

A new group formed for union members who hunt and fish

A new group for union members who hunt and fish is offering discounts on magazines and outdoor gear — and inviting members to bring the power of the union idea to conservation efforts.

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) kicked off in January as a project of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), a group that advocates to protect fish and wildlife habitat and preserve public access to outdoor recreation. USA, based in Nashville, Tennessee, is open to AFL-CIO-affiliated union members and their families, and so far has the backing of 20 national labor unions, plus the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

Members join via the group's web site, www.unionsportsmen.org or by calling 1-877-USA-2211 toll-free. Membership is \$25 a year, and comes with a subscription to the club magazine, a decal, a \$25 Beretta gift certificate, and a year's subscription to Guns & Ammo, In-Fisherman, or Petersen's Hunting magazine. Members also get access to the members-only portion of the Web site, which contains deals and discounts on hunting and fishing gear.

USA spokesperson Kate Cywinski



says in offering the discounts, the group looks first for union-made, then for U.S.-made, where possible. Products include union-made Corwin Knives and U.S.-made fishing rods from several makers. With a \$40 charter membership, members also get a USA hat and DVD.

Also on the Web site — help planning hunting and fishing trips, a member forum to share hunting tips, a place to post pictures from hunting trips, and a members-only Trading Post to buy and sell outdoor gear and equipment.

A survey of USA's 20 union affiliates found that 70 percent of their members hunt and fish.

Any AFL-CIO-affiliated union

member or retiree in good standing, or their family member, can join.

So far, national unions to formally affiliate include International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; the Machinists; Plumbers and Fitters; International Association of Fire Fighters; Sheet Metal Workers; Iron Workers; Bakers Union; the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades; Transportation Communications International Union; Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers; Boilermakers; Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons International Association; Elevator Constructors; Roofers and Asbestos Workers.

Tom Buffenbarger, president of the International Association of Machinists, and Ed Sullivan, president of the Building and Construction Trades Department, are members of the TRCP board.

Though it advocates for conservation, USA doesn't get involved in political campaigns. And its parent organization, TRCP, is strictly non-partisan. Recent campaigns include efforts to support reauthorization of a federal fisheries conservation law, and opposing oil and gas exploration leases in Wyoming and Colorado that would have threatened prime mule deer habitat.

Donations needed for Nov. 10 Labor Arts Festival



It's crunch time for the upcoming Pacific Northwest Labor Arts Festival, to be held at Portland State University from 1 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 10.

For several months now, Jim Cook, organizer of the inaugural event, has been busy raising money and reserving venues for the show. November is Labor History Month in Oregon, and in recognition, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council's Labor History Committee has always held a special event.

This year, Cook came up with the idea of a labor arts festival. The labor council signed off as a co-sponsor and Cook, a member of Letter Carriers Branch 82, has been working diligently to put it together.

Cook set a budget goal of \$15,000. To date, he has raised \$5,000.

All of the planning and committee work is being done by volunteers. Finances are needed to rent the venues, for printing costs, to pay performers and more. Anne Feeney, who is considered one of the best labor singer/songwriters in America, will be a featured performer. Rebel Voices of Washington State also is scheduled to appear.

In addition to music, the festival will showcase art exhibits, films, poets, and panel discussions. If you are an artist and would like to participate, contact Cook at 503-703-1693

To make a donation, call Cook or the Northwest Oregon Labor Council at 503-235-9444. Or, send your donation, made payable to Northwest Oregon Labor Council, to NOLC, 1125 SE Madison, Suite 100D, Portland, OR 97214.

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