

# Labor songwriter, activist Harry Stamper dies

NORTH BEND — Several hundred workers and families packed the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 12 Hall in North Bend on March 17 to honor longshore worker and songwriter **HARRY STAMPER, JR.**, who died of a heart attack March 9 at his home in Charleston, Oregon. He was 67.

Welcoming the crowd, Stamper's daughter Anna announced, "This is a sad day, but a celebration."

And so it was.

Bill Bradbury, retired Oregon secretary of state, described Stamper as "...an awfully fun person, but he was damned serious about changing the political structure so it serves us and not the corporations."

Past and present faculty of the Labor Education Center at the University of Oregon (LERC) wrote they were proud of Harry as "Our guy from Oregon, the best labor folksinger/songwriter around."

The Low Tide Drifters band led a set of Stamper's songs, including his famous anthem of the occupational health and safety movement: "We Just Come to Work Here; We Don't Come to Die." The song has been recognized as a part of American labor and folk music history by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution.



Other musician friends of Stamper played on through the afternoon.

**HARRY STANFORD STAMPER, JR.** was born Sept. 20, 1944, in Roanoke, Va.

He lived in the San Francisco Bay Area in the early 1970s, and worked as a longshoreman for more than 37 years. He was a longtime member of ILWU Local 12.

He married Holly Hall in 1985. They had two daughters, Anna Brown and Nell Ero.

Stamper is survived by his wife and daughters; three grandchildren; his mother, Viola; two brothers, and three sisters.

In lieu of flowers, Stamper's family suggests contributions to the ILWU Auxiliary, 12064 Sherman Ave., North Bend, OR 97459; or Waterfall Clinic, 1890 Waite St., North Bend, OR 97459.

*(Editor's Note: Special correspondent Stefan Ostrach of Eugene contributed to this report.)*

## IN MEMORIAM

**MARTY BLAKE**, a retired executive secretary-treasurer of Portland-based Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49 and a former international vice president, died March 11. He was 91.



**MARTELL F. BLAKE, SR.** was born July 20, 1920, in Tacoma, Washington, to Nettie and Harold Blake. His father was a founding member of the Building Service Union Local 38, which later changed its name to SEIU.

After graduating from Stadium High School in Tacoma in 1937, Blake joined Local 38 and worked as a window-washer. He tried his hand at other jobs and was a member of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union and Boilermakers Union. He was working as a welder at Todd Shipyard in 1943 when he joined the U.S. Navy to serve in World War II.

That same year he married Clara Olsen.

After the war, Blake used his GI Bill benefits to learn the insurance business and open his own agency. In 1948, the Building Service Union hired him to serve as a trustee of Local 38. After completing that assignment in 1951, he moved to Vancouver, Washington, to work in a plywood mill in Portland. There, he was a member of the Woodworkers Union. He also worked part-time as a window washer through SEIU Local 49, where his uncle, Glenn, was secretary-treasurer.

After two years, Blake returned to Washington. He owned and operated unionized restaurants in Tacoma and Moses Lake.

He returned to Portland in 1959 to work for his uncle as a Local 49 business agent. When Glenn Blake retired in 1968, Marty was elected his successor. In 1970, he became a member of the SEIU international Executive Board

and four years later was elected an international vice president, where he served with former national AFL-CIO president John Sweeney.

Sweeney spoke at Blake's retirement dinner in Portland in 1983.

Blake served for about 30 years on the board of directors of the Union Labor Retirement Association, builder of Union Manor retirement apartment complexes in the Portland metro area.

After retiring in 1983, the Blakes moved into Westmoreland Union Manor in Southeast Portland.

Starting in 1997, Westmoreland Union Manor was the location for the Northwest Oregon Labor Council's annual Labor Appreciation Night, and for many years Blake volunteered his cooking skills to prepare dinner for the more than 250 guests.

Blake was installed into the Northwest Oregon Labor Retirees Council's Labor Hall of Fame in November 2000.

Blake was preceded in death by his wife, and son, Marty Jr. He is survived by three daughters, 12 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.



(International Standard Serial Number 0894-444X)

Established in 1900 at Portland, Oregon as a voice of the labor movement.

4275 NE Halsey St., P.O. Box 13150, Portland, Ore. 97213 Telephone: (503) 288-3311

Editor: Michael Gutwig

Staff: Don McIntosh, Cheri Rice

Published on a semi-monthly basis on the first and third Fridays of each month by the Oregon Labor Press Publishing Co. Inc., a nonprofit corporation owned by 20 unions and councils including the Oregon AFL-CIO. Serving more than 120 union organizations in Oregon and SW Washington. Subscriptions \$13.75 per year for union members.

Group rates available to trade union organizations.

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## Forgive us our trespasses (and we'll forgive those who've trespassed against us)

To protest abuses at Dosha Salon Spa, protesters from Portland Jobs with Justice briefly occupied Aveda Institute Portland Feb. 7. The two businesses share an owner. Dosha workers voted March 2011 to join Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 7901, but the company has continued to persecute union supporters, including several who were fired.

Though Aveda managers called police during the takeover, no arrests were made.

But afterward, they filed charges, singling out CWA Local 7901 President Madelyn Elder (pictured right) and Jobs with Justice activist Laurie King, among the 80 or so protesters.

On April 2, Elder and King pled guilty to second degree criminal trespass and second degree disorderly conduct.

"Having acted in support of workers rights to bargain collectively, she will accept the consequences," attorney Noah Horst told the community court judge for each case.

Each was sentenced to 16 hours of community service.



## Dosha pays \$7,000 to fired massage therapist

In an out-of-court settlement approved March 20 by the National Labor Relations Board, Dosha Salon Spa agreed to pay \$6,946 to fired massage therapist Mary Christ, who waived her right to reinstatement. Christ was a new employee when she was fired last September after she wore red feathers in her hair as a show of solidarity with co-workers. Workers at Dosha voted in March 2011 to join Communications Workers of America Local 7901, and red is CWA's color. Christ has since found work elsewhere.

Dosha also pledged a \$26 payment to former Dosha hair stylist Kelanie York, who was sent home early from work

after she wore a temporary union tattoo. York later quit and moved out of the area.

Other allegations were settled by a voluntary agreement to post a notice in all locations for 60 days. In the notice, Dosha promises not to do any of the 30 things that it was alleged to have done in violation of the National Labor Relations Act. Included is a pledge to remove cameras from the employee break room at the Hawthorne store, at the union's request.

Several other charges of labor law violations by Dosha are still being investigated.

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