

PEOPLE

Terry Lansing retires after 28 years at Bakers Local 114

Terry Lansing, longtime secretary-treasurer of Bakers Local 114, retired Dec. 2 after a lifetime of involvement in the labor movement. Lansing joined Local 114 in 1976 as an employee of Williams Bakery in Eugene—following a failed effort to unionize a non-union bread plant in Salem. He soon became a shop steward and a union officer, and went to work for the local as a full-time business agent in 1990. He has served as Local 114's top officer since 2004.

Portland-based Local 114 represents about 1,150 workers: Roughly 850 at the Franz, Kroger, Safeway and Bimbo/Oroweat wholesale bakeries, and about 300 at grocery store bakery departments.

Lansing's union involvement predates his time with the Bakers. He grew up in San Rafael, California, and went to University of California at Berkeley on a Fulbright scholarship. There he became a member of the Worker Student Alliance, a radical faction within the group Students for a Democratic Society. After numerous acts of campus civil disobedience against the Vietnam War, he was kicked out of school and banned from every campus.

He then got a warehouse job and took part in a union organizing campaign. It failed, but the Teamsters let him use their hiring hall, and he got a union-represented job at Doughnut Corporation of America. It was after the plant closed in 1974 that he moved to Oregon.

When Lansing first went to work for Local 114 in 1990, Fred Meyer was rapidly



BEST UNION RETAIL BAKERY?

"The best union scratch bakery right now is Rosauer's in Hood River. They make everything down to the pie crust from scratch. They have real bakers and cake decorators. Roth's IGA chain in Salem also still operates scratch bakeries. The best sourdough bread you can get is out of a Roth's store." — Terry Lansing

expanding, and it was his job to organize members into the union. Later, plant closures and a change in retail baking methods slashed Local 114's membership from about 2,000 to a low point of 1,014 in 2005. In the early 2000s, hundreds of union

THE HAND-OFF Because Lansing is retiring one year into his three-year term as secretary-treasurer, the union executive board appointed Darren Hamann to replace him until union officer elections are held in Dec. 2020. To replace Hamann as business agent, the board named Alejandro Ahumada.

jobs were lost with the closure of the Wonder Bread plant in Portland and the Grandma's Cookies plant in Beaverton. Meanwhile, starting with Fred Meyer in 1995, in-store bakeries stopped making products from scratch and instead thawed and baked frozen goods produced elsewhere. Baking departments went from four or five members per store to two, now mostly cake decorators.

Looking back, Lansing is proudest of the times he was able to save members' jobs, and he's proud of his role on the Oregon Bakers Union Trust providing outstanding and affordable health benefits to 900 families of workers on the wholesale bakery side.

If he has any regrets, it's the failure of a series of organizing campaigns — Dave's Killer Bread, Breadsong Bakery, and Portland Specialty Baking.

"We've always lost our campaign in the last two weeks to a union buster. The new generation's gotta figure out how to handle that, because employees generally are scared and a union buster knows how to come in, exploit that fear, and convince them to give the employer another chance."

NW Labor Press staff changes

Cheri Rice, 64, is retiring after 20 years as bookkeeper and office manager at the Northwest Labor Press. Rice managed the paper's business operations and worked with local unions to maintain accurate meeting notices and a 60,000-person subscriber list. Her last day was Nov. 28.

Rice was born in Kennewick, Washington, and graduated

from Centennial High School in Gresham, Oregon. The daughter of a union meat cutter, she grew up reading the Labor Press,



Cheri Rice

and ended up making a career of keeping labor organization offices running smoothly. She started in 1977 as a dues clerk at the Portland office of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16. In 1985 she went to work for United Food & Commercial Workers Local 555, where her father Keith Jons was by then the head of collective bargaining for the union's meat division. She stayed there 12 years as dues clerk, bookkeeper and secretary to the union president. Throughout her union career, she was a member of Office and Professional Employees Local 11, which was led for a time by her brother-in-law Mike Richards. Retiring with a union pension, she'll spend more time with family, splitting her time between Neotsu, Oregon, and Arizona.

Succeeding Rice as office manager is Jill

Lukens. Lukens, 48, comes to the Labor Press after 22 years managing a small downtown Portland dental office. Like



Jill Lukens

Rice, she was raised union. She's the daughter of Judy O'Connor, who worked as office manager of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council for nearly 16 years and then served as the organization's executive secretary-treasurer from 1998 to 2009. Lukens' husband of 29 years is Will Lukens, business representative at Machinists District Lodge W24.

...Hawthorne Burgerville goes union

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legal minimum wage); 15-minute rest breaks instead of the 10-minute legal minimum; one free meal per shift (currently workers get a 70 percent discount); agreement that tip jars may be placed next to cash registers; standard union rights like "just cause" and "progressive discipline"; and a halt to employer efforts to verify that employees are legally allowed to work in the United States.

Schlenz says the company has refused to reply with its own economic proposals until after the two sides reach tentative agreement on non-economic proposals. That hasn't happened, and Schlenz says Burgerville has agreed to no tangible improvements so far.

In the negotiations, Burgerville is represented by attorney Kristin Bremer Moore, a partner in the Tonkin Torp law firm.

Even with negotiations taking place, union supporters

DID YOU KNOW?

- Burgerville Workers Union is asking the public to boycott all 44 Burgerville locations until a fair union contract is signed. At least 17 unions have endorsed the boycott.
- Burgerville Workers Union is affiliated with Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

have continued to take action in the stores, and the company has continued to terminate union supporters.

Since the union campaign launched publicly in 2016, Burgerville Workers Union has filed 28 charges with the NLRB alleging violations of federal labor law. At least seven of the charges, known as "unfair labor practice" charges, stemmed from cases where union supporters were terminated. But none of those resulted in the NLRB issuing formal complaints, possibly because it's hard to prove anti-



union motives contributed to the firings.

One charge did result in a cease-and-desist order from a federal administrative law judge: In a case stemming from a July 2016 incident at the Vancouver Plaza restaurant, Burgerville was ordered to stop telling workers they can't leaflet on the property while off-duty.

Then this September, 10 union supporters at the 8218 NE Glisan St restaurant were sent home for wearing "Black Lives Matter," "No one is illegal," and "Abolish ICE" but-

tons (ICE stands for Immigration and Customs Enforcement). The company later provided back pay to the workers, but also announced a new anti-button rule company-wide without the union's agreement.

James Curry, a union supporter at the Hawthorne store, told the Labor Press that Burgerville's workplace reality is very much at odds with the company's progressive reputation.

"Their relationship with local farms, using renewable energy, those are helpful and good, but in terms of working there, our conditions as workers, it's just like any other fast food place," Curry said. "We get paid minimum wage. We have clocks on the wall telling us how fast we need to work."

"And even if all the branding were true," Curry said, "we would still deserve to get paid more than we are, and have more of a voice in the workplace."