

# Workers at Vancouver Hilton Hotel get first contract with UNITE HERE Local 9

VANCOUVER — Workers at the Hilton Vancouver Washington hotel and convention center ratified their first-ever union contract June 26, bringing to a close a two-year long contract campaign. Workers there joined UNITE HERE Local 9 in June 2006.

The new contract clears the way for the formal end of Seattle and Portland boycotts of the Hilton. All three hotels are now under contracts that will expire simultaneously in 2011.

The vote, by about 70 percent of the 140 employees, was eight-to-one in favor of approving the contract, said chief negotiator Rick Sawyer. The contract contained the same job security language as the recently concluded Port-

land deal, with rules against outsourcing, and successorship in the event of hotel sale.

Wages and benefits, while not up to the Portland and Seattle standard, were good for a first hotel contract, Sawyer said. Non-tipped employees get a 5 percent increase, while banquet department employees get a 5 percent increase in their take from the service charge levied on banquet customers. Workers will be now paid time-and-a-half after eight hours in a shift, and double time starting the seventh consecutive day of work. Employees also get a one-time contract-signing bonus of \$200, or \$100 for on-call workers and recent hires within the last six months.

Monthly employee premiums on the company's employee-only health insurance plan dropped to \$40 a month from \$89. Workers will now have access to the union's 401(k) pension plan, though contributions to that are still up to the employee, with no employer match. And they'll now be participants in the defined pension program, with the employer contribution starting at 33 cents an hour.

Housekeepers will have the same daily room quota as the Portland contract — 15 rooms.

And the contract contains a reopener next year, meaning bargaining on further improvements to wages and benefits will begin next March.

*(Editor's Note: Some building trades union locals are not patronizing the Vancouver Hilton Hotel and Convention Center because portions of the facility were built by nonunion subcontractors. However, neither the Oregon State BCTC or the Columbia Pacific BCTC have sanctioned a boycott against the Vancouver Hilton.)*



## Legal settlement returns union organizer to bakery

Thanks to a settlement brokered by the National Labor Relations Board, Georgene Barragan (pictured left) returned to Bread Song Bakery

June 24, six months after she was fired for failing to reveal past union experience on her job application.

Barragan, a full-time organizer for Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers Local 114, got a job at Bread Song last July in order to give workers there a chance to unionize. Wages and benefits are substantially lower there than at unionized bakeries in the Portland area. The Lake Oswego bakery is owned by a subsidiary of Cargill.

Barragan said co-workers welcomed her back with hugs and handshakes when she arrived for her pre-dawn shift. They knew she was returning because Bread Song posted terms of the out-of-court settlement in three languages on company bulletin boards.

Barragan was a mixer when she was fired, but rather than displace her replacement, she came back in a position on the divider line. She'll divide dough into loaves while on the clock, and unite bakery workers, she hopes, while on break.

"I think they're realizing the power they have if they come together as one and negotiate in a union rather than on their own," Barragan said.

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## NOLC to host Labor Day picnic

The Northwest Oregon Labor Council will once again sponsor a Labor Day Picnic at Oaks Park in Southeast Portland. Labor Day is Sept. 1.

The Labor Council will sell food

scrip for 25 cents each. Three scrip will get you a hot dog and chips, two scrip a soda pop, and four scrip a beer.

A deluxe ride bracelet costs \$8.50 and is good from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The ride bracelet also includes admission to the roller skating rink.

To pre-order scrip, call the Labor Council at 503-235-9444.

## 'Labor Night' at ballpark

The Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council will sponsor "Labor Night at the Portland Beavers" Thursday, Aug. 21. Tickets are \$12 for seats along first base. The first pitch will be thrown at 7:05 p.m.

Unions are encouraged to purchase bulk tickets early. To order, call Brian Pollard at 503-553-5441.



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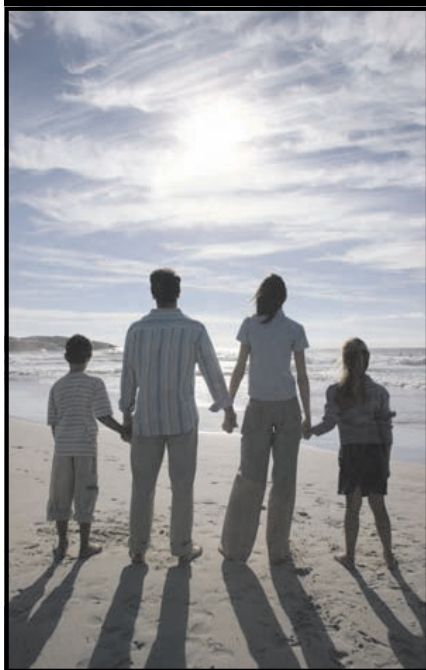
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