

Painters, Floor Coverers hand out bonuses to STAR members

Nearly 100 union painters and floor coverers received \$500 bonus checks and \$100 gift cards May 30 at a Safety Training Awards Recognition (STAR) banquet in Portland. The craftsmen and women are members of Painters Local 10 in Portland, Local 1277 in Eugene, Local 724 in Salem, and Portland-based Floor Coverers Local 1236.

Seventy Painters and 28 Floor Coverers qualified for the bonuses after completing seven classes (painters only) and 24 hours of skill-advancement training and safety courses over a 12-month period. Classes are held in the evenings and on weekends at the Painters Training Center in Northeast Portland and at the Clark County Skills Center in Vancouver, Washington.

Four painter apprentices also were



Four apprentices were recognized for their perfect attendance in the painters apprenticeship and training program. They are from left to right: Peter Halterman, Doug Bartholomew, Erin Scott, and McKenzie Fidler. Halterman has had perfect attendance for the last three years.

recognized for perfect attendance in the apprenticeship training program. They are Peter Halterman, Doug Bartholomew, Erin Scott and McKenzie Fidler. Halterman has had perfect attendance for three years in a row.

The STAR program was initiated eight years ago when Painters and Allied Trades District Council No. 5 and the Signatory Painting Contractors Organization made a commitment to each other to field the best-trained, highest educated workforce in the industry. This led to the creation of the Painters Union/Management Partnership, or PUMP. The program is funded by a cents-per-hour contribution negotiated in their collective bargaining agreement.

Local 1236 started funding its own program three years ago in partnership with the Signatory Floor Covering Contractors.

Presenting the bonuses were Allied Trades District Council 5 Area Director Bud Bartunek, and Business Representative David Winkler.

Bill Regan is the apprenticeship coordinator for the Painters, and John Lawson is apprenticeship coordinator for the Floor Coverers.

Signatory contractors attending the recognition banquet were Sterling Floors, Don Frank Floors, and Floor Factors, Inc. for the Floor Coverers and Long Painting, Schiller & Vroman, Reichle, Inc., and Fine Painting for the Painters.

Letter Carriers' food drive sees sharp increase

The annual food drive of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) collected more than 74 million pounds of food to help restock food banks, pantries and shelters around the country. The May 11 effort garnered 74.4 million pounds of food, an increase of 5 percent over last year. The total food collected was the second most in the drive's 21 years, and the increase was the highest in a decade.

Oregon contributed 1,052,264 pounds of food to the cause, while in Washington, letter carriers brought in 1,835,238 pounds of food.

"This demonstrates in clear fashion the value of the unique postal network, which goes to 151 million addresses six days a week," said NALC President Fredric Rolando. "It also shows the remarkable connection between letter carriers and the communities they serve — a bond that serves the nation well."

The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is the largest single-day food drive in the nation. It is held annually on the second Saturday in May in 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. From major metropolitan areas to small rural towns, residents put out non-perishable food donations on that day, which letter carriers collect as they deliver mail along their postal routes.

"Letter carriers see first-hand the needs in the communities where we work, and we're honored to be able to help people in need by leading an effort that brings out the best in so many Americans," Rolando said.

Rolando said the effort by 1,400 NALC branches around the country would not have been possible without the contributions of its national partners: Feeding America, Campbell Soup Co., AARP, Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, Valassis/Red Plum, U.S. Postal Service, United Way Worldwide, AFL-CIO, Uncle Bob's Self Storage, GLS Companies, Source

Direct Plastics, and the Publix grocery store chain. Rural letter carriers and other postal employees, plus members of other unions and civic volunteers, also helped, as did Family Circus cartoonist Jeff Keane.

"We could not have accomplished this without the hardworking team of partners we have, all committed to ending hunger in our country," said Pam Donato, NALC community services coordinator.

She said the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive never has been more important, with hunger affecting about 50 million people around the country, including 17 million children and nine million senior citizens.

"Pantry shelves filled up through winter-holiday generosity often are bare by late spring," she said, "And, with most school meal programs suspended during summer months, millions of children must find alternate sources of nutrition."

The natural disasters the country has recently endured — including the tornadoes in Oklahoma and Super Storm Sandy along the East Coast — magnified the needs.

Oklahoma residents who contributed to record collections soon became recipients of the public generosity.

"Thanks to Oklahoma City area letter carriers, nearly 320,000 pounds of food was collected during the Letter Carriers Food Drive," said Rodney Bivens, executive director of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, a member of the Feeding America network. "These much-needed donations were immediately available to families and individuals impacted by the May tornadoes."

And some Northeastern areas affected by Hurricane Sandy, including in Vermont and New Jersey, set food-collection records despite the hardships residents had been through.

"These events show the good will of people, good will that in such times is both more necessary and more impressive," Rolando said.

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Evergreen College union ratifies first pact

OLYMPIA, Wash. — After 17 months of negotiations and a one-day strike, members of the Student Support Services Staff Union at The Evergreen State College ratified their first-ever collective bargaining agreement June 12. The vote was 52-2.

The contract takes effect July 1 and runs through June 30, 2015.

The contract includes a fair compensation package and "just cause" due process rights for discipline, the Washington Federation of State Employees, an affiliate of AFSCME Council 28, said in a press release.

On compensation, the Evergreen workers (who have never gotten step increases) will start to catch up with across-the-board increases totaling 4

percent: 3 percent on July 1, 2013, and 1 percent on July 1, 2014. They'll also start getting step increases of 1 percent on the first day of the month in which the employee's date of permanent/project hire occurs, once the employee has been employed for 12 months or more. Also, effective July 1, 2013, each employee will receive a one-time bonus payment equal to 1 percent of the employee's annual salary.

The union represents 57 counselors, advisers, resident directors, and others at the college. The group walked out May 28 after six days of mediation failed to resolve differences over just-cause due process rights and a fair compensation package. The strike virtually shut down the college for the day.