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IN THIS ISSUE

ROOFERS LOCAL 49 CONTRACT RAISES PAY \$4.96 AN HOUR The first of three raises happens July 1. | Page 2

UNITED WE HEAL: Hillsboro drug treatment clinic workers are the latest to join AFSCME | Page 6

Meeting Notices p.4 In Memoriam: Dave Johnson p.6

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PAINTERS PICKETS PERSIST Since they started May 21, Painters Local 10 has put up pickets eight times at six work sites, shutting down jobs all over Portland. **SEE STORY ON PAGE 8**



Freightliner comes home

Daimler will make its next-gen electric Freightliners in Portland, and it's raising wages \$4/hr.

By Don McIntosh

Daimler Trucks North America is looking to hire 100 more union workers by July 1 at its truck plant in Portland's Swan Island Industrial Park. To attract them it's raising starting wages to \$19 an hour — \$4 above what it's required to pay under its contract with Machinists Local Lodge 1005. That's not all: It's also offering to pay new workers a \$1,000 hiring bonus once they reach 90 days on the job. All current employees making less than the new starting wage will also see their wages increased to \$19 hour.

Daimler needs more workers because demand is booming for the heavy-duty Western Star trucks the plant produces — including dump trucks and cement mixers. But the plant is also investing in new capital equipment, because Portland has been chosen as the site that will assemble two new lines of battery-powered 100% electric trucks under the Freightliner brand.

When the first eCascadia rolls off the production line some time in late 2022, it will be a homecoming for Portland. Freightliner—born in Portland in 1947—was bought by Daimler-Benz in 1981. Daimler gradually shifted production to the Carolinas and to Mexico, and in 2007, the last Portland-assembled Freightliner truck rolled off the assembly line.

Since then, the Portland plant has produced trucks under the Western Star brand. [Western Star was a Canadian truck company that Daimler bought in 2000; Daimler shut down the Western Star plant in British Columbia and shifted its production to Portland.]

The eCascadia is a Class 8 heavy duty truck capable of 360 to 525 horsepower and up to 82,000 pounds. It advertises a 250 mile range, and can recharge up to 80% in 90 minutes. It will use a drive train built in Detroit by members of United Auto Workers Local 163 at another Daimler subsidiary, Detroit Diesel.

Then in 2023, Daimler expects the Portland plant to begin producing the Freightliner eM-2, an electric box truck.

Daimler's current contract with Machinists Lodge 1005 expires October 29, 2021. In May the company proposed to extend it by a year and open negotiations six months before expiration. Members rejected that proposal by more than four to one, so regular bargaining will likely start in September.

The current round of hiring will bring total union employment at the truck plant to just under 1,000, the highest it's been in years.

About those jobs: Daimler is hiring both assemblers and material handlers at \$19 an hour. Workers reach top pay at five years. Currently that's \$28.05 an hour for assemblers and \$26.32 an hour for material handlers. Apply online at <http://bit.ly/3cGztUF>

Homeless nonprofit. Union-buster.

Central City Concern just beat back a union campaign. County Commissioners are concerned.

By Don McIntosh

Following a string of union organizing wins among non-profits, Oregon AFSCME suffered a loss June 3 in a union election at Blackburn Center. Blackburn Center, 12121 East Burnside, is a combination clinic and residential treatment center run by the homeless services nonprofit Central City Concern. Way back on March 18—when AFSCME Local 88 asked the National Labor Relations Board to hold a union election there—a strong majority of Blackburn Center's 70 workers had signed cards saying they wanted union representation. By the time mail ballots were counted 11 weeks later, nearly two thirds of those workers had changed their minds. Tallyed June 3, the vote was 35 workers against the union, and 14 for.

What happened? The same thing that happens at workplaces across the country when workers try to unionize: Employers use



every tool at their disposal to talk them out of it, showing what an uneven playing field workers who want a union have to contend with.

At Blackburn, managers organized three days of catered "learning fairs" to provide what they called "unbiased information" about the union, and showed custom-made anti-union videos. Oregon AFSCME organizer Sarah Thompson says managers lied about the union at those meetings and created a hostile environment for union supporters, in violation of federal labor law.

"It was sort of like whack-a-mole trying to answer these ar-

TAKE IT FROM ME, YOUR LEADER: YOU DON'T NEED NO UNION

"Personally, I believe that we are better continuing to work together directly, and that you don't need AFSCME to represent you in our workplace." So said Central City Concern CEO Rachel Solotaroff in one of a series of in-house anti-union videos. As of 2019, Solotaroff was being paid \$266,000 to lead the homeless service nonprofit. You can see her disgraceful anti-union video in its entirety at nwlaborpress.org/ccf.

guments," Thompson said.

In one video, Central City Concern CEO Rachel Solotaroff implores workers to vote "no," and says she's truly sorry if employees ever felt that she and other executives "didn't care enough or engage enough."

What's so strange about all this is that AFSCME already represents about 300 of Central City Concern's 1,000 employees. Their current contract runs through June 30, 2022. But when Central City Concern opened Blackburn Center in 2019, it declared that its newly hired workers weren't part of the union bargaining unit.

Turn to Page 8