

...Union picnic season

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ride bracelets are \$5. Bingo runs from noon to 2 p.m. and from 3 to 5 p.m., interrupted at 2 p.m. for door prize drawings, followed by raffle prize drawings. Members must be present to win the door prizes, but not the raffle prizes.

NALC BRANCH 82

Sue Canfield, longtime letter carrier at the post office in Newberg, coordinates the annual picnic for National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82. This year it will take place noon Sunday, July 24, at Cook Park, Area 2, in Tigard, just next to Ball Park 2, where the local will have its annual softball match-up starting at 9 a.m. Each postal station tries to field a team, though that's been getting harder, Canfield said. It's been so long since the U.S. Postal Service was doing any serious hiring that members are older on average than they used to be. Most years, the event draws 75 to 150. Chow will include hamburgers and hot dogs, potluck offerings, and a raffle. For kids and grandkids, there's a game table and water games, and a "balloon man" who makes balloon toys for every kid who wants one. Branch 82 also takes part in the NOLC picnic, setting up a table and offering discount tickets for the rides at Oaks Park.

ATU LOCAL 757

Ever since he went to work at TriMet 18 years ago, diesel mechanic Jeff Hunt has been volunteering to put on the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 picnic. Hunt, 42, said he went to the ATU picnic every year growing up, because his father, a TriMet driver who is now retired, was also a picnic volunteer. Local 757 represents about 4,400 transit employees in Oregon and Southwest Washington, and has one of the larger picnics around, with 5,000 to 7,000 turning out every year. Eugene area members bus up to attend. This year, it's Sunday Aug. 28, at Blue Lake Park. Except for parking, everything is free to Local 757 members and guests. Food, including pulled pork, hamburgers, and hot dogs, is served by Terrel's Texas Bar-B-Que, a husband-and-wife caterer that includes TriMet bus driver Tina Straughter. There's also cotton candy and snow cones. Activities include a water balloon toss; watermelon eating

contest; baseball; a game truck with video games like Guitar Hero; bingo; and copious prizes: \$25, \$50, and \$100 Toys"R"Us gift cards are given away in a drawing for kids, and grownups vie for prizes that include a big screen television. Hunt said it takes about two hours to hand out all the prizes, which include up to 500 union T-shirts. There will also be a DJ and dancing, and an artist who draws your portrait as a cartoon character.

"We have 24 collective bargaining agreements," says Hunt, who serves on the Executive Board alongside his brother, Local 757 President Jon Hunt. "The picnic is a great opportunity to meet people who work at other locations. For example, I might talk to a school bus driver from Salem and compare our situations. It's the only event we have that brings that many members together."

[Local 757 has a separate well-attended picnic for its retired member chapter; this year it's Wednesday, July 6, at Oaks Park.]

NOLC LABOR DAY PICNIC

The area's biggest union picnic is the multi-union Labor Day picnic put on by Northwest Oregon Labor Council. As many as three dozen union locals will take part in the event, Monday Sept. 5, at Oaks Park. NOLC reserves the entire amusement park, and hires park staff to serve food in the common area; sales of scrip cover the cost of food. Scrip is 50 cents each; offerings this year will include hamburgers and chips (3 scrip), hot dogs and chili (2), soda or water (1) and beer (3). In addition, about 30 local unions reserve an area for their members and guests, and some of these serve food as well.

American Red Cross will have two mobile units on site to collect blood donations.

Entertainment includes bingo, speeches by elected officials, and of course, amusement park rides: Deluxe bracelets are available at a discounted rate of \$9.

Last year NOLC reported estimates of 20,000 in attendance. As the event has grown, getting to the park and finding parking have become a challenge. This year, for the first time, NOLC is making arrangements for the Oregon Pacific Railroad to ferry passengers to



Members and families of ATU Local 757 compete in a watermelon eating contest at the union's annual picnic at Blue Lake Park.

Oaks Park from designated parking areas near Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Train tickets will be \$2 per passenger. The route, along the Springfield Corridor, passes through Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge.

[Later in the summer, the Northwest Labor Press will have information about other Labor Day picnics in the region.]

IBEW LOCAL 280

IBEW Local 280 will hold its picnic Saturday, Sept. 10, 12 to 5 p.m., at Timber-Linn Park in Albany. Kids'

games are a focus of the annual event, which draws about 300. There will also be a horseshoe tournament at 10 a.m., and a retiree group photo at 11:30 a.m. This year the theme is Cajun, with plans for Cajun food and a live Zydeco band. And, back by popular demand, the local will purchase a steer to benefit 4H, which will then be raffled off as two quarters and a half. Oh, and ice cream. Lots of ice cream.

UA LOCAL 290

With members throughout Oregon, Southwest Washington and Humboldt and Del Norte counties in California,

4,200-member United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290 puts on six picnics altogether. Coos Bay started the season this year with a picnic that took place June 25. Next up is the Springfield-area — July 9 at Richardson Park in Eugene; then Medford-area members will gather July 16 at Tom Pearce Park in Grants Pass; Eureka, California members meet Aug. 27 at Freshwater Park; and Bend-area members come out Aug. 28 to Hollinshead Barn.

Local 290's biggest picnic is in the Portland-area, Sept. 11 at Blue Lake Park. Third generation member John Kimberling, a Local 290 business agent, coordinates it, just as his father did before him. Each year it draws about 1,000 people. This year's attractions include beef brisquet, chicken, barbecue, and copious quantities of ice cream. There's bingo, and a clown, a face painter, and two bounce houses for the kids. The local is also making a dozen canoes available to take out on the lake.

All the Local 290 picnics run noon to 4 p.m. At the Springfield and Medford picnics, members whose last names start with the letters A to M are asked to bring salads to share, and N to Z desserts. Bend-area members are asked to bring desserts, and Eureka members desserts and salads. No animals are permitted at Blue Lake Park or at the Eureka picnic; the other parks allow pets on leashes. There is a \$5 fee to park in Blue Lake Park.

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