

UA #290 obtains \$3.60 an hour raise over next 3 years

Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 have come to terms on an economic package covering the last three years of their six-year collective bargaining agreement with the Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors Association.

In March, members of the union unanimously rejected the contractor association's proposal for a \$4.01 an hour cut over the remaining three years of the pact. Conversely, the

union was seeking a \$6.15 increase.

Under terms of the contract ratified in 2003 (which called for a wage re-opener in 2006), all disputes would be settled by the national Industrial Relations Council for the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry. The council consists of four business managers from UA locals and four signatory contractors.

The council met last month in Sa-

vannah, Georgia, where it ruled unanimously for an increase of \$3.60 an hour over the remaining three years of the Local 290 contract.

Plumbers and fitters received a 65 cent raise June 1, and will get another 35 cents on Oct. 1, 2006; 65 cents on April 1, 2007; 60 cents on Oct. 1, 2007; 75 cents on April 1, 2008 and 60 cents on Oct. 1, 2008.

Local 290 members will meet each

February to decide how to distribute the annual increase.

As of June 1, 2006, the total hourly

wage and benefit package for plumbers and fitters was \$49.28. By Oct. 1, 2008, that will increase to \$52.53.

NLRB rulings could curb union organizing

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Labor Relations Board will soon issue rulings on three cases that could handicap labor's ability to organize health care workers and others.

Two cases concern the supervisory status of nurses at Oakwood Healthcare Inc., Taylor, Mich., and Golden Crest Healthcare Center, Hibbing,

Minn., the Wall Street Journal reported May 25. A third case concerns production and maintenance employees, including load supervisors who work in the shipping department loading trucks at Croft Metals Inc., McComb, Miss.

The AFL-CIO expects that in the next few months the NLRB will broaden the definition of supervisors to include more workers, effectively

limiting how many employees unions can organize. The AFL-CIO says the future of several hundred thousand workers — including tens of thousands of unionized nurses with assigning duties — is at stake, the Journal said.

All five members of the NLRB were appointed by President George Bush.

Oregon Lottery workers vote to stay nonunion

SALEM — A majority of workers at the Oregon Lottery are betting they'll be better off on their own — without a union.

In mail-in ballots counted May 23, 127 Lottery workers voted in favor of joining the largest state employees union, Service Employees International Union Local 503, while 165 voted against. Turnout was 96 percent.

Leslie Frane, the union's executive director, said the result was an example of time and delay working against workers who want to organize.

SEIU said a narrow majority of workers had signed union authorization cards as of mid-November, but Lottery director Dale Penn held off on union recognition, saying some card-signers had changed their minds.

Pro-union workers decided to press ahead, and filed for a union election March 14. In the two months that elapsed before ballots were counted, a committee of anti-union employees formed, which ran an energetic campaign. As many as two dozen workers who had signed union authorization cards ended up changing their mind and voting no.

Robert L. Tunstall dies at 64; retired Postal Workers Union officer

Retired American Postal Workers Union Secretary-Treasurer Robert L. Tunstall died May 12 at his home in Gresham, Oregon. Tunstall, who had diabetes, was 64.

Tunstall's service with the APWU began in 1963 at the Portland Post Office, when he was "fresh out of the Marine Corps."

In 1974, Tunstall was elected president of the Portland-area Local. He also held elected positions as national representative (1976-1978), national vice president/business agent for the Seattle Region (1978-1985), assistant director, Clerk Division (1985 to 1992), and director, Clerk Division (1992-1998). In

1998 and again in 2001, he was elected secretary-treasurer. He retired in early 2004.

Tunstall is survived by his wife of 42 years, Rae Ann Tunstall, son Brett Tunstall, daughter Brooke Payne, father Harold C. Tunstall, brothers Ron and James Tunstall, grandson Matthew Martinez and granddaughter Leah Payne.

A Celebration of Life memorial service was held on May 20.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Adventist Health Hospice, 5835 NE 122nd Ave., Suite 135, Portland, OR 97230.

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