

## Who's on our side?

By Tom Chamberlain Oregon AFL-CIO President



### Our workers' movement must evolve

The 2015 Oregon AFL-CIO Convention was a testament to the growth and strength of Oregon's workers' movement. A total of 248 delegates and 148 guests attended to celebrate the accomplishments of the last two years, and to set the course for the next 24 months. The number of guest itself is significant: Community partners and allied organizations were in attendance, and since the 2013 convention, are allowed to participate in convention debates to bring a different perspective to our movement.

There is a direct link between the success of the Oregon Strong Voice program and the increased participation of our community partners. If you're unfamiliar, Oregon Strong Voice is a coalition of community-based organizations, activists, and unions in Southern Oregon, Central Oregon, and Lane County that drive progressive policies through city ordinances and elections on the local level.

Examples of our success can be seen in each active region. In Southern Oregon, where Sen. Alan Bates needed a stronger voter contact program, we filled that void and made the difference that swept Sen. Bates across the finish line. In Eugene, building trades unions and community organizations saw how the Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE) was being manipulated to allow hiring of contractors without proper licenses, wage theft, illegal dumping, and importing workers from out of state, to increase profits. Oregon Strong Voice Lane County was born from this fight, forming a coalition to call for needed revisions to the MUPTE through Eugene City Council. To respond to a rental housing shortage in Central Oregon, Central Oregon Strong Voice passed a local ordinance that creates a permitting process for short term rentals by generating funds for affordable housing.

For our workers' movement to survive, we must constantly evolve. The first resolution of the convention restructured central labor councils from autonomous bodies directly af-

filiated with the national AFL-CIO, without staff, to Labor Chapters affiliated with the Oregon AFL-CIO, with staff. Our hope is to build a stronger relationship between chapters and Oregon Strong Voice to increase local power by moving a working people's agenda.

Convention delegates passed a resolution in support of the \$15 minimum wage and a separate resolution directing us to develop strategies to raise the wage through legislation and the ballot. Such strategies must include removing the ban on local governments from establishing a minimum wage that lifts workers out of poverty.

The convention was different — at times like a celebration of our accomplishments, including statewide laws to ban the box, paid sick days, retirement security, organizing wins, and electoral victories. Attendees were proud, and understood that we are now a movement for all workers.

Our success is why there was also a shadow cast across convention. That shadow is cast by the Koch Brothers, the Freedom Foundation, and the National Right to Work Committee: individuals and organizations whose mission is to destroy the labor movement and stop us as the vehicle of change and voice for working people. Their strategy ranges from anti-worker ballot initiatives to a possible decision by the United States Supreme Court. These are well-funded attacks that we will face for at least the next decade. Convention speakers, plenaries and workshops helped attendees to begin preparing to face challenges ahead, and to understand the need to create a broader movement that grows our community allies and build power at the grassroots.

The Oregon AFL-CIO is positioned well for the fights to come. As long as we fight, there is hope.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO, a 120,000-member-strong federation of labor unions.

## FIGHT FOR 15

### Fast food workers hold mass rallies and one-day strike

Workers in 270 cities nationwide took part in mass rallies and a one-day strike by fast food workers on Nov. 10. The rallies, organized nationally by the union-backed group Fight for 15, were the latest move in their drive for \$15 hourly wages and the right to unionize without employer interference. But this time, the campaign added another message: We vote, and we'll remember next November who was for raising low-wage

workers' pay and who was against it. In a statement, the Fight for 15 described workers paid less than \$15 an hour as "a voting bloc that can no longer be ignored."

At least 64 million U.S. workers — fast food workers, retail workers, Walmart workers, port truck drivers, adjunct professors, part-time UPS drivers, and more — earn \$15 an hour or less.

Two of the larger protests were in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, site of that evening's GOP pres-

idential debate, and Brooklyn, New York, where 1,000 people took part in a pre-dawn march on a low-paying McDonald's.

Los Angeles television stations reported thousands of fast food workers there walked out in their first-ever one-day strike. Los Angeles has 181,000 fast-food workers, whose median wage of \$9 an hour nets them a yearly income of just above \$11,000, far below the federal poverty line.

— Mark Gruenberg, PAI

## FREE CLASSIFIED ADS

### AUTOMOTIVE

2 NISSAN FRONTIER factory rims with caps and tires, 235 75 R15. \$40, fit 2005 and newer. 503-668-5768

'11 MAZDA3 ISPORT sedan, 60k mi, 4cyl, 2litre, auto w/sport shifter, remote start, 1 owner \$10,500. 503-753-9571

'62 FORD T-BIRD, 390 2d, \$18,000. 503-289-0066

### HOUSING

ROCKAWAY OCEAN FRONT rental <http://rockawaybeachfrontrental.com> Sleeps 13, call 503-777-5076

390 ACRES, secluded large juniper trees, beautiful views, wildlife, \$650 per acre, less for cash, terms.541-468-2961

### SPORTING GOODS

WINCHESTER MODEL 24, 12 ga. SxS, 28-inch barrel, nice gun, \$400. 503-349-8180

RUGER LCR 22mag w/ original box and paperwork, zipper case and 150 rounds of HP ammo, \$395. 503-209-3457

### MISCELLANEOUS

COLEMAN GAS GENERATOR, 5.5 hp Tecumseh, 3000 watt capacity, \$100. 503-774-0902

WORKFORCE WET TILE SAW, like new, \$35; scroll saw, 14" throat, \$15. 503-655-6685

JD 870 DIESEL 4WD, 900 hrs. w/ loader, 6' box scraper, 6' blade, 5' brush hog, \$13,500. 503-871-6722

2 FLAT BED trailers, 7'7" x 18', dual axle, 1-7k, 1-10k, like new, \$3,000 each obo. 503-307-3934

LEVI 550 JEANS, made in USA, new, size 34-34, relax fit, tapered leg, want offers over \$25. 503-568-6159

### FOR THE HOME

UPRIGHT PIANO, Baumeister New York, good condition, recommend tune-up, \$500 obo. 971-219-3254

### WANTED

OLD WOODWORKING tools, planes, levels, chisels, handsaws, slicks, adzes, wrenches, folding rulers, axes, hatchets, 503-659-0009

BUYING US & world coins to add to collection, paying fairly, any amount welcome. 503-939-8835

COLLECTOR, cash paid, old fishing tackle, wood plugs, reels, creels, salmon fishing photos, etc. 503-775-4166

COLLECTOR PAYS cash for older toys, oil paintings, American art pottery, and costume jewelry. 503-703-5952

MOTORCYCLES, tractors, boats, VWs, RVs, running or not, cash paid. 503-880-8183

COLLECTOR SEEKING old beer stuff, signs, cans, bottles; brand doesn't matter; the older the better. 503-357-7862

RV SPACE in Newberg area, George Fox student seeks quiet, private place close to campus. 503-927-1007 (Bill)

### CLASSIFIED AD GUIDELINES

Subscribers may place one free classified ad per issue. Ads should be 15 to 20 words, all in lower case (NO CAPITAL LETTERS). Ads *must* include a phone number, including area code, *or they will not be published*. No commercial or business ads.

### HOW TO SUBMIT A CLASSIFIED AD

Indicate which union you are a member of, and send your ad to michael492@comcast.net or by mail to PO Box 13150, Portland OR 97213. We publish the first and third Fridays of each month, and the deadline is one week prior to that.

## NATIONAL

### Attorneys general file pro-union briefs in Friedrichs case

State attorneys general from 21 states — including Oregon and Washington — and the District of Columbia, announced Nov. 15 they are filing a friend-of-the-court brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold existing law that protects the right of public-sector unions to collect "fair share" or agency fees from workers who do not choose to join the union but are covered by collective-bargaining agreements that benefit them. Their brief addresses *Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association*, a case that challenges the requirement to pay "fair share" dues.

New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is leading the coalition filing the brief, which was joined by attorneys general from 20 other states.

If the court strikes down the

requirement, it would be a heavy blow to organized labor nationwide.

### UNITE HERE takes on Airbnb in San Francisco, and loses

Housing costs have become unaffordable for working people in San Francisco, and one factor has been the conversion of rental housing units for use as short-term rentals through Airbnb.com. Airbnb has also cost as many as 400 jobs in the union hotel sector.

So UNITE HERE Local 2 fought back, and spent close to \$400,000 backing Proposition F, a ballot measure to limit private, short-term housing rentals to 75 nights per year — and ensure they're paying the required hotel taxes and following city code. Airbnb spent \$8 million to defeat Prop. F. The measure went down to defeat 66 to 44 percent.