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Heroes no longer?

Fred Meyer ends hero pay

They'll still wear masks and put themselves at risk to make sure the rest of us can eat, but Fred Meyer grocery workers saw the end of "hero pay" May 22. Despite objections from United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), Kroger-affiliated stores across the United States ended the \$2 an hour bonus they had began paying since March. Instead, the company announced it will pay one-time "Thank You Pay" bonuses of \$400 for full-time workers and \$200 for part-time, paid out in installments on May 30 and June 18.

"They're still making people wear masks, so the danger is ob-

viously still ongoing," said Miles Eshaia, spokesperson for Tigard-based UFCW Local 555.

Meanwhile, Albertsons Companies extended its \$2 an hour "Appreciation Pay" through at least June 13 for all 20 of the chains it owns, including Safeway, Albertsons and Haggen.

The grocery industry is booming. Sales are up dramatically with the closure of most restaurants, and grocery prices rose 2.6% on average in April, the largest one-month jump in 46 years, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Kroger has hired more than 100,000 workers since mid-March.

Labor Appreciation Night postponed

The annual Labor Appreciation and Recognition Dinner sponsored by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council has been postponed until further notice due to concerns about the coronavirus pandemic. The event, now in its 23rd year, is a special evening honoring men and women identified by their peers for outstanding contributions to labor and their community. It also serves as a fundraiser for Labor's Community Service Agency. The Northwest Oregon Labor Council will announce when a new date has been set.

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