

## IN MEMORIAM

### Ronald E. Fortune

April 21, 1936 - Nov. 25, 2015

Ron Fortune, a retired executive secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council (NOLC), passed away Nov. 25 due to complications from Alzheimer's disease. He was 79.



Fortune, who lived in Gresham, led NOLC from 1985 until 1998, when he retired. He was a 59-year member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, joining Portland Food and Drug Clerks Local 1092 in 1956. He worked as a business rep for that local starting in 1969. Local 1092 is now part of UFCW Local 555.

**RONALD EDWARD FORTUNE** was born April 21, 1936 in Chicago, Illinois, the youngest of seven children — five brothers and a sister. His father was a "union man," working in the coal mines, as a street sweeper, truck driver and carpenter.

The Fortune family moved to Newberg, Oregon, in 1947.

As a student at Newberg High School, Fortune took a part-time job at a nut packing plant, where

he became a member of the Teamsters Union. After graduating, he worked at a paper plant in Newberg and was a member of the Pulp Workers.

In 1956, Fortune took a temporary job as a clerk in a Safeway store in Hillsboro. There, he joined Local 1092. That job eventually led into a career in the union. He was hired as a business rep in 1969, and was elected to the top post of NOLC in 1985, succeeding Local 1092 colleague Lon Imel.

Fortune came into office when the labor council—then known as the Multnomah County Labor Council—was about to merge with councils from Columbia and Clackamas counties to create the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

During his 13 years at the helm of NOLC, Fortune helped launch a Labor History Committee, a Retirees Council, a Labor in the Schools program, a Saturn/Labor's Community Service Agency partnership, and the Labor Bowl Challenge for Muscular Dystrophy. He was a founding member of the Business Union and Legislative Leaders (BULL) Session golf tournament, which has raised more than \$5.5 million for local

children's charities.

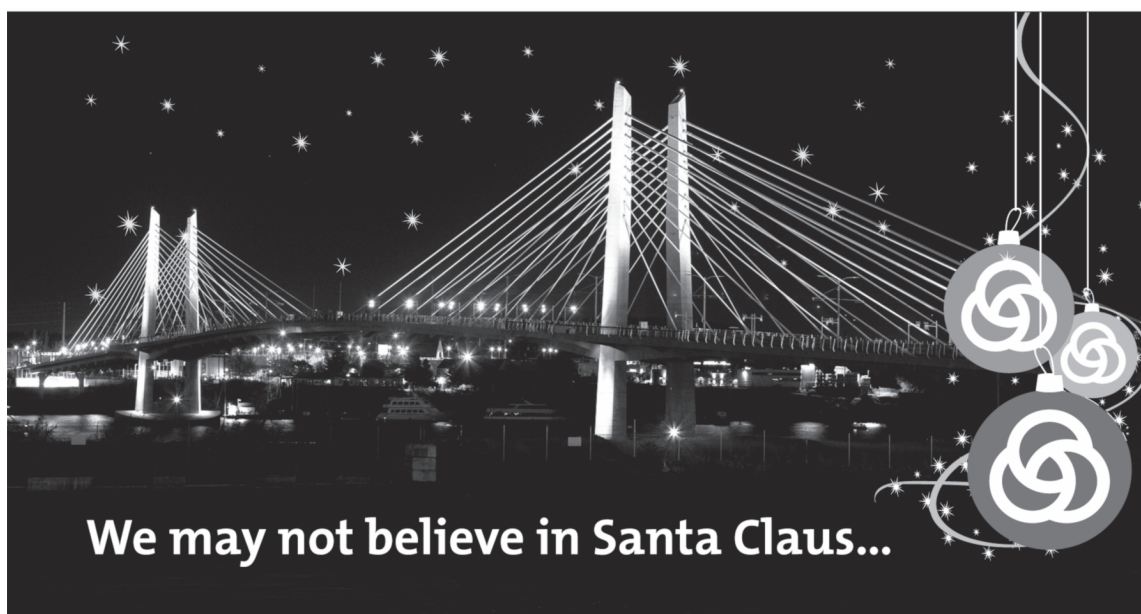
He helped persuade congressional officeholders to hire labor liaisons to keep in touch with the council and organized labor. He regularly scheduled labor breakfasts with elected officials and union officers so that they could share their views on issues and concerns.

He was appointed by Gov. John Kitzhaber to serve on the Oregon Economic Development Commission. Portland Mayor Bud Clark tapped him for the Portland Leadership Roundtable. And he was a member of Metro's Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission. He also served on the Executive Board of United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, and was chair of Labor's Community Service Agency.

Fortune was inducted into the NOLC Retirees Council's Labor Hall of Fame in December 1999.

In retirement, Fortune was active in the St. Henry Catholic Church of Gresham. He volunteered regularly at a local soup kitchen and at SnowCap.

Fortune is survived by his wife of 58 years, Kathleen (Fugere); five daughters, two sons; 21 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



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135 Second Avenue North, Suite 202,  
Edmonds, WA 98020  
(425) 582-8935  
Email: mikek@korpilaw.com