



Murray to lead ASSE

Ron Murray, a retired business agent for Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, has been elected president of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering. ASSE is a national code and standards-writing organization, developing American National Standards Institute guidelines for the plumbing and piping industry. Murray, of Sauvie Island, developed the residential fire sprinkler professional qualification standard, the only ANSI accredited residential sprinkler standard in the world. He took office Jan. 1.



Roofers hire rep

Portland-based Roofers Local 49 has hired Darrell Hopkins Sr. as a business representative and organizer. Hopkins is president of the local and has served on its Executive Board since 1998. For the past 18 years Hopkins has been an instructor for the Roofers Apprenticeship and Training Program. Local 49 represents approximately 450 roofers and waterproofers in the Portland metropolitan area.

More Steelworkers laid off at Cascade Steel

MCMINNVILLE — Cascade Steel Rolling Mills, Inc., the largest employer in Yamhill County, laid off 17 employees — members of Steelworkers Local 8378 — Jan. 10. This brings the number of union members who have been laid off and are still out of work since December 2008 to 103.

Local 8378 once represented nearly 400 workers at Cascade Steel, a division of Schnitzer Steel.

“Every one of these layoffs hurts another hard-working family, and it also hurts the wider economy,” said union President Joe Munger Sr. “When family-wage jobs are eliminated, there’s that much less money for people to spend at local businesses, and a ripple effect is created. This is a painful situation for everyone involved. Our members and our community deserve better than this.”

During a slight uptick in business in July and August of 2009, Cascade Steel

brought back 41 employees, but that reversing trend has since reversed itself.

Last month, 71 union members who were laid off in December 2008 lost their recall rights and will not be returning to the mill. Several long-term management employees — including human resources director Mike Hereford, a former president of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555 — also lost their jobs.

Without any further economic recovery, an additional five union members will lose their recall rights in February and nine more in April after having been laid off for a year.

“One of the reasons we’ll continue to lose jobs across all sectors of the economy in McMinnville and nationally is because of imports,” said Munger, who also serves as president of the Marion-Polk-Yamhill Counties Central Labor Council. “Congress has passed trade policies that force local

businesses to compete with companies taking advantage of sweatshop working conditions and lax environmental and safety standards overseas.”

“Oregon workers lose out every time in that scenario,” Munger continued. “Our union is urging Congress to support comprehensive reform legislation that would finally allow local workers to compete on an even playing field.”

Munger is referring to the TRADE Act, a bill currently supported by over 130 members of Congress that would require review and renegotiation of existing trade agreements and set mandatory standards for future trade agreements. The legislation’s co-sponsors include Sen. Jeff Merkley and Congressman David Wu and Peter DeFazio, all Oregon Democrats.

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people ask you to invest in stuff: If you’re a Nike exec and your aunt Carol asks you to invest in her bakery, you show up on the books as a rich small business owner. Then there’s 2 percent of small business owners that are rich enough to pay the tax, and actually do make most of their money from their small business. But under the definition both sides use, that includes law firms like Stoel Rives. How could a small business owner make that much money [\$250,000]? They’re trying to confuse people into thinking that the small business owners are taxed on the gross income of the business. Actually, they’re only taxed on their share of the profits, which means what they take out after

they pay wages and other expenses. So the idea that this tax will cause them to lay people off is ludicrous.

But it’s retroactive. Is that fair?

The taxes were passed in 2009. The reason they’re not collected until 2010 is the opponents gathered signatures to force a vote. They have this argument that money hasn’t been withheld from paychecks. You’re talking about rich people, most of whom make the biggest chunk of their money from capital gains, not paychecks. They’re aware this is going on. They’ve got tax planners. It’s not like they’re going to be stuck at the end of the year with this huge tax bill that they can’t afford. The same goes for the corporations.

Labor and Employment Relations Association hands out ‘Maggies’

The Oregon chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) presented “The Maggies” at its 2009 annual meeting.

LERA is an organization that brings labor, management, neutral, and academic leaders together to improve labor-management relations. The Maggies, named in honor of Magdalena Jacobsen, founder of the Oregon chapter, recognizes individuals who practice good labor relations.

Jacobsen was a mediator with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service before being appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve on the National Mediation Board. That federal agency has jurisdiction over collective bargaining in the airline and railroad industries.

Jacobsen died in February 2008 following a battle with breast cancer.

In the category of labor, awards were presented to Bob Shiprack, executive secretary of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council and a 30-plus year member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48; Lisa Beasley, a member of Service Employees Local 49 and 19-year shop steward at Legacy Emanuel Hospital; and Larry Bartasavich, a member of American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees Local 88 and a shop steward at Multnomah County.

The management award went to Dennis Uniform Manufacturing Company and its owners John and Joan Shipley. In business since 1920, the company is one of the last remaining apparel manufacturers in the United States — designing, cutting, sewing, and finishing nearly 80 percent of their products. Employees are members of UFCW Local 555. “When bargaining begins, they don’t look at things from the perspective of what is the minimum they can settle for, but what can they do to show appreciation for their employees’ hard work, and to continue to remain competitive in the market. They promote open access and communications at all levels, which makes the resolution of issues, when they do occur, an easy and collaborative process.”

The Emerita Award, which goes to a “neutral,” recognized Sally Newton of Kaiser Permanente. Newton retired as national labor relations vice president. In that role, she was responsible for leading the development and coordination of labor relations strategy for all Kaiser Permanente regions.

The Academic Award was presented to Marcus Widenor, associate professor at the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon. Before joining LERC 25 years ago, Widenor taught in the labor education program at the University of Minnesota and also was an organizer with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

A Labor Practitioner Award was given to attorney Greg Hartman of Bennett, Hartman, Morris & Kaplan. Hartman has been practicing labor law for 35 years and has provided counsel to unions in several high profile cases.

For more information about LERA, contact President Connie Weimer, a mediator with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, at OregonLERA@aol.com.



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