

# ...Building 'the cloud'

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longest I've been working," he said.

Chris Rockwood, a plumber with a wife and two kids, was out of work for a year-and-a-half. "Eighteen months with no work was challenging," he said.

Bishop and the others also commented on the jobsite. "Awesome," he said. "The cleanest, safest job, most productive I've ever had. It's like your grandma's kitchen floor."

In July, general contractor DPS/Fortis celebrated a million hours worked without a lost-time accident.

Local businesses in Prineville also are getting a boost.

John Beach, manager of the Executive Inn, said his motel is full all the time. "It pays the overhead, my wages, and all the bills," he said.

Mandy Ireland, a bartender at the Horseshoe Tavern, said, "We see a lot of the Facebook guys in here, especially Taco Tuesdays. Business has picked up. It's benefited the whole town."

And unlike other construction projects that provide only short bursts of employment, the size, complexity, and phased nature of the data center projects keep the work going.

"We've been here two-and-a-half years — a good run," said K.C. Beddow, superintendent for Rosendin Electric at the Facebook site.

And there's still plenty of work to do at Facebook and Apple. Add to the mix other high-tech companies negotiating for land, water, and power in Central Oregon, EDCO's Carr says construction contractors can expect to look forward to another five to 10 years of building the cloud in Central Oregon.

## HIGH-TECH FIRMS PREFER USING UNION LABOR

Facebook's corporate policy encourages buying and sourcing locally. Only a few general contractors have the knowledge and experience to build precision high-tech facilities, and Portland-based Fortis has a history of using union subcontractors.

Craig White, DPS/Fortis Mechanical, Electrical, and Piping superintendent, gave two reasons for preferring union labor: "Unions are familiar with these types of projects, and they have a qualified labor pool with training and experience. We know they have the level of schooling we need."

White said he is happy with how the project is going. "We get workers who care, 99 percent care about craftsmanship and the product we're turning over to Facebook."

Facebook spokesman Lee Weinstein said the company is "absolutely" pleased with how the work has been going in Prineville. "The commitment



Curtis Cole (left), Tom Boyhan (center), and Brian Rutheford (lying down), members of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 employed at Temp Control Mechanical, work on the first of three data centers built by Facebook in Prineville. In the background are Rich Schlegal and Aaron Hanlon, electricians for Electrical Construction Co. and members of IBEW Local 280. (Photo courtesy of Facebook)

to craftsmanship and safety has been exceptional," he said, "We're proud to provide good jobs at a fair wage."

Asked about whether Facebook's experience with union labor in Prineville would make them more or less inclined to use union contractors in the future, Weinstein replied, "We've had a wonderful experience and don't plan to change our construction plans."

(Editor's Note: Union construction workers performed the majority of

work at Google operations in The Dalles and at Amazon data centers in Boardman.

Google invested \$600 million and is operating out of three data centers (205,000 square feet) on 37 acres on the banks of the Columbia River in The Dalles. It employs over 150 full-time workers.

Amazon is completing a second 120,000-square-foot data center adjacent to one it opened last year in Morrow County.)

# ...Clackamas County battle

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small increments since 1979. In other words, "Portland creep" is already limited by law, a law which, Chamberlain points out, some Republicans have sought to undermine — on the grounds of property rights.

As for the union movement, Chamberlain said, "We're not for strip malls in timber land or farmland. We're for sustainable growth and development where it makes sense."

To support Lehan and Damon, Oregon AFL-CIO is mounting what Chamberlain described as a sophisticated ground game, with phone banks and canvasses.

Labor's efforts focus on its members — 14,000 Clackamas County residents are members of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions, and 22,000 more are members of their households. Thanks to years of canvassing, there are also 12,000 members of the AFL-CIO's Working America affiliate — it's a group for workers who don't have union-representation through their workplace. And at least 7,700 residents are members of other unions.

"We're doing everything we can to get Charlotte and Jamie elected," Chamberlain said.

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