

Inside

MEETING NOTICES

See Page 6



NORTHWEST

# LABOR PRESS

Volume 110  
Number 21  
November 6, 2009  
Portland, Oregon



*'No justice, no peace'*

Stuart Acuff of the national AFL-CIO leads a chant at Bend Fred Meyer in a show of support for store employees, who are members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555. Grocery, meat, and central checkout employees at Fred Meyer stores in Bend and the Portland metropolitan area have been working under terms of an extended contract since July 2008. On Oct. 15, three UFCW Local 555 officials were arrested for trespass at Hillsboro Fred Meyer after they tried to talk to members about contract negotiations. Police were called after union officials wouldn't leave when ordered to by managers. The arrests rattled unionists attending the Oregon AFL-CIO convention in Bend. More than 100 delegates marched on the Bend store after the convention adjourned on Oct. 27. UFCW Local 555 is not affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Because of language in its current contract, Local 555 officials were restricted from participating in the rally. Fred Meyer is owned by national food giant Kroger.

## Tensions escalate at Fred Meyer stores

*Three UFCW reps are arrested at a Hillsboro store, and a Spokane UFCW local mounts a region-wide protest of cashier firings*

By DON McINTOSH  
Associate Editor

A long-simmering conflict between Portland-area grocers and United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555 boiled over Oct. 15 when three union representatives were arrested at a Hillsboro Fred Meyer store. Local 555 President Dan Clay, Local 555 Representative Mike Marshall, and UFCW International Representative Jenny Reed were cuffed and led away in front of members and the public after a store manager called police.

Accounts differ as to what led up to the arrest of the head of Oregon's largest private-sector union.

Hillsboro Police spokesperson Michael Rouches said police were called to the Fred Meyer store on Tualatin Valley Highway when a group of eight union representatives refused a store manager's order to get off the property. Five left voluntarily, Rouches

said, while three refused a police order to leave and were arrested.

Several witnesses offered a different account: Clay had just driven in to find out what was going on when police arrested him in the parking lot after a brief conversation; Marshall was in the parking lot waiting for a ride when he was arrested; and Reed was arrested in the lobby asserting that federal law — and the union contract — gave her the right to be there.

In charges filed the same day with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the union alleges that Fred Meyer (which is owned by national food giant Kroger) broke federal labor law in the incident. According to the unfair labor practice charge, the union reps checked in with store officials, then tried to talk with members to update them on the status of contract negotiations and an employer health care proposal. Right away, store manager Jim Dostert confronted the reps, told them to go to the break room, and angrily and loudly ordered them not to speak with employees. Dostert followed them through the store, placed himself physically between them and employees, ordered employees not to talk to them, and threatened the reps with arrest for

(Turn to Page 11)

## Oregon AFL-CIO bolsters constituency groups, targets younger workers

BEND — More than 250 delegates attending the 51st convention of the Oregon AFL-CIO at the Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center Oct. 26-27 made a strong commitment to bolster the federation's constituency groups and to reach out to younger workers — in both organizing and involvement in union activities.

A resolution creating a new Youth Caucus for union members under 35 passed unanimously, as did a resolution to revitalize existing constituency groups within the Oregon AFL-CIO. Two groups that are moving forward aggressively are the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Statistics show that women, workers of color, and young people have the most to gain from union membership. In wages alone they can earn between 28 to 43 percent more when working under a union contract.

To help spread the message that unions are champions of the middle class, starting this month the Oregon AFL-CIO will launch a year-long radio and Internet advertising campaign. "We've been through some very tough times," said Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain. "But we're coming back, and we want the middle class with us."

Guest speaker Stuart Acuff of the national AFL-CIO said that after decades of unfettered corporate-driven globalization, stagnant wages, and

(Turn to Page 4)



Newly elected AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler (center) poses for a picture with AFSCME Local 88 and Local 328 delegates during break at Oregon AFL-CIO convention in Bend. The delegates — from left, Elvyss Argueta, Jaimie Sorenson, Michael Hanna and Grant Swanson — are members of AFSCME's "Next Wave," a group for younger members. In her convention address, Shuler stressed the need for labor to reach out to younger workers. "There's one thing we have to get right, and that is to give the next generation hope," Shuler said. "Fight for them, embrace them and welcome them into our movement." Earlier, the convention passed a resolution establishing a Youth Caucus.