

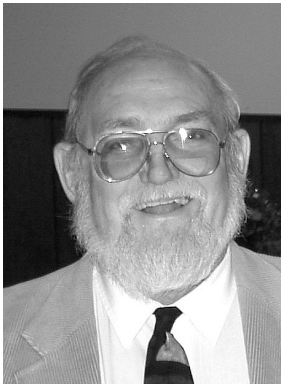
## Let me say this about that

—By Gene Klare



## John Klein dies at 67

**JOHN JAMES KLEIN**, a retired business agent of Portland Teamsters Local 305 who devoted decades to public service, died of leukemia on Feb. 8, 2007. He was 67. Klein was the current president of the Northwest Oregon Labor Retirees Council, which is affiliated with the NW Oregon Labor Council, AFL-CIO. He also held the presidency of the Teamster Retirees and was a trustee of the Oregon Chapter of the labor-backed Alliance for Retired Americans.



**JOHN KLEIN**

A Funeral Mass was conducted for him on Feb. 13 at the Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church in Lake Oswego, where he was a member for decades.

**KLEIN WAS BORN** on Aug. 6, 1939 in Anamoose, North Dakota, the youngest of 11 children. The family moved to Portland in 1941. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1957 and the next year married Helen Smith. After their marriage they made their home in Lake Oswego. Mrs. Klein worked for 38 years at Consolidated Freightways as a member of Office and Professional Employees Local 11.

Klein was a member of several locals in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) before joining Local 305 while driving a transport truck for Franz Bakery. He was elected as

Local 305's business agent when Frank Kies retired, and held that post for 20 years until retiring in 1996.

**HE REPRESENTED** the IBT as a volunteer with the Portland Police Bureau's Sunshine Division, which helps the needy, for nearly 30 years. He served for 11 years with the Lake Oswego Police Reserves, earning the rank of lieutenant. He was longest-tenured member of the Clackamas County Water Commission, with 30 years on that board representing the Rivergrove Water District. He spent eight years on the governor-appointed Oregon State Mortuary and Cemetery Board. He represented the IBT for many years on the Portland Rose Festival's Board of Directors. He was a volunteer in the Teamsters Credit Union for years; and raised funds for the Elks Lodge Children's Eye Clinic while holding leadership posts in the lodge. He's a past president of Oregon State University's Dads Club.

Survivors include his wife, Helen; two daughters, Chris Taylor of Beaverton, and Lori Weed of Snohomish, Wash.; six grandchildren, Erica, Anna, Matthew David, Tony, Nolan and Matthew Wesley; two sisters, Katherine Zucher of Portland; and Loretta Marovich of Lake Oswego; three brothers, William Klein of Portland, Al Klein of Prineville and Lawrence Klein of Bend; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the Children's Eye Clinic, c/o Oregon State Elks Association, P.O. Box 189, Salem OR 97308.

Arrangements were by the Riverview Abbey Funeral Home.

★★★

**THE LABOR HONOR ROLL** was started by the Northwest Labor Press to give posthumous recognition to union members of yesteryear. The Labor Hall of Fame sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Retirees Council honors retired union activists while they are still living.

In this issue, the Labor Honor Roll will spotlight two unionists who were active in the 1950s, '60s and into the '70s.

**SYLVESTER McCULLUMN** was both a union leader and a church leader. He was a business representative of Ship Scalers and Auto Painters Local 1404, one of the few black union activists at that time. I met him in late 1962 shortly after I started working full-time for the Labor Press, for which Jim Goodsell was the editor. I had started doing free-lance writing for Jim in 1960, a few months after the start of the strike against the Newhouse-owned Oregonian and the then-locally-owned Oregon Journal.

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# Unions want to bargain safety issues for corrections guards, police, firefighters

**SALEM** — Labor unions are lobbying lawmakers to pass a bill that would make workplace safety issues a subject of contract negotiations for corrections officers, police and firefighters.

Senate Bill 400 and House Bill 2404 are identical bills working their way through their respective chambers.

In 1995, the Republican-controlled Legislature made changes to the public employee collective bargaining law, stripping unions' right to make safety a mandatory subject of bargaining. Now that Democrats are in control, union leaders are trying to restore that right.

"Employees who deal with flames, criminals or convicts as part of their daily work environment surely deserve to talk about safety issues in bargaining," said Oregon AFL-CIO Political Director Duke Shepard in testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee last month.

Management is opposing both bills, claiming that the potential cost of bargaining staffing issues could bankrupt some districts.

Public safety employees are forbidden to strike and instead contract disputes go to binding arbitration.

"The costs of SB 400 won't be known for years, depending on arbitrator rulings," said Tillamook County Commissioner Tim Josi, a former Democratic state legislator.

Oregon State Fire Fighters lobbyist Bob Livingston discounted those claims in earlier testimony, reminding committee members that allowing the subject of safety and staffing to be brought to the bargaining table doesn't mean the union automatically gets its way. "It just opens an important discussion," he said.

Randy Ridderbusch, an AFSCME staff rep and former Food Service coordinator for the Department of Corrections, said it's always more costly to take corrective safety action after the fact than it is to pro-actively address safety concerns ahead of time.

"Years ago, one of our members had to be beaten with a free weight bar before the Legislature stepped in and passed our bill to ban free weights in the prisons," Ridderbusch told law-

makers. "Numerous officers had to be stabbed before we passed a bill providing for safety vests. These were issues we could have talked about in bargaining if we were allowed to do so."

To illustrate how heated this issue has become, the Portland City Council on Feb. 21 postponed voting on a resolution supporting the rights of safety employees to bargain safety issues because the council, in a highly-charged discussion, was divided on the wording.

The resolution — co-sponsored by Randy Leonard, a former Fire Fighters Union president, and Erik Sten — sought to change the city's position of opposition to SB 400 and HB 2404 to that of supporting the legislation.

The proposed resolution would "reflect the City's high regard for the safety of police and fire personnel, as well as the City's high regard for the collective bargaining rights of its workers."

Mayor Tom Potter opposed the resolution and the bills in the Legislature. Portland Police Chief Rosie Sizer also testified at City Hall against the resolution. "I want to make clear, I'm not anti-union," Sizer said. "I've been a union member all my adult working life."

However, she told commissioners that a labor leader told her that "demand to bargain letters would be flying" if the bills are passed in Salem "Senate Bill 400 is too broad. I don't support it," she said.

Leonard and Sten emphasized that their resolution didn't focus on any specific bill before the Legislature, but merely for the council to support a safety officers' right to talk about job safety issues with management.

"I'm disappointed to hear what I'm hearing today," Leonard said.

Leonard and Sten agreed to re-write the resolution and bring it back to the council.

(Editor's Note: Don Loving, public affairs director of Oregon AFSCME Council 75, contributed to this report.)



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