

NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

IN THIS ISSUE

AN END TO NAFTA? Trump won gains in a tentative new deal with Mexico, but it's far from done. | Page 2

COMING SOON: THE MOXY Union pension funds will finance a new downtown Portland hotel. | Page 4

Meeting Notices p.6

Labor Day at Oaks Park p.4-5

VOLUME 119, NUMBER 16

PORTLAND, OREGON

SEPTEMBER 7, 2018

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Teacher strike wave hits Washington

For 60,000 SW Washington students, the first lesson of the school year is about union power

By Don McIntosh

As many as 5,000 teachers went out on strike the week before Labor Day at seven Southwest Washington school districts — districts where school superintendents tried to hold on to funds the Legislature had granted for long-overdue teacher raises. In each case, strikes were authorized by overwhelming majorities — from 93 percent to as high as 98.4 percent. The strikes resulted in the complete closure of whole school districts, postponing the school year's start for over 60,000 students.

As of mid-day Tuesday, the strikes had ended in Vancouver,



Vancouver teachers held a mass rally Aug. 31 at district headquarters.

Ridgefield, and Hockinson, but continued in East Vancouver's Evergreen School District and the Washougal, Battle Ground, and Longview school districts. Camas School District teachers

had been set to begin a strike Sept. 4, but settled before then.

Teachers are making no apologies about the reason for

Turn to Page 12

UNION DEMOCRACY

Oregon Building Trades says it's ready to take it to next level

SUNRIVER, Oregon—Robert Camarillo of Iron Workers Local 29 was elected executive secretary of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council (OSBCTC). The election took place at the organization's 57th Convention held Aug. 22-24. Camarillo was appointed to the post last May following the resignation of Tim Frew. The appointment was made by business managers of the affiliated union locals that make up the Building Trades Council.

Jim Anderson, business manager of Operating Engineers Local 701, was elected president of the council. Anderson was appointed to the post shortly after Camarillo took office. The president at that time was Joe Bowers, business manager of Iron Workers Local 29. OSBCTC's constitution doesn't allow for top officers to be from the same local, so Bowers stepped down.



The new top officers of the Oregon State Building Trades Council are Executive Secretary Robert Camarillo (left) and President Jim Anderson.

Both Camarillo and Anderson ran unopposed. Terms are for three years.

The 69 convention delegates took action on 11 resolutions (see sidebar, Page 3), and heard reports from National Association of Building Trades Unions president Sean McGarvey and

from newly-elected Washington State Building Trades Council executive secretary Mark Riker. Representatives from the Portland Diamonds Project, University of Oregon, Jordan Cove and Pacific Connector Pipeline talked about billions of dollars

Turn to Page 3

NATIONAL

Trump denounces America's top labor leader ... on Labor Day

On Labor Day — the one day a year elected leaders of all stripes traditionally say something nice about working people and their unions — Donald Trump fired off a presidential tweet attacking America's top union official.

“Richard Trumka, the head of the AFL-CIO, represented his union poorly on television this weekend,” Trump wrote. “Some of the things he said were so against the working men and women of our country, and the success of the U.S. itself, that it is easy to see why unions are doing so poorly. A Dem!”

The tweet was in reaction to an appearance on Fox News Sunday by Trumka, who is president of the AFL-CIO, the federation that most unions belong to. Invited to comment on Trump's trade negotiations with Canada and Mexico, Trumka said there's still a lot of work to do, because the language of the deal hasn't been drafted yet. [See Page 2 for the latest on

Trump's NAFTA talks.]

“We've been told for over 25 years, ‘Trust us, this agreement is good for workers,’” Trumka said.

Trumka also knocked Trump for failing to put forth his promised \$1 trillion infrastructure plan, and for overturning a regulation that would have extended the right to paid overtime to five million people.

“When he was elected I said I would call balls and strikes,” Trumka said. “When he did something that was good for workers, we'd support him. When he did something bad for workers we would oppose him. Unfortunately, to date, the things that he's done to hurt workers outpace what he's done to help workers.”

SEE IT FOR YOURSELF

You can watch what AFL-CIO president Trumka said about Trump on Fox News at <https://bit.ly/2LWkOEI>

Federal judge strikes down Trump's anti-union executive orders

A federal judge on Aug. 25 struck down most of three executive orders Trump signed May 25 that aimed to strip federal workers of their union rights. Four federal employee unions sued to stop the orders from taking effect, and both sides asked the court for a quick decision.

“The orders plainly further the president's intention to restrict the scope and effectiveness of federal employees' right to collective bargaining,” wrote U.S. District Court judge Ketanji Jackson, “or clearly constrain agency negotiators' ability to conduct collective bargaining negotiations in good faith. Therefore, this Court finds that these provisions conflict with congressional intent in a manner that cannot be sustained.”

Among other things, the orders decreed a sped-up timeline for firing workers, severe limits

on the use of “official time” by union stewards, and an end to progressive discipline, seniority rights and other key union contract provisions.

“The judge rightly found the president is not above the law and cannot, through these blatantly anti-union and anti-worker executive orders, eviscerate employee rights and undermine the collective bargaining process established by Congress,” said Tony Reardon, president of the National Treasury Employees Union in response.

The judge did leave intact some portions of the executive orders, including a direction to agency chiefs to reject any union proposal limiting their discretion in firing a worker, and recommending that agencies impose contract proposals unilaterally if unions delay negotiations.