attend. Then they did exactly what Safeway recommended in their captive audience meetings... they got the facts!

They met with Union organizers numerous times and had all of their questions answered. They kept documentation of possible illegal activity, they wore their union buttons, and kept each other pumped up and excited about their upcoming victory.

Just days after the company recognized UFCW Local 555 as the employees' representative, the workers gained more hours in their department due to the language in their contract, which protects them from non-union workers (China Express cooks) doing their work! It pays to be union!!!