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Union Shopping Guide For The Holidays

Consumers will spend upwards of \$60 billion for holiday gifts this year and much of that money is earmarked for apparel, computer equipment, consumer electronics and books, according to government sources and commercial polling firms. There are union-made, competitively priced sources for all of the items on the typical shopper's wish list.

"Yes, it gets harder every day to seek out union products and services. It's a moving target with some goods that were produced here last month bearing a 'Made in China' label this month," says Charles Mercer, president of the AFL-CIO Union Label and Service Trades Department. However, he added, "It does make a difference when union families tell merchants they want to see a union label before they buy."

Last year, the national AFL-CIO convention designated the 10 days following Thanksgiving as "Buy Union Week" as a means of harnessing the considerable buying power of union wages.

The *Northwest Labor Press* has compiled a union shopping guide. It is by no means an all-inclusive list, but it does include products made by members of both the AFL-CIO and the Change to Win labor federations.

Maybe the best-known union companies in Oregon are **Powell's Books**, represented by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 5; **Pendleton Woolen Mills**, where you can buy blankets and housewares made by members of UNITE HERE; **Harley-Davidson motorcycles**, made by members of the Machinists Union and United Steelworkers; and **Cingular Wireless**, represented by Communications Workers of America. All of those companies' products would make great union-made or serviced holiday gifts.

There are others. Teamsters represent workers at **Boyd Coffee** in Northeast Portland. The Machinists Union represents workers at **Gerber Legendary Blades**, who make outdoor knives and multipurpose tools in Tigard.

Jackson & Perkins is a Medford-based company that grows roses, Christmas trees and other items in California, where it employs 1,400 members of United Farm Workers.

Baked goods from **Oroweat**, **Franz**, **Williams**, **Fred Meyer Clackamas Bakery** and **Safeway Clackamas Bread Plant** are made by members of Bakery, Confectionery Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 114.

Other union-made goodies include **Hershey's**, **See's Candies**, **Ghirardelli**, **Brown & Halley**, **Russell Stover** and **Hostess** products, to name a few.

Teamsters and Operating Engineers represent workers at **Tillamook County Creamery**, where some of the best cheese in the world is produced.

Teamsters also represent workers at **Smuckers**, **Darigold**, **Pepsi Cola**, **Coca-Cola** and **Franz Bakery**.

WHERE TO BUY

Fred Meyer is the only unionized department store in Oregon, with employees represented by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555. However, not all stores are union, and even within union stores there are sometimes nonunion departments. If you want to be sure, ask a worker.

In Longview, Washington's Old Town, **Bob's Merchandise** and **Bob's Bike Shop** have employees represented by Local 555. So do **Farr's True Value** stores in Coos Bay and Coquille, and **Bay Appliance and TV** in Coos Bay.

In grocery and meat, most **Fred Meyer**, **Safeway**, **Albertsons**, **Haggens**, **QFC**, **Sherm's** and **McKay's** stores employ workers represented by UFCW Local 555. Again, not all stores are union and, as in retail, not all departments are union.

In-store bakery workers are members of Bakers Local 114 at most

(Turn to Page 5)



Getting into the holiday spirit

A sure sign that the holidays season is near is the presence of volunteer electricians from IBEW Local 48 getting The Grotto ready for its annual Festival of Lights. As they have done for the past 19 years, electricians mounted panels and assembled temporary power boxes that supply power to more than half-a-million lights and fiberoptic displays and animated displays in a walk-through depiction of the story of the birth of Christ. A team of 40 union members volunteered (including Dave Manning and Steve Martell in the photo above on opening night; Eric Garcia in the photo right, and Bob Palandech and Craig Dyk below) this year, while union contractors of the National Electrical Contractors Association donated equipment. "The expertise and professionalism of the IBEW Local 48 electricians are so important to this event," said Father Jack Topper, executive director of The Grotto. "Year after year they come out to lend us a hand. We couldn't do this without their selfless help." The Grotto Festival of Lights is open nightly through Dec. 30 from 5 to 9:30 p.m. The Grotto is located at NE 85th and Sandy Boulevard, Portland.

