



Portland hosts Union Sportsmen's Alliance dinner

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance teamed up with the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council to host the second annual conservation dinner June 30 at the IBEW Local 48 Hall in Northeast Portland. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, USA is a non-profit conservation organization that works to unite union members and their families who hunt, fish, shoot, and enjoy the outdoors. USA raises funds throughout the country, then holds "Work Boots on the Ground" events with skilled union workers, who volunteer to complete projects in local communities that conserve wildlife habitat, improve access to the outdoors, restore parks, and provide youth mentorship. USA has completed 88 projects in 38 states, with union members logging more than 16,000 hours of volunteer labor. With two years of fundraising now under its belt, Oregon could have a conservation project to work on within the next year. The June 30 dinner attracted more than 200 members from 13 locals and the Oregon AFL-CIO. The final tally of money raised had not been completed at press time. "I am certain we will locate and fund a very significant project with the proceeds from the dinner," said Walt Ingram, USA's director of union relations. USA has 225,000 members nationwide. Membership is \$45 and includes a digital subscription to The Union Sportsmen's Journal, a 1-Year MyTopo.com online mapping subscription, an e-newsletter with tips and special offers, money-saving discounts on outdoor gear and services, and chances to win prizes and trips all year. For more information, go to <http://unionsportsmen.org>.

WORKERS RIGHTS

Burgerville pays \$10,000 to settle wage and hour violations

The Burgerville fast food chain — target of a 14-month union campaign to improve wages and working conditions — on June 22 agreed to pay \$10,000 to settle charges that it willfully failed to give workers meal and rest breaks as required by law.

Oregon law requires employers to provide paid rest periods of at least 10 minutes for each four-hour work period, and a duty-free meal period of at least 30 minutes when employees work six or more hours at a time.

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) first wrote to Burgerville on April 7, 2016, saying it received information that the company may not have been providing rest breaks and meal periods at its Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard restaurant in Portland. The letter asked the company to review its practices and take immediate steps to correct the situation. Burgerville's chief operating officer wrote back April 18 to say the company had retrained the entire management team and would meet with all 40 employees to make sure they know about the requirement that they take breaks.

But the practice continued: Two other employees complained in August, and BOLI sent another letter, and opened an investigation. The investigation found that over two-week periods in August and December 2016, managers "willfully" failed to provide meal periods to 28 and 16 employees respectively. Willful, in this case, is a legal term meaning the company knew about the requirement for meal breaks, and also knew that workers weren't get-

ting them. The agency found 44 violations total, and assessed \$250 per violation, for \$11,000 in all. BOLI also found three cases in which minors were performing a hazardous duty — operating a trash compactor — and assessed \$250 per violation for those.

On June 2, 2017, the agency issued a notice that it intended to assess civil penalties of \$11,750. The Vancouver-based fast food chain agreed to pay \$10,000 to settle all the charges.

Burgerville Workers Union, affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World, has been campaigning since April 2016 for a \$5 an hour raise, affordable health care, and other demands. The Oregon AFL-CIO and half a dozen other labor organizations have endorsed their campaign.

The Burgerville Workers Union helped workers file the BOLI complaints, says union supporter Chris Merkel, a crew member at the MLK Jr. Boulevard Burgerville store.

"There was a period of time when it was standard practice that you were incentivized to not take certain breaks," Merkel said — for example, working the grill late at night, workers were constantly busy and felt unable to stop.

Because of the BOLI case, Merkel said, a new company-wide policy now requires workers to sign off for breaks, and set a timer when they do.

"It's a step in a direction of Burgerville recognizing the basic needs of its workers," Merkel said.

—Don McIntosh



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