

# NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

(International Standard Serial Number 0894-444X)

Established in 1900 in Portland, Oregon as a voice of the labor movement. Published on a semi-monthly basis on the first and third Fridays of each month by the Oregon Labor Press Publishing Co. Inc., a non-profit mutual benefit corporation owned by 20 unions and councils including the Oregon AFL-CIO. Serving more than 120 union organizations in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

**Office location:**  
4275 NE Halsey St., Portland, Oregon

**Mailing address:**  
P.O. Box 13150, Portland, OR 97213

**Phone:** (503) 288-3311

**Web address:**  
<http://nwlaborpress.org>

**Editor & Manager:** Michael Gutwig  
**Senior staff reporter:** Don McIntosh  
**Office manager:** Jill Lukens

Printed on recycled paper, using soy-based inks, by members of Teamsters Local 747-M.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Individual subscriptions are \$15 a year for union members, \$23 a year for all others. Pay by credit card online at [nwlaborpress.org/subscribe](http://nwlaborpress.org/subscribe), or send a check to our mailing address (above) along with your name, address and union affiliation, if any. Group rates of 48 cents an issue per member — \$11.52 a year — are available for 25 or more subscriptions; call 503-288-3311.

**CORRECTIONS:** See an error? Please let us know at [editor@nwlaborpress.org](mailto:editor@nwlaborpress.org) or by phone at 503-288-3311.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID  
AT PORTLAND, OREGON.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** If you move, let us know at [nwlaborpress.org/subscriber-services](http://nwlaborpress.org/subscriber-services) or by mail at our mailing address (above). Be sure to provide your old and new addresses and the name/number of your local union. Please allow three weeks for the change to take effect.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to  
NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS  
P.O. BOX 13150 PORTLAND, OR 97213-0150



Your Oregon & Washington  
Union Mail House.

**MORELINK**  
PRINT & MARKETING PARTNERS

Proud Mailers of the  
Northwest Labor Press  
[morelink.com](http://morelink.com) • 503-736-0111 ext. 140

**WHITE & WESCO**  
"Always the best Quality!"  
10" SMOKE JUMPER  
16" LINEMAN  
HUGE SELECTION WATERPROOF BOOTS  
SIZES IN NARROW, MEDIUM & WIDE  
**AI'S SHOES**  
5811 S.E. 82ND • 771-2130

New Temporary Hours: Mon-Sat 12-6 pm

## CORRECTIONS

Oregon law says you must notify others if you record in-person. A story in our June 19 issue about audio recordings of Columbia Sportswear managers plotting to fire union supporters didn't explain Oregon law very well. Oregon law says you can record a telephone call that you're part of without telling the other party, but if you record an in-person conversation, you must notify others. They don't have to agree, you just have to inform them.

## LIFE GOES ONLINE

# In the era of COVID-19, the union hall is going virtual

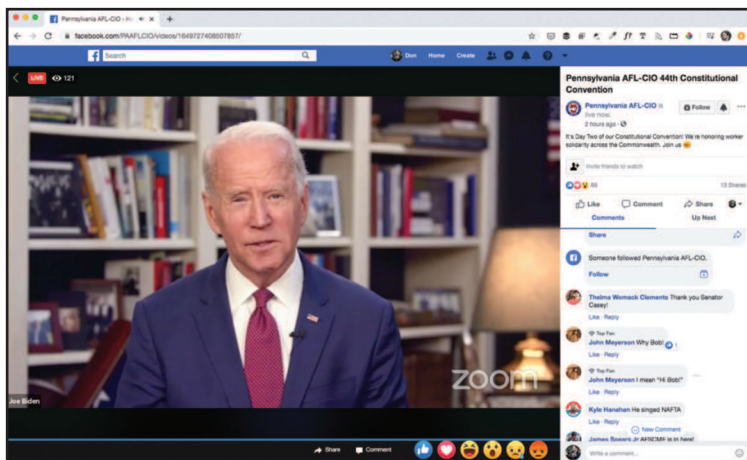
By Don McIntosh

In the internal life of local unions, it's been lonely few months since COVID-19 turned life upside down in mid-March. Meetings, fundraisers and conferences have been canceled. Union organizing house calls are off limits. But unions are adapting by moving nearly everything online. They're finding that Zoom and other teleconference apps have their limits, but the new methods also have advantages.

A number of unions are finding that holding meetings online is actually increasing attendance. Members are spared the drive to and from the meeting, and they can attend from home without having to find child care.

Protec17, a 900-strong City of Portland technical employees union, polled its members and found that many prefer the new meeting format. Some meetings have had over 100 attendees.

AFSCME Local 189 switched to holding all manner of meetings on Zoom, including regular membership meetings and sessions explaining contract language. As many as 80 members are attending, more than



**LIVESTREAMED CONVENTION:** Presidential candidate Joe Biden was a keynote speaker at the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO convention April 6-7, the first to be held online.

were regularly attending before. Meetings also increased to as frequent as once a week. One meeting was joined by Mayor Ted Wheeler for half an hour.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 111 President Belinda Reagan says her union of Portland Public Schools support staff had over 300 members at one online informational meeting about furloughs, and the format also makes it easy for the union to hold meetings at different times to accommodate varying demands on members' schedules.

From July 28-30, AFT will become the first to hold a na-

tional union convention entirely online. Local 111's Reagan said she immediately saw one advantage to that: Local chapters like hers often don't have the funds to send their full allotment of delegates to the convention. Now that won't be an issue.

Of course, live meetings are without a doubt more exciting. And Zoom can't replace a crucial function of such gatherings: The fellowship of informal meetings in which union members from around a state or nation get to know each other one-on-one.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO was actually the first to hold a

union convention online on April 6 and 7, after the Pittsburgh hotel where they planned to meet announced it would close. To be sure, it was a greatly pared down convention. Many affiliated unions had expected to elect their delegates in March, but those meetings were canceled as the epidemic shut down gatherings. The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO convention normally draws over 600 delegates and lasts three days. Instead, it took place over two days, with 305 delegates registered and as many as 270 online at any one time. Being online did make it possible for AFL-CIO leaders from 10 other state federations to take part without having to travel. And unions were also spared the expense of hotel stays and other meeting costs, at a time when many members are out of work. Still, Zoom was no substitute for the personal connections that would have been forged in person, and Bloomingdale said the 2022 convention would return to tradition.

"We certainly missed the face-to-face interaction," Pennsylvania AFL-CIO President Rick Bloomingdale told the *Labor Press*.

Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floor coverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Millwrights, Painters,

**HATS OFF TO THE CLASS OF 2020!**  
**WE WISH YOU ALL CONTINUED SUCCESS NOW & IN THE FUTURE**

**IBEW AND UNITED WORKERS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floor coverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Millwrights, Painters,