

Have A
Happy
Holiday!

NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

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It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!



Labor unions from Oregon and Southwest Washington came together to host an amazing Presents from Partners holiday party Dec. 14 for families experiencing difficult times. Some 350 kids — from toddlers to teens—and 250 parents and/or caregivers enjoyed the festivities. Labor's Community Service Agency, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, members from 50 union locals, and 14 community allies, including United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, donated toys, cash, and volunteers for the event. Each child took home three presents, plus a game, sports ball, books, and a stuffed animal. All the families ate a hot lunch donated by Spin Catering. For dessert there was cake made by members of Bakers Local 114. Radio Cab, where dispatchers are members of Teamsters Local 305, donated rides for families to and from the event.

ILWU Local 8 members and their Portland Local 8 Federal Credit Union raised over \$15,000. With that money they purchased 70 bicycles, books, and gifts for older teens. The bikes were assembled

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UNION ORGANIZING

Grand Central Baking workers join union

By Don McIntosh

Workers who make bread for Grand Central Baking in Portland voted to unionize Dec. 12 in an election held by the National Labor Relations Board. The 29-to-9 vote affirmed what the workers had told management three weeks earlier: Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco, and Grain Millers (BCTGM) Local 114 has the support of a majority of the workers at the company's wholesale bakery at 2249 NW York St.

For now, just the 44 bakers and dishwashers at that location will be union-represented. Working three shifts a day, they make all the Grand Central bread and rolls sold in local Fred Meyer, QFC, Whole Foods, and New Seasons Market stores. The company's 12 retail locations, its NE Fremont pastry bakery, and its Seattle wholesale bakery, remain nonunion, but supporters of the new-born union at the Portland wholesale bakery have given



After winning the vote, supporters gather with their new union's banner: From left: Cameron, Lou, Autumn, Ashlee, Allie, Dana (and lower right, Mae the dog.)

workers at all other locations an open invitation to join the union effort. Grand Central employs about 460 workers in all.

In the weeks before the union election, a company-wide memo told all employees not to talk to the press. It even directed them

to ask TV camera crews to leave the property ... if any showed up. Nor did the company respond to messages from the *Northwest Labor Press*.

But a spokesperson for the

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TRADE

AFL-CIO endorses Trump's revised re-write of NAFTA trade treaty

For the first time in a generation, NAFTA is getting a re-write, and even America's premier trade union federation has endorsed the final draft.

NAFTA, which took effect in 1994, eliminated tariffs on goods and services made and traded within the three nations of North America, and granted special rights to foreign investors. That made it easier for U.S. corporations to shift production to Mexico, where wages are lower and workers' rights are weaker and environmental enforcement is more lax.

Donald Trump pledged in his 2016 campaign to renegotiate or pull out of NAFTA, and in September 2018, he announced a new deal had been negotiated. The proposed U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) con-

tained a number of improvements over NAFTA:

- It committed Mexico to reform its labor law to guarantee workers right to choose their unions and approve union contracts via secret-ballot votes.
- It mandated that at least 40% of auto content be made by workers earning over \$16 per hour, and that 75% of the value of materials within a car or truck be produced in North America in order to cross borders tariff-free (up from 62.5% under NAFTA).
- It scaled back NAFTA's controversial Investor-State Dispute Settlement process, which allows foreign investors to sue governments in special trade tribunals if new regulations deprive them of opportunities for profit.

But national AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka—and top Democrats in Congress—said that wasn't good enough.

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