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Strike ends at Daimler's Western Star truck plant

After 22 days, Machinists and Painters vote to accept company offer

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Union members returned to work at Portland's Western Star truck plant July 23 after Machinists and Painters accepted a company offer and ended their strike. The offer from Daimler Trucks North America was little changed from the one the union members rejected in June.

Said Sign Painters and Paint Makers Local 1094 Business Agent Dave Winkler: "I don't think we won. I don't think we lost."

Bargaining teams for Machinists Lodge 1005 and Local 1094 met July 17 and 18 with Daimler management — and came away with two modifications to the previous offer. Workers will have two more months to retire before Daimler terminates its promise of post-

65 supplemental medical benefits. And Daimler added a 25-cent-an-hour raise at the end of its previous three-year contract offer. The new contract runs 40 months, and expires Oct. 26, 2016.

"The strike moved the needle a little bit," said Machinists Union Rep Joe Kear. "People should be proud that they were able to accomplish that."

Though members of Service Employees Local 49 and Teamsters Local 305 had voted to accept the company's previous offer, they honored the other unions' picket lines and did not work during the strike. On July 20, those two groups voted to amend their contracts to add identical language. The striking Painters voted to accept the new offer the same day. And two days later, striking Machinists voted to accept the new offer.

The new contract provides immediate raises of 60 cents an hour, followed by a 40-cent raise July 1, 2014; a 30-cent raise July 1, 2015; and a 25-cent raise July 1, 2016. In all, wages will

rise \$1.55 an hour by the end of the contract, topping out at \$24.80 an hour

for the most common machinist classification.



Union members return to work July 23 at the Western Star truck plant in Portland's Swan Island Industrial Park.

Those raises will be partially offset by increased employee contributions to the company-provided health insurance plan. The increases range from \$5 a month for individual coverage to \$45 a month for family coverage. The premium increases work out to a reduction in take-home pay of between 3 and 26 cents an hour.

For Daimler, total compensation costs will be going up in other ways during the contract. To make up for financial losses in the Machinists-sponsored multi-employer pension fund, Daimler is obligated to pay a pension rehabilitation surcharge that will reach \$6.15 an hour by July 2016. That's on top of the regular pension contribution of \$4.47 an hour. And though the worker share of health insurance costs will increase, Daimler's contribution will rise even more: Premiums are forecasted to rise about 15 percent in two years, reaching \$554 a month for employee-only coverage and \$1,601 a

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Hamburgers, hot dogs, and politicians will be in abundant supply at union-sponsored Labor Day picnics throughout the state. Above, U.S. Sen Jeff Merkley grills hot dogs for union members at last year's picnic at Oaks Park in Portland. Assisting him is Jeff Anderson, secretary-treasurer of UFCW Local 555. Check out the list of picnics on this page for the location nearest you.

Labor Day PICNICS

Labor Day – Monday, Sept. 2

Every year, labor organizations throughout Oregon hold Labor Day picnics. Check with your union local to see if it is participating. Here is a list of picnics taking place :

BEND — Solidarity Day Picnic at Pioneer Park in Bend. 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Central Oregon Central Labor Council. Contact Linda Bradetich at 541-350-0965 or Steve Williamen at 541-678-0235 for more information.

EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD — John Lively Picnic Shelters, behind SPLASH at 6100 Thurston Road in Springfield. Noon – 4 p.m. Please bring a side dish. SPLASH will be open for families that wish to swim. Sponsored by the Lane County Central Labor Council and Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network. Contact ESSN at essn@efn.org for more information.

MEDFORD — TouVelle State Park, 8425 Table Rock Road, Central Point. The fun begins at 11 a.m. with speakers. Lunch will be served from noon to 2 p.m., followed by music by Broadway Phil & Shouters and Patrick Tovatt. Donations accepted, and there is a \$5 charge for parking. Tables are limited, so bring your own chairs. Sponsored by the Southern Oregon Central Labor

Council. Call Kathy McUne at 541-664-0804 for more information.

NORTH BEND — Ferry Road Park in North Bend. Noon – 2 p.m. Sponsored by the Southwestern Oregon Central Labor Council. Free barbecue, but asking for donation of non-perishable food items for the needy. For more information, contact Robert Westerman at 541-756-3907 or by email at ibew932@frontier.com, or Megan Rivas at 541-756-0579, ext 6311, or email at mrivas@ufcw555.org.

PORTLAND — Oaks Amusement Park in Southeast Portland. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., with a program at 1 p.m., featuring U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley. Food scrip sells for 50 cents. A hamburger with chips is 3 scrip; a hot dog with chips is 2 scrip; chili is 1 scrip and beer is 4 scrip. Deluxe ride bracelets are \$9. All are welcome to attend, whether your union is reserving a spot or not. Sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council. Call 503-235-9444 for more information.

The Oregon Pacific Railroad Shuttle Train will transport people (\$3 per person roundtrip) to and from Oaks Park from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Parking will be available at the Portland Opera, 211 SE Caruthers St., and in the vicinity of SE Ivon and 4th St.

SALEM — Riverfront Park in Salem. 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Sponsored by Marion-Polk-Yamhill Central Labor Council. Cost: two food items per person or donation to the food bank. For more information and/or to RSVP, call Judy by Aug. 20 at 503-362-7057 or e-mail her at jsugnet@att.net.