



## Lineman Rodeo

(ABOVE): The PGE team of Jeromy Adamson, Craig Randall and Terry Randall — all members of IBEW Local 125 — captured first place in the Three-Phase Tie Wire Change Out at the Pacific Northwest Lineman Rodeo held July 23 in Gresham. In the photo right, second year Local 125 apprentice Justin Robeas finished first in the Apprentice Hurt Man Rescue. His time was 55.55 seconds. The annual rodeo consists of events designed to simulate the work that linemen do on a daily basis, including pole climbing, transformer swaps and more. The focus is on skills and safety. All proceeds from the rodeo go to the Legacy Oregon Burn Center.



## Who's on our side?

By Tom Chamberlain Oregon AFL-CIO President



## 'All politics is local'

The recognition of Labor Day as a holiday did not happen overnight. It took work which started at the local level. Beginning in 1885, municipal ordinances and individual states' recognition of Labor Day built the momentum to push Congress to act and to establish the first Monday in September as a national holiday to recognize the achievements of labor and working people. On June 28, 1894, it finally happened.

It's remarkable to me that it took 11 years of work, piece by piece, state by state, just to have a day dedicated to the labor movement and to honor the dignity of what we do day in and day out: *work*.

The campaign to create a national Labor Day validates an often used quote from former Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O'Neill: "All politics is local." That point is as true today as it was when O'Neill held the gavel, and decades before when unionists worked toward recognition of Labor Day. These days, "all politics is local" applies to campaigns for policies designed to give working people a fair shot at prosperity, such as a higher minimum wage, affordable housing, fair scheduling, or paid family leave. We know our organizing must start locally and grow from there.

The idea of local action spurring statewide and eventually national change is what the labor movement is all about. It's in our blood. It's what brought representatives from local unions and community-based organizations together in Eugene this summer for the 2016 Oregon Strong Voice Summit, and why Oregon Strong Voice coalitions in Lane County, Southern and Central Oregon meet each month and continue to work together. It's what brings delegates to Central Labor Chapter and Council meetings each month; what keeps union meetings full of members eager

to have their voices heard; and what inspires working people from Portland to Medford to volunteer and take action. Local change is the promise of something bigger.

That's why we support candidates across the state who champion policies that help working people. In the past two years we have passed laws to raise the minimum wage, expand paid sick days, tackle the practice of profiling, 'ban the box' to remove barriers to employment, and provide a secure retirement for Oregonians. We know if Oregon continues to raise the bar, other states will follow. It's for that same reason that we cannot yield the progress we have made.

These days, Labor Day is many different things to many different people. For some, it's a day of reflection at the end of the summer. For many, it's another day on the job. For me, and for the Oregon AFL-CIO, it's a starter pistol firing to signify the beginning of election season. It's our chance to start working hard to defend the progress we've made and create the potential for further progress in Oregon. We do that by defending the legislators who have our back, and helping elect new candidates with the right priorities.

As you prepare for Labor Day, give yourself a moment to reflect on what you can do in your community to make life better for working people. My suggestion: Get involved with the Oregon AFL-CIO's Labor 2016 program. Call fellow union members, knock on their doors, and explain to them why we have to keep raising the bar for working people. And remember: The big changes we all need start with local actions each of us can take.

The Oregon AFL-CIO is a 130,000-member-strong federation of labor unions.

## Have a Safe Labor Day

**Fact:** The labor movement is essential for creating a strong middle class.

**Thank you, organized labor.**

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Sheet Metal Workers' Local 16

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Wish All Workers in Oregon and Washington

A Safe and Happy Labor Day

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