

Enjoy Your Labor Day Weekend, You've Earned It!

The Pacific Northwest Iron Workers District Council

and
Affiliated Local Unions



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- Iron Workers Local 29, Portland, OR.
- Iron Workers Local 86, Seattle, WA.
- Iron Workers Local 751, Anchorage, AK.
- Iron Workers Local 506, Seattle, WA.
- Iron Workers Local 516, Portland, OR.

We Honor All the Working Men and Women on Labor Day.

We wish the working families of Oregon and Washington a very special Labor Day.

CWA Local 7901 reaches stalemate at credit union

Members of Portland-based Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 7901 have reached a stalemate at Unitus Community Credit Union.

In meetings the first week of August, workers voted 3-to-1 to reject management's final union contract proposal. A contract extension expired July 20 and Unitus has stopped collecting union dues.

Unitus, which used to be Oregon Telephone Employees Credit Union, now is a community credit union for anyone in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Marion, Polk, Yamhill and Clark counties. Its 75 union employees serve 60,000 member-depositors; Local 7901 has deposits there, and so does the Oregon AFL-CIO.

The key issue dividing the two sides is merit pay.

Local 7901 President Madelyn Elder says it's a core union principle to oppose pay systems that give all the discretion to management to decide whether and how much an employee should earn. Unitus has proposed scrapping the existing pay-step schedule and replacing it with a set-up based on a market survey conducted by a consulting firm. According to the survey, most Unitus employees are paid more than the "market" rate in the banking sector.

"And they're saying they're doing us a favor because they're not going to cut anybody's salary who's above the market," Elder said.

Instead, the credit union's management proposes a wage freeze for employees earning above-market wages,

except for individualized merit bonuses — and a cost-of-living increase, which management wants to call a "market adjustment."

The current union scale tops out at \$14.37 an hour, plus \$6.82 an hour for benefits. Benefits include the fully-paid employee-only health insurance and 70 percent of the premium for family coverage; a 401(k) match; and six months short-term disability pay.

Unitus employees *are* better paid than other financial service workers, Elder said.

But then, that's much of the point of unionizing to begin with. In an overwhelmingly nonunion industry like banking, the "market" rate that the consultant reports for wages and benefits is the result of thousands of individual wage negotiations with employers — in which management overwhelmingly has the upper hand.

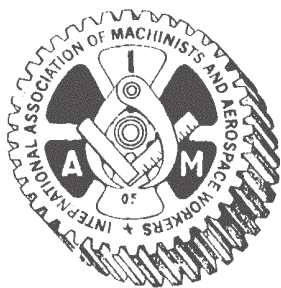
By belonging to a union, Unitus employees are saying they want to opt out of bargaining alone; they want to bargain collectively. So for management to insist on paying the "market rate" is like saying "you can't get a better deal with a union than you can get on your own."

It's psychological warfare, with the goal of union-busting, and Elder said it's taking a toll on morale.

"Some people are so disgusted they're quitting," Elder said.

Local 7901 has filed several unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board. And Elder said the union plans to take their case to the public.

Labor Day is Our Day!



from
the Officers,
Representatives
and Office Staff of

**International Association of
Machinists and Aerospace
Workers, AFL-CIO**

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24

Be Union! Be Proud!

Affiliated Locals
63, 1005, 1179, 1311, 1374, 1432, 1468, 2911

Labor Day Greetings

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