

## Retired Portland letter carrier announces hunger strike in D.C.

Retired Portland letter carrier and union activist Jamie Partridge is heading to Washington, D.C., for a four-day hunger strike. The action begins June 25, in protest of massive cuts to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

Partridge — a long-time member of Portland-based National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82 — will be joined by seven other activists from around the country for the fast, which will coincide with rallies outside the U.S. Capitol, at USPS headquarters, and at the Washington Post. Caravans are planned from Baltimore and New York City for the final day of the protest, where there will also be solidarity demonstrations in half a dozen cities.

The postmaster general has announced that half of all mail processing facilities will close over the next two years, with closures starting July 1. As a result, tens of thousands of USPS workers will lose their jobs, and the USPS won't be able to guar-



Retired Portland letter carrier **Jamie Partridge (right)** will take part in a four-day hunger strike to protest massive cuts to the U.S. Post Office. In the photo above, he is leading a protest march through the streets of downtown Portland.

antee next-day delivery for regular first class mail that stays in the local area. And in nearly half the post offices in America, hours of operation will be cut from 25 percent to 75 percent.

The growth of online bill payment has sapped USPS revenues, but the activists say Congress is to blame for the USPS cuts. They argue that Congress could “stop starving the Postal Service” — by eliminating an unusual requirement that USPS “pre-fund” health

benefits for future retirees, and by refunding money they say USPS overpaid into the federal workers pension system.

The hunger strike and protests are being organized by Communities and Postal Workers United, a newly-formed national grassroots network of union and community activists.

## 2012 Labor Appreciation Night honorees



Kudos were flying June 2 at the Labor Appreciation and Recognition Night dinner sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council (NOLC). Now in its 15th year, the dinner recognizes people for their commitment to helping better the lives of workers. It also serves as a fundraiser for Labor's Community Service Agency (LCSA). This year's event raised \$2,707.05.

Top recognition is the Del Ricks Community Service Award in honor of the late Del Ricks, who was LCSA's executive director for 17 years. The 2012 recipients were Lee and Kathy Duncan for their volunteer work with the Unions for Kids motorcycle poker run. In 10 years the event has raised \$326,000 for Doernbecher Children's Hospital. The Duncans, both members of International Brotherhood of Electric-

ity Workers (IBEW) Local 48, were instrumental in founding the non-profit organization.

The labor council's “Heritage Award” was presented to Nellie Fox Edwards and Verna Porter. Fox Edwards is a retired political coordinator of the Oregon AFL-CIO and business rep for the Retail Clerks (now United Food and Commercial Workers). Porter is a past president of the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans and secretary-treasurer of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union's Columbia River Pensioners. Both remain active in causes focusing on health care, seniors, and the disabled.

A “Business Appreciation” award went to Machinists Lodge 63 for its longstanding role promoting and raising money for Guide Dogs of America.

Recognition awards went to: Scott Blau, president of the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans and National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 82 retiree; Deborah Burbank and Betty Nash of Branch 82; Eryn Byram of LCSA; IBEW Local 48 Business Manager Clif Davis and Political Coordinator Joe Esmonde; Donna Hammond, president of the Local 48 Electrical Workers Minority Caucus; Rita Loucks of Bakers Local 364; Mark MacPherson of Teamsters Joint Council No 37; Al Marino, retired Teamsters and head of the NOLC Retirees Council; former state rep Mike Schaufler; Kevin Stampfle of Laborers Local 483; Claudella Walland, a retiree of the American Federation of Teachers; and Roben White, president of Painters Local 10.



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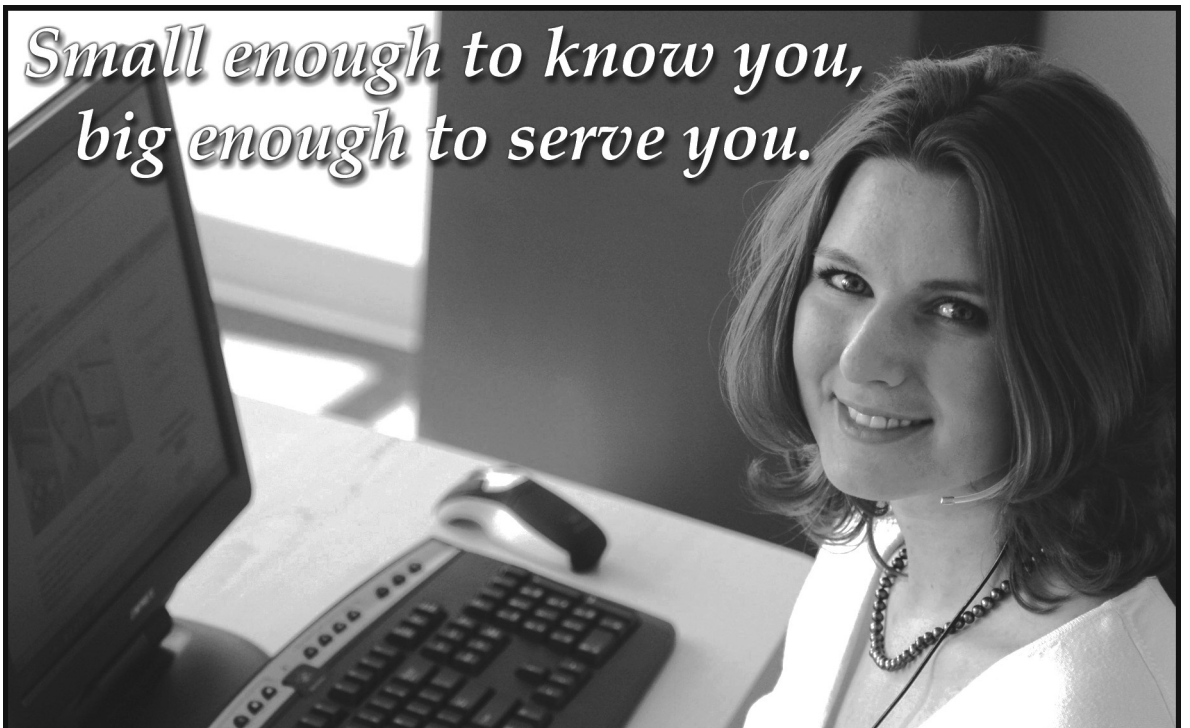
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