



# NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

Volume 114  
Number 13  
July 5, 2013  
Portland, Oregon



PHOTO BY RUSSELL SANDERS

## Grand opening for Union Cab

Portland's newest cab company — Union Cab — held a grand opening June 27 at its headquarters at 14415 SE Stark Street. The celebration is the culmination of a years-long effort by a group of immigrant drivers who campaigned against exploitation by several Portland cab companies, helped by Communications Workers of America Local 7901 and the Oregon AFL-CIO. Prior to the festivities at its headquarters, company and union officials held a press conference at City Hall. Speakers included City Commissioner Amanda Fritz and Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain (photo above). In the photo below, cabbie Adam Teshite greets visitors to the grand opening, which included catered Ethiopian food. Union Cab operates 50 vehicles, with more than half the fleet hybrid vehicles. Their phone number is 503-408-1234. Union members with union cards get a 10 percent discount on all rides.



## Machinists, Painters strike Daimler Trucks

By DON McINTOSH  
Associate Editor

Members of Machinists Lodge 1005 voted down a contract offer from Daimler Trucks North America and went on strike at the company's Portland truck plant 12:01 a.m. July 1. The 520 machinists were joined on strike later in the day by 68 members of Sign Painters and Paint Makers Local 1094. Two other union groups at the plant — 117 members of Teamsters Local 305 and 19 members of Service Employees Local 49 — accepted company offers, but won't be crossing picket lines.

The plant, located in the Swan Island Industrial Park, manufactures heavy-duty Western Star brand trucks used in mining, logging, oil fields and construction. Roughly 725 union-represented workers were turning out 26 trucks a day operating one shift. But they've been falling behind economically while the company prospered.

About 415 Machinists Local 1005 members packed a conference room at Holiday Inn Portland Airport at 10 a.m., June 29, for their first glimpse of the company's "last, best, and final" offer. Bargaining hadn't wrapped up until 2:55 a.m. that morning, so members had no chance to review the contract beforehand.

In the weeks leading up to their contract's June 28 expiration, Lodge 1005 members had worn union T-shirts with the slogan, "The concession stand is closed." Now they listened as the union bargaining team explained that the company's offer would increase wages \$1.30 an hour over three years, but would also increase employee health care premiums as much as \$45 a month, initiate a more restrictive absenteeism policy, and end the promise of post-65 retiree health benefits for employees who still had that coming. Each of those details drew howls from members.

Machinists District Lodge W24 Business Representative Joe Kear said this was his fifth time negotiating at the truck plant, and that it has been getting rougher each time, as the company tries to squeeze more out of workers.

Talks began June 10, but the union didn't hear the company's economic proposal until June 24.

Daimler started off proposing a \$4-an-hour pay cut over three years — to make up for additional pension contributions it's required to make. Daimler is the biggest employer in the Automotive Machinists Pension Trust, a multi-employer pension plan for companies

(Turn to Page 2)

## City of Portland contract goes past expiration date

At least 1,600 City of Portland workers are working past the June 30 expiration of their previous union contract. Significant issues remain between the City and the seven-union coalition known as the District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU), and the two sides have requested help from a state mediator.

The DCTU consists of members of AFSCME Local 189, Laborers Local 483, Machinists, IBEW Local 48, Operating Engineers Local 701, Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, and Painters Local 10.

DCTU leaders say two key sticking points preventing agreement are a City proposal for stricter rules on earning

and using comp time, and a City proposal to make it easier to contract out work performed by union members.

In 2010, an arbitrator ordered the City to pay back pay totaling \$200,000 to six parking meter technicians, after the City contracted out an upgrade to City-owned parking pay stations without notifying Laborers Local 483. And in February 2013, the City agreed to end an outside contract for temp services at rec centers, to settle a similar grievance. Now, the City is trying to win back in bargaining what it lost in the grievance process.

"We see what the City's proposing

(Turn to Page 9)