

...Turbulence at Boeing

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the London-based Transport Ground Workers Union.

On Sept. 20, Machinists District Lodge 24 hosted a rally and barbecue at the front gate of the plant in Gresham. More than 200 people attended, including the Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, Jeff Merkley; Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian; State Rep. Diane Rosenbaum; Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain; IAM Western Territory General Vice President Lee Pearson; Aerospace Coordinator Mark Blondin, and retired IAM Aerospace Coordinator Dick Schneider.

"This is power. This is what the union movement is about," said Chamberlain, a member of Portland Fire Fighters Local 43. "And frankly, it is what's scaring the hell out of corporate America. I'm so proud of you for standing up and holding your ground."

Before the strike began, Boeing had a backlog of more than 3,600 orders valued at \$346 billion. According to the Seattle Times, Wall Street analysts estimate that at the one-month mark, the strike will have cost Boeing at least \$1.3 billion in profits.

"I think Boeing is allowing their vendors and suppliers to get caught up at the expense of their own employees," said Bob Petroff, directing business representative of Machinists District Lodge 24 in Portland. "Boeing has outsourced work around the globe, which only justifies our need for job security language in this contract."

The strike is the second in as many contracts; IAM members struck the company for 28 days in 2005.

The union has filed multiple unfair labor practice complaints against Boeing and, in fact, this is an unfair labor practice strike and not an economic strike. One of the complaints before the National Labor Relations Board charges Boeing with directly dealing with workers. Federal labor law requires employers to bargain exclusively with its employees' designated union representatives.

The NLRB is still investigating the complaints and had not set a hearing date as of press time.

Meantime, the union has directed striking members to file for unemployment insurance. If denied, members are asked to appeal. If the ULP charges are upheld, striking Machinists will be eligible for the insurance benefits.



State Rep. Jeff Merkley, a candidate for U.S. Senate, offers support to striking Boeing Machinists during a rally Sept. 20 in Gresham. About 27,000 Machinists in four states — including 1,244 members of Portland Lodge 63 — walked off the job Sept. 6 over issues of outsourcing, health care and pension benefits.

'Battle in Seattle' to show in Portland

After considerable local demand, the Hollywood film "Battle in Seattle" is coming to Portland. The movie depicts the 1999 protests that successfully shut down the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, and features an all-star cast including Charlize Theron, Woody Harrelson, Andre Benjamin, Ray Liotta, Michelle Rodriguez and Channing Tatum.

It opens Friday, Oct. 3, at the Regal Fox Tower 10, 846 SW Park Ave., Portland, for a one-week engagement.

On Saturday, Oct. 4, fair trade activists from throughout the Portland area will gather to watch the film, then meet afterwards to share reactions to the movie and ideas on where to go from here.

The event is sponsored by the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign.

If you're interested in trying to get the moving to play in other towns, visit the Web site and click on the "Demand It" link at: www.whocontrolsstheworld.com/battle/film/labors-victory-battle-in-seattle/.

Carpenters back Obama

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners General Executive Board on Aug. 20 unanimously endorsed Barack Obama for President.

"On all the fundamental issues that affect the lives and well-being of our members, the choice of candidates in this election is clear," said General President Douglas McCarron in announcing the endorsement, the first the union has made in a presidential contest since 2000.

"We believe that Barack Obama recognizes the necessity for fundamental change in our nation's poli-

cies," McCarron said.

"The UBC shares my conviction that we need to come together to make sure that the American Dream lives on for our children, and I'm thrilled that they will be standing with me in this critical election," Obama said.

The Carpenters Union represents some 550,000 workers in the construction and forest products industries, including large memberships in key swing states such as Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Nevada.

Musicians Local 99 gets new pact at Oregon Symphony

Oregon Symphony musicians — members of Musicians Local 99 — approved a new two-year contract that covers the orchestra's concert seasons through 2010.

The agreement provides for a 5 percent salary increase this season, with a cost-of-living increase at the start of the second year. It maintains the size of the orchestra at its current complement of 76 musicians.

The ratification vote came just before the Oregon Symphony Association's annual meeting, which took place Sept. 19.

"The investment supports and helps nourish the artistic quality of the orchestra," said Jason Schooler, a bass player who serves as chair of the Orchestra Committee. "It helps ensure that this orchestra will continue to grow and thrive."

Schooler said 92 percent of the orchestra's musicians took part in the ratification vote and that the vote in favor of the contract was nearly unanimous.

The orchestra's board of directors had approved the contract earlier.

The symphony has struggled in recent years with financial losses, but 2007 its ticket sales jumped more than 15 percent to \$5.6 million. Symphony losses totaled \$5.1 million between 2002 and 2008, and it must pay back a \$7 million bank loan that has saddled the nonprofit with \$400,000 in yearly

interest payments.

Oregon Symphony Association President Elaine Calder acknowledged that the Oregon symphony's pay lags peers in other U.S. cities.

"The negotiations reinforced how well our musicians understand our financial situation," Calder said. "We worked with them to balance fiscal reality and their aspirations, and I was impressed by the thoughtful and detailed analysis they brought to the negotiating sessions."

NECA/IBEW donate funds for scoreboard

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48 and the National Electrical Contractors Association have donated \$17,000 to the Reynolds School District for the purchase of an 8-by-20-foot scoreboard that features the Raiders mascot. The new score board is located at the varsity field.

"To raise enough money to complete a project of this size would be a challenge," said a grateful Reynolds baseball coach Kelly Larkin at a recent Local 48 union meeting. "Something of this size would have taken years. But NECA and IBEW's generosity made it happen for the kids."

Reynolds School Board member Theresa Davis echoed Larkin's praise. "This is the first major high-tech improvement for the high school in 50 years," she said. "The entire district — parents, coaches teachers and students — are incredibly grateful for the union's generosity."

Local 48 Business Manager Cliff Davis said the donation strategy was to reach out to area high schools and expose students to a career in the electrical industry.

The union and contractor coalition is also using MySpace and Facebook pages on the Internet to reach high school students and young adults.

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