

# GREED AT A GLANCE

Could anything possibly be more all-American than Pasadena's annual New Year's Day Tournament of Roses parade? This Southern California city has been parading on New Year's since 1890, and over 50 million Americans watched this past edition. What these viewers didn't see: Pasadena's staggeringly wide gap between the rich and everyone else. By one measure, Occidental College's Peter Dreier noted, Pasadena has just tied San Francisco as "California's most unequal city." Pasadena's wealthiest 5 percent — essentially everybody making over \$250,000 — now take home almost a quarter of the city's income. Their bidding up the cost of shelter has sent rents throughout the city soaring. Just under 70 percent of Pasadena families making between \$35,000 and \$50,000 are currently paying over 30 percent of their income on housing ...

Pasadena has another New Year's claim to fame. The city, back in 1902, invented the college football bowl game. Nearly three dozen of these exhibitions now dot America's holiday landscape.

Why so many? These games pay off big — for bowl game CEOs. Most of these execs, a new study shows, make over \$300,000 for running ostensibly "non-profit" operations. The top exec for one obscure game, the Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl, made \$320,492 in 2008, a total that equaled 11 percent of the game's revenues. If the CEO of Wal-Mart took in 11 percent of his company's revenues, notes a new Time report, "he'd be making \$44 billion."

Wal-Mart's current CEO does not, of course, make \$44 billion a year. But that exec, Mike Duke, does make an impressive piece of change, \$19.2 million in the company's latest fiscal year. What's Duke doing to earn his ample take-home? He's moving furiously fast on his pledge to slow the retail chain's rising expenses — by cutting Wal-Mart wages. Starting this January, all new Wal-Mart hires will no longer earn the \$1 an hour premium Wal-Mart employees have traditionally earned for working on Sundays. Duke's move, by the end of this year, will have most Wal-Mart workers no longer eligible for the Sunday pre-

mium, since employee turnover at the retail giant averages 60 percent a year ...

Mike Duke has some stiff competition in the CEO scrooge race from over at Disneyland, where just over 2,000 bellmen, dishwashers, room attendants, and cooks at Disney hotels have been without a contract since January 2008. The biggest bone of contention at the bargaining table: Disney wants workers to start shelling out as much as \$535 a month more for health care. For workers like Narciso Guevara, a 10-year Disney veteran who makes \$1,910 a month, that added outlay would be simply unaffordable. Walt Disney CEO Bob Iger, for his part, averaged over \$2.4 million a month in 2009. In a bid to dramatize that contrast, Disney workers are battling in an unusual new venue. They're urging film industry folks to "vote their conscience" in this year's Academy Awards balloting and deny Disney's Toy Story 3 the nod as the year's top picture.

*(From Too Much, an online weekly publication of the Institute for Policy Studies; editor@toomuchonline.org.)*



## Carrier retires from Painters Union

A retirement party was held Dec. 16 for Tim Carrier, longtime business representative of Painters and Allied Trades District Council No. 5. In the photo above, Carrier (center) receives a plaque of appreciation from Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Byrd (right) and AFL-CIO Political Legislative Director Duke Shepard. Carrier was the "unofficial" political coordinator for the union and was involved in numerous campaigns in Oregon and Southwest Washington throughout his career. Carrier, 55, joined Painters Local 360 in 1978 after going to work for Thompson Metal Fab. Always active in the union, he was hired as an organizer in February 1991 by the former District Council No. 55 (it merged into District Council 5). In addition to organizing, Carrier also was an instructor in the apprenticeship program. He was elected as a full-time business rep in the mid-1990s, serving Local 360 and later Local 10, following the merger of those two locals. Over the years he was elected to virtually every office of Local 360 — from president on down. He was a trustee to the joint apprenticeship training council and District Council's health and welfare trusts; and was an at-large member of the Oregon AFL-CIO Executive Board. He also served as a delegate to several central labor and building trades councils. "This union has cared for me and my family," Carrier said. "They have found me work, they secured health and welfare for me and my family and they have secured a decent pension for me to retire. Thank you for letting me serve as your business rep." Carrier's successor as business rep for District Council 5 is Jeff Brooke.

## City of Lake Oswego workers join Oregon AFSCME

By a margin of 57 to 43 percent, the independent Lake Oswego Municipal Employees Association (LOMEA) voted Nov. 10 to affiliate with Oregon AFSCME Council 75.

The bargaining unit of 165 people includes most non-management and non-police employees in the city.

The Lake Oswego workers are the sixth group of city employees within Clackamas County to affiliate with the union, joining those from Canby, Gladstone, Milwaukie, Oregon

City, and West Linn.

Talks between AFSCME and LOMEA have been ongoing since December 2009, and included "11 months and many meetings," said AFSCME Organizing Director Sue Lee-Allen. "We are excited to have them join us, and they are excited about becoming part of AFSCME."

LOMEA and the City of Lake Oswego inked a new three-year contract in January 2010.

## Labor Union Hearing Instrument Benefits Offered

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## Washington judge nixes effort to stop minimum wage hike

SEATTLE — A Kittitas County judge Dec. 29 rejected an effort by corporate lobbying groups to halt a 12-cent increase to Washington state's minimum wage that went into affect Jan. 1.

Superior Court Judge Scott Sparks ruled against the summary judgment request from the Washington Farm Bureau, Washington Restaurant Association, Washington Food Industry Association, and Washington Retailers Association that sued the state in November over the decision to raise the minimum wage to \$8.67 an hour on Jan. 1. They sided with Republican State Attorney General Rob McKenna who opined that the lowest legal wage should not increase in years following a drop in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The Washington State Labor Council joined with the Washington Asso-

ciation of Churches, the Lutheran Public Policy Office, Washington Community Action Network, and minimum wage workers from UNITE HERE! and the United Farm Workers union to intervene on behalf of the state's position that the minimum wage ought to go up on Jan. 1, per the language and formula that the WSLC wrote in 1998's Initiative 688. The judge denied the plaintiff's request for summary judgment and stated that the law was clear as it was written — that the minimum wage was only to be increased whenever there was a positive rate of change of the CPI-W from one year to the next.

"This means about 140,000 workers received a raise Jan. 1, including a number of our members in the hospitality, service, food service, and agricultural industries," said incoming WSLC President Jeff Johnson, who attended the hearing in Ellensburg. "This is our first success in 2011 for Washington's working families. May there be many more."

*(From the WSLC Reports Today website at [www.wslc.org](http://www.wslc.org).)*

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