

WHAT'S
HAPPENING

UA Local 290 to offer members free hepatitis testing

Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 will offer free hepatitis testing for all of its members Monday, Oct. 16, starting at 6 p.m.

Additionally, training for blood-borne pathogens and infectious disease will be offered to all of the union's apprentices, and to any journey-level craftsman who wants it.

Local 290 also offers a four-hour pathogens class for its members.

Eugene/Springfield will also host an event, and all apprentices and journeymen and women throughout Local 290's jurisdiction will have the testing made available locally, said John Endicott, business manager and financial secretary-treasurer of the union.

Plumbers and pipefitters are particularly susceptible on the job to hepatitis C, a potentially fatal disease of the liver. The hep C virus (HCV) is spread by blood to blood contact, and can be acquired through broken skin, the mucous membranes, or the eyes.

The free hepatitis testing is funded through a partnership with Roche Pharmaceuticals.

PDC sessions explore prevailing work wage issues

The Portland Development Commission held the first of three work sessions it has scheduled to discuss construction wages on projects that it helps finance.

The first work session held Sept. 20 attracted about 45 people and featured little discussion, but lots of history on how state prevailing wage laws work. Oregon Labor Commissioner Dan Gardner and his staff gave a 90-minute presentation on wage laws, how surveys are conducted, the importance of apprenticeship training and more.

The format for the next work session on Wednesday, Oct. 18, will include two panels, one with invited union officials, and another panel with invited representatives of nonunion construction contractors. One to two hours will be open to public testimony.

The work session will be held from 4 to 9 p.m. in the PDC conference room at 222 NW Fifth Ave., Portland.

A third work session originally scheduled for Nov. 7 has been rescheduled for Thursday, Nov. 9. It also will run from 4 to 9 p.m.

Following the work sessions, the PDC board will consider whether or not it should set wage and benefit requirements on projects that aren't

clearly subject to prevailing wage laws.

The quasi-independent development arm of the Portland City Council has been under fire from city commissioners, the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries and building trades unions for allegedly circumventing state prevailing wage laws on some of its public-private development projects.

Carpenters start fund for organizer held by Immigration

The Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters has opened a "Luis Mendoza Solidarity Fund" following the union organizer's arrest last month by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers.

A representative of Interior/Exterior Specialists Local 2154 of Portland, Mendoza has worked for the past six years as an organizer for the union.

According to Pete Savage, regional manager of the Carpenters Council, Mendoza, 37, will be charged with forgery of a federal document. He has a court date set for December.

Officers from ICE, the FBI and U.S. Marshals arrested Mendoza at his Molalla home on Sept. 7. The family posted \$5,000 bond Sept. 29, but their future is uncertain.

"He has a wife and two kids, and now he's not allowed to work," Savage said.

To help, the union has set up a Soli-

arity Fund for the family, last weekend a dozen union members went to Mendoza's home to paint it and prep it to put on the market to sell.

Mendoza was part of a team of Carpenter Union staffers who have been aggressively organizing largely Latino workers in the Pacific Northwest. "We've been told this (home raids and arrests) is happening to a lot of union organizers across the country," Savage said.

Contributions to the "Luis Mendoza Solidarity Fund" can be made at any branch of US Bank. Checks can also be mailed to US Bank at 636 SE Grand Ave., Portland OR 97214. Checks must be made out to the "Luis Mendoza Solidarity Fund."

Labor to rally for Kulongoski on Saturday, Oct. 14

A labor rally for Ted Kulongoski will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, at the campaign headquarters of the Democratic governor.

Linda Chavez Thompson, vice president of the national AFL-CIO, and Bill Lucy, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees have been invited to attend.

Gov. Kulongoski will speak at the rally.

Immediately following the event union volunteers will visit union households in the area.

The Kulongoski campaign head-



Coal miners handbill Portland

Judy O'Connor, executive secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, joins officials from the United Mine Workers of America and the national AFL-CIO Sept. 19 leafleting the Oregon Convention Center during a meeting of the Northwest Public Power Association. The target was keynote speaker Fredrick Palmer, senior vice president of Peabody Energy, the world's largest private-sector coal company. The UMW is seeking card-check recognition in an organizing campaign at 21 Peabody mines involving some 2,300 miners, mostly in the Midwest. More and more unions are employing the "card-check" method when organizing, to avoid oftentimes adversarial campaigns when using the National Labor Relations Board. Union officials say election campaigns can drag on for months, giving companies the opportunity to harass and intimidate employees into not joining a union. Pictured from left to right are Dave Eckstein of the national AFL-CIO, O'Connor, Bob Kendrick of the UMW, and Bob Gaydos, deputy director of organizing for the union. Nearly two dozen Portland-area union members helped leaflet. Several members handed out fliers inside the conference room before being asked to leave. The NWPPA is an organization of 148 companies that are allied with the electric utility industry. Palmer was there pitching the value of coal for future energy needs. "We're here letting potential customers know of the problems at Peabody," Gaydos said.

quarters is located at 128 NE 7th Ave. (off Davis), Portland.

awards or the health care conference, call Burton White at 503-590-3535.

Nominations are sought for awards in labor relations

The Oregon Chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) is soliciting nominations to honor individuals in labor relations, including union leaders, managers, academics and others devoted to excellence in labor-management relations.

The awards will be presented at a reception following LERA's conference "Crisis in Health Care: What Are We Doing About?" to be held Wednesday, Nov. 15, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

Individuals honored will have demonstrated commitment to the collective bargaining process, integrity, and involvement in the labor relations community. Two awards are open for union members, one for an officer, business agent or attorney and one for a steward who administers a collective bargaining agreement.

For nomination forms, e-mail OregonLERA@aol.com. The deadline to submit nominations is Thursday, Oct. 26. For more information about the

SEIU president Stern in Portland to promote new book

Andy Stern, president of the second largest union in America, will be in Portland Oct. 17, making several public appearances and talking about his recently published book.

In his book, "A Country That Works: Getting America Back on Track," Stern, president of 1.8-million-member Service Employees International Union (SEIU), gives his account of the debate that led SEIU to leave the AFL-CIO last year. It also describes his strategies for American unions to respond to globalization and a changing business environment.

Stern will appear Oct. 17 at Powell's City of Books on W. Burnside at noon, and at the Lucky Labrador pub at 1945 NW Quimby at 7 p.m. He will also meet with members of SEIU Locals 503 and 49 in the afternoon.

And the day prior (Oct. 16) he'll be a guest at 8 a.m. on the Thom Hartmann show, 690-AM, and at 6 p.m. on Labor Radio, KBOO 90.7 FM.



UFCW leaflets new nonunion grocer

About a dozen members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, including Stuart Fishman, above, leafleted the Sept. 20 grand opening of Save-A-Lot at 6828 SE Foster Road in Portland to let shoppers know the employer doesn't have a union contract. The discount grocer will open 25 to 30 stores in the Pacific Northwest over the next year. A store at 6100 SE King Rd. Milwaukie, also opened the same day. Save-A-Lot is one of a number of grocery chains owned by Minnesota-headquartered SuperValu Inc., which bought the Boise-based Albertsons chain in June of this year. Since then, Albertsons has closed six of its least profitable stores in the Portland area. Most of the some 300 union employees at the stores were transferred to other locations, as called for in the Local 555 contract. Save-A-Lot stores are typically 15,000 square feet and have 15 to 20 employees each. While Save-A-Lot has operations in 39 states, most of its 1,154 stores are in the Midwest. None are unionized.