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MEETING NOTICES

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Happy  
Holiday!

NORTHWEST

LABOR  
PRESSVOLUME 110  
NUMBER 24  
DECEMBER 18, 2009  
PORTLAND*Shop union this holiday season*

Anne Koster, a 28-year member of Portland-based Bakers Local 114 and cake decorator at Roth's Fresh Market in Salem, shows off a gingerbread house sculpted in the bakery using Aunt Katie's Gingerbread House kit. Roth's has been a union bakery since 1966 and maintains the "scratch baking" tradition. Aunt Katie's Gingerbread House kits are union-made in McMinnville, Oregon, by members of Bakers Local 364. Look for more union-made products inside on Page 8.

Oregon labor leaders  
attend climate talksBy DON McINTOSH  
Associate Editor

Workers of the world may not have a seat at the table, but they're in the room — for the climate change talks under way in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The Dec. 7-18 conference is between governments that are party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a non-binding UN treaty in which governments committed to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The International Trade Union Confederation has observer status at the 2009 talks, and is using that opportunity to advocate a set of what it calls "just transition" principles. ITUC came to Copenhagen with a 400-strong contingent of labor unionists from around the world. The labor representatives are lobbying their official government delegations to commit to major investments in alternative energy and energy efficiency, and do so in a way that creates and maintains decent jobs. They are also calling for commitments to minimize harm to workers caused by both climate change and measures to combat it.

Heading up the 40-member U.S. labor delegation is Bob Baugh, co-chair of the AFL-CIO Energy Task Force, and former Oregon AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer. [Three other Oregon trade unionists are in Copenhagen: Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-

Treasurer Barbara Byrd, and Ron Heintzman and Jon Hunt of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU).] Also present are several top U.S. union leaders, including Plumbers and Fitters General President William Hite, Laborers General President Terence O'Sullivan, and Boilermakers President Newton Jones.

The United States is one of 192 nations that signed the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, but it was not a part of the later Kyoto Protocol, a binding 1997 treaty in which 37 developed countries made specific commitments to reduce greenhouse emissions to 6 to 8 percent below 1990 levels. President Bill Clinton signed the Kyoto treaty, but the U.S. Senate failed to ratify it. At the time, the AFL-CIO opposed the Kyoto treaty because it did not require developing countries — chiefly China and India — to make similar commitments.

Eleven of the last 14 years have been the warmest on record. The Arctic ice cap is melting. Scientists from many fields attribute the warming to human causes — mainly the addition of heat-trapping greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide, the most common greenhouse gas, is now present in earth's atmosphere at over 380 parts per million, up from 315 in 1960.

Despite the efforts of some countries to meet the targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, global greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise almost every year, and even the rate of increase has risen. Most European nations have reduced greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency and alternative energy, but their progress has been more than canceled out by the rapid industrial growth of China. This doesn't vindicate inaction by the United States, but it does make it clear that countries like China and India will have to be included if any progress is to be made reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Getting a concrete commitment from the United States, and bringing the developing world into the process, is the heart of what's being discussed

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## Unions join in march for trade justice

About 1,800 people turned out for a Dec. 5 Portland march and rally against the World Trade Organization (WTO), just over 10 years after 50,000 protested a Seattle summit meeting of the organization.

The WTO facilitates and enforces an international legal framework of multi-party treaties. But labor unionists, environmentalists and human rights activists say the WTO elevates trade, investment and so-called "intellectual property rights" above the interests of workers, the environment, and community.

"We were flimflammed," Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain told Portland rally-goers. "We were told these treaties would bring good-paying jobs and raise our living standards."

Instead, for American workers, outsized trade deficits of \$700 billion a year tell a story in which trade contributes to job losses. Some 5 million

jobs have disappeared in the U.S. manufacturing sector in the last 10 years.

Mostly, the WTO exerts its influence indirectly, preventing rather than overturning action by national governments. An example is what happened when the U.S. Congress proposed the "cash for clunkers" program, in which the government would pay up to \$4,500 toward the purchase of a new automobile if it was substantially more fuel-efficient than a purchaser's existing vehicle, which would be scrapped. The program was conceived as a way to spend U.S. tax dollars to stimulate the economy during a severe recession — and increase the fuel efficiency of cars on the road. In its first version, the pro-

Union members made up a large portion of the estimated 1,800 people who marched through the streets of downtown Portland Dec. 5 to protest proposed expansion of the World Trade Organization.

posal was limited to U.S.-made cars.

But the European Union ambassador to the United States protested that

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