

Arctic blast doesn't hamper holiday events in Portland

Despite bone-chilling winds and a foot of snow, Portland-area union members and union employers forged ahead with their scheduled holiday gift-giving events.

An estimated 120 children from inner-North and Northeast Portland had their pick of two to three toys at the 12th annual Presents from Partners holiday gift-giving program sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council and Labor's Community Service Agency, AFL-CIO. The event typically attracts several hundred children to the Genesis Community Center in Northeast Portland, but the inclement weather prevented many families from attending.

"We were going to cancel it, but then we thought: 'What if some kids show up and no one is there?'," said Glenn Shuck, executive director of Labor's Community Service Agency. "We showed up — and so did the kids; actually more than we expected."

The agency received over 400 toys during this year's drive. Toys are donated by union locals, the BULL Session Golf Tournament, and Saturn of Beaverton. Cash donations are used to purchase gifts — with a focus on U.S.-made and union-made items.

Genesis Community Center opened its doors the following Saturday (Dec. 27), hoping to distribute the remainder of the toys to children who didn't make it on Dec. 20.

Additionally, members of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 employed at Pioneer Waterproofing Co. in Portland joined owner Mike Crawford in putting together bicycles for kids in need. Assembly day was scheduled for Dec. 20, but because of the snow and ice, volunteers began putting bikes together and delivering them in advance — as weather permitted.

Crawford has been donating bikes and helmets to the Clackamas County Fire Department's "Operation Santa Claus" for many years. Since its inception the volunteers have built and distributed over 1,300 bikes.



UA 290 members bring gifts to kids at Eugene Relief Nursery

Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 donated pajamas, slippers and blankets to the Eugene Relief Nursery this holiday season. On Dec. 11, Local 290 Business Rep Lou Christian (center) and other members of the union purchased and dropped off the much-needed items — enough for 132 kids enrolled in the Early Childhood Program. Over \$3,000 was spent this year. Accepting the donation were Suzanne Arlie (left), president of the Relief Nursery Board of Directors, and Irene Alltucker, executive director of the Relief Nursery. Relief Nursery, Inc. is a private, non-profit agency that helps low-income families with children between birth and six years of age who are at risk for child abuse and neglect. Members of the statewide Local 290 began the fundraising drive more than 10 years ago after a very busy work year. They wanted to share in their good fortune — and one way they did was by donating items to the children at the Relief Nursery. They have continued the philanthropic gesture, even in today's more difficult economic climate. The Relief Nursery is located at 1720 West 25th Ave., Eugene. The phone number is 541-343-9706.



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Wal-Mart workers in Quebec vote for UFCW

HULL, Quebec (PAI) — The United Food and Commercial Workers' Canadian division won again against Wal-Mart in Quebec. The province's labor board ruled on Dec. 17 the union successfully won recognition to represent 150 workers at the Wal-Mart store in Hull, just across the river from Canada's capital, Ottawa.

"After nine times, the message from Wal-Mart workers in Canada to

Wal-Mart executives in Bentonville, Ark., couldn't be louder or clearer: Canadian Wal-Mart workers want to be union members," UFCW Canada President Wayne Hanley said. "Hopefully, this decision will help Wal-Mart to understand Canada is a place where labor rights are human rights, and where people take their rights very seriously. Hopefully, Wal-Mart won't squander another chance to prove its

critics wrong, and it will take this opportunity to show the world that it believes in human rights by sitting down with these Hull workers to negotiate a contract in good faith."

In the past cases, including in Quebec, Wal-Mart closed stores or departments that voted to unionize. That included a meat-cutting department in Texas, and the first store UFCW organized in Jonquiere, Quebec.

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