

Labor Day PICNICS

Labor Day – Monday, Sept. 5

Every year, labor unions throughout Oregon hold Labor Day picnics. Here is a list of picnics taking place:

BEND — Solidarity Day Picnic, **Sunday, Sept. 4*, at Pioneer Park in Bend. 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Central Oregon Central Labor Council. Contact Linda Bradetich at 541-350-0965 or Steve Williamsen at 541-678-0235 for more information. **Note the date is not Labor Day.*

EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD — John Lively Picnic Shelters, behind SPLASH at 6100 Thurston Road in Springfield. Noon – 4 p.m. Please bring a side dish. SPLASH will offer a swim rate for picnic participants that wish to use the wave pool. Sponsored by the Lane County Central Labor Council. Contact Cj Mann at 541-913-0056 for more information.

MEDFORD — TouVelle State Park, 8425 Table Rock Road, Central Point. 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Donations accepted and there is a \$5 charge for parking. Sponsored by the Southern Oregon Central Labor Council. Call Kathy McUne at 541-664-0804 for more information.

NORTH BEND — Ferry Road Park in North Bend. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Sponsored by the Southwestern Oregon Central Labor Council. For more information, call Robert Westerman at 541-756-3907 or e-mail at ibew932@frontier.com.

PORTLAND — Oaks Amusement Park in Southeast Portland. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., with a brief program at 1 p.m. Scrip sells for 50 cents. Deluxe ride bracelets are \$9. The Oregon Pacific Railroad Shuttle Train will transport people (\$2 per person roundtrip) to and from Oaks Park from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Parking will be available at the Portland Opera, 211 SE Caruthers St., and in the vicinity of SE Ivon and 4th Street. Sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council. Call 503-235-9444 for more information.

SALEM — Riverfront Park in Salem. 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Sponsored by Marion-Polk-Yamhill Central Labor Council. Cost: two food items per person. Call Judy at 503-362-7057 for more information.

THE DALLES — Sorosis Park Shelter in The Dalles. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Potluck. Sponsored by Mid-Columbia Central Labor Council. Call Walt Denstedt at 541-298-4783 for more information.

OREGON STATE FAIR — The Oregon AFL-CIO labor booth in the central canopy area continues to be staffed with union volunteers during the entire two weeks of the fair, including Labor Day.

Backers file second ballot initiative aimed at public employee unions

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Supporters of an anti-union ballot initiative turned in 1,000 signatures Aug. 5 to the Oregon secretary of state's office. The initiative is dubbed the "Get Government Out of Politics Act," by its authors. But "Get Public Employee Unions Out of Politics Act" might be a more accurate title.

Reached by phone, the initiative's chief petitioner, Sandra Chapin, said its purpose is "to prevent public unions from taking money out of people's checks to support political agendas." The initiative would bar public employers from collecting union dues if any part goes toward political activities.

"All indications are that they are treating it seriously as a campaign," said Scott Moore, spokesperson for Our Oregon, a union-backed ballot measure watchdog group. "It's a direct attack on public employees, and it's part of a nationwide effort to attack working families."

It could take several months before signatures are validated and a ballot title is certified. At that point, the initiative — currently known as "Petition 23" — would be approved to circulate, and to pay petitioners. To become a ballot measure on the November 2012 ballot, it will need 87,213 valid signatures from registered Oregon voters.

Chapin herself is a public employee — she's an applied behavior analysis assistant at High Desert Education Serv-

ice District in Redmond, working with autistic students. In that job, she's represented by the Oregon Education Association, the state's biggest teachers union. At one time, Chapin said her union dues paid for political activities that she opposed. But she went through a process for objectors, and now has "fair share" employee status, which means she pays reduced dues that go only toward "representational" expenses.

Chapin was asked to serve as the initiative's chief petitioner because of that stance, but she wouldn't say who asked her, or who is backing the campaign, and she said she's never met her fellow chief petitioner — retired Oregonian and anti-light-rail activist Mel Zucker.

Zucker, reached by phone, said former Oregonian editorial board member David Reinhard is a key figure in the effort, and is working full time on it.

The campaign address is a mailbox at downtown Portland Mailboxes etc.

Chapin said the campaign is paying circulators, but said she doesn't know any details and doesn't know who's paying them. The Oregon secretary of state's campaign finance database lists a Get Government Out of Politics Petitioners Committee associated with the initiative. But the committee had reported no contributions or expenditures at the time this article went to press. Under Oregon law, the committee must report contributions and expenditures within 30 days. The group lists as its

treasurer Carol Russell of Bandon, who has served on the executive board of the agribusiness lobby group Ag-PAC, and chairs the Oregon Cranberry Network.

Zucker said one figure who emphatically is not involved in this effort is Bill Sizemore.

"I don't care what Bill Sizemore does," Zucker said. "He is not affiliated with us. We can't stand him."

Sizemore, a perennial union foe, was the author of ballot measures that were very similar to Petition 23. Such proposals have sometimes been called "paycheck protection" by their backers, and "paycheck deception" by opponents. But whatever the label, the measures are intended to make it harder for public employee unions to gather political resources.

Voters rejected those measures in 1998, 2000, and 2008. And Sizemore is currently behind bars in Marion County for failure to file tax returns. But his associate Tim Rohrer, who took over the Sizemore signature gathering operation, is listed as chief petitioner on Petition 3, which is also aimed at the November 2012 ballot, and has been circulating since October 2010.

Moore, at Our Oregon, calls Petition 3 a "carbon copy" of Sizemore's 2008 Ballot Measure 64.

So, incredibly, Oregon may witness two initiative campaigns for the 2012 season that are targeting public em-

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