

Safeway plant sanitators join Bakers Union

Sanitation workers at the Safeway Clackamas Bread Plant voted June 3 to join Bakers Local 114. The vote was 10 to 2.

Bakery sanitation workers do the deep cleaning of machinery, one of the most important jobs in a bakery.

The sanitators have been without a union for over two decades. During that time they have watched management reduce their crew from 25 workers to 14 — and replace it with temp agency workers.

According to Local 114 Secretary-Treasury Terry Lansing, Safeway engaged in an intensive anti-union campaign, holding many “voluntary” meetings trying to convince workers to stay non-union. “But they knew their job protection was ‘at will’ and they voted to have a say in their job security,” he said.

Lansing is pictured above (front



row right), with sanitators from the bread plant. With them are Local 114 Business Agent Shad Clark (left), and International Representative Eric Anderson (standing next to Lansing).

All production bakers at the plant are members of Local 114. Operating Engineers Local 701 and Teamsters also represent workers there. The office staff is nonunion.

Defined benefit pension plans still in meltdown, analyst reports

SEATTLE —The Milliman 100 Pension Funding Index, which consists of 100 of the nation’s largest defined benefit pension plans sponsored by U.S. public companies, reported June 10 that such pension plans experienced asset decreases of \$41 billion and liability increases of \$14 billion in May 2010, resulting in a \$55 billion deterioration in funding status.

“We haven’t seen a month like this in a while,” said John Ehrhardt, co-author of the Milliman 100 Pension Funding Index. “We saw a similar decline in overall funded status in June of 2009, but that was largely liability-driven. (May’s) precipitous decline was the re-

sult of steep asset losses and further liability increases, making it the worst month for pension funded status since the dire days of late 2008.”

Overall, the pension funding deficit increased to \$294 billion at the end of May. Given current interest rates (5.61 percent), investment gains of 34.4 percent for the remainder of 2010 would be needed to reach a 90 percent funded ratio, which would still leave the deficit at \$138 billion.

Milliman, Inc. is a global consulting firm. To view the complete monthly update, go to <http://www.milliman.com/expertise/employee-benefits/products-tools/pension-funding-index/>.

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Labor history group meets in Portland

The Pacific Northwest Labor History Association held its 42nd Annual Conference in Portland June 11-13.

About 150 people — a blend of academics, writers, union organizers, and labor activists from Oregon,

Washington, and British Columbia — attended the conference held during Rose Festival parade weekend.

“This was one of the best conferences I have been to in a long time,” said conference panelist and novelist Peter Donahue. “The mix of people made it so much more lively and engaging than the often dreary all-academic conferences I typically attend.”

The conference was planned by a committee organized by Bob Bussel, director of the Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon (UO).

Keynote speaker Kim Bobo, executive director of the Interfaith Worker Justice Coalition, roused the group of historians Saturday morning to take the struggle for justice to the streets, or at least to the public.

At that evening’s annual banquet, PNLA President Ross Rieder presented Keith Johnson, former president of the International Woodworkers of America, and Don Willner, a retired labor attorney, with the association’s “Labor History Person(s) of the Year” award. Johnson was recognized for promoting international solidarity between workers in the U.S. and Canada.

A “Making Labor History” award went to the Next Wave committee leadership from Oregon AFSCME Council 75. Next Wave is an AFSCME program designed to recruit and organize young workers.

Among others taking part in the conference were Margaret Hallock, director of the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics at UO; Chuck Sheketoff of the Oregon Center for Public Policy; Michael Honey of the University of Washington, and Oregon State Sen. Diane Rosenbaum.



(ABOVE) Denny Scott and his wife, Nadine, listen to Ross Rieder (at podium), president of the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association, during introductions at a Labor History Conference June 12 in downtown Portland. Scott is a retired representative of the Carpenters Industrial Council. (BELOW) Nellie Fox Edwards (center) shares a laugh with “Labor History Persons of the Year” Keith Johnson (left) and Don Willner. Johnson is a retired president of the International Woodworkers of America and Willner is a retired labor attorney and former state legislator.



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