

# 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:**  
<https://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 for details.

**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



## PEOPLE

# After 35 years, Labor Press editor to retire

Michael Gutwig is retiring Dec. 31 after 35 years as editor of the *Northwest Labor Press*. The non-profit, semi-monthly, newspaper is owned by 19 local labor organizations. Founded in 1900, its mission is to tell labor's story to union members and the wider public.

Gutwig, 65, often read the *Labor Press* growing up in Northeast Portland's Parkrose neighborhood. His father, Clifford Gutwig, was a drywall finisher in Painters Local 10 who became a business rep and later apprenticeship coordinator for the union. Encouraged by his dad, Gutwig worked summers in construction and completed a drywall apprenticeship. He also got involved in his high school paper as sports editor, did a several-day job shadow of *Labor Press* editor Gene Klare, and earned an associates degree in journalism technology at Mt. Hood Community College while working on the student paper there. In 1981, he moved to Prineville to become sports editor and later advertising director at the *Central Oregonian*. When Klare, who died in 2008, prepared to retire, the *Labor Press* board decided Gutwig

was a good fit to succeed him.

When Gutwig became *Labor Press* editor in October 1986, the paper had a circulation of 38,000 and was losing enough money that even short-term survival was uncertain. Gutwig restored profitability within two years and kept it in the black for the next three and a half decades. He also grew circulation to over 50,000 within a few years. Circulation peaked at just under 65,000 and has held steady at that level for much of the year. Throughout the years the *Labor Press* has won numerous awards of excellence from the International Labor Communications Association and the defunct Western Labor Press Association (WLPA).

In the early days, stories were written on electric typewriters, sent to a typesetter, returned, proofed, then cut-and-pasted on to pages. Photos were screened in a bathroom converted into a dark room lab. The final product was hand-delivered to the printer.

"Delivering pages to Salem in the middle of winter could sometimes be an adventure. I had to chain up more than once," Gutwig recollected.

Gutwig soon brought the *Labor Press* into the era of desktop computers and computerized page layout.

The *Labor Press* is a 121-year-old institution, but Gutwig's 35-year tenure was a tough time for organized labor, an era during which union-busting, downsizing, and offshoring depleted labor's ranks, and unions fell from 17.7% to 10.9% of the U.S. workforce. Amid that decline, finding a union web press could at times be challenging. When press operators at the *Salem Statesman-Journal* went non-union, the *Labor Press* switched to *The Columbian*, until they too voted out the union. Today the *Labor Press* is trucked down to Portland from union-represented Rotary Offset Press in Kent, Washington, where the *Seattle Times* and the *New York Times* are also printed.

Over the last three and a half decades the *Labor Press* also weathered a tech bubble market crash, a housing bubble market crash, 9/11, The Great Recession of 2008, an ugly divorce in the AFL-CIO, and a worldwide pandemic that shuttered much of the economy.



"Any one of these events could have taken down this newspaper, but they didn't, and that's because of the strong support of the labor community here," said Gutwig. "I take great comfort in knowing that union leaders in Oregon and Southwest Washington want to keep their members informed about what the labor movement is doing here."

Gutwig said one secret to his success was surrounding himself with talented people. He has had just 10 employees work for him over the years. Several employees, including senior reporter Don McIntosh, have logged more than 20 years at the newspaper.

As editor, Gutwig was an associate member of Office & Professional Employees Local 11. He currently serves as a volunteer board member of IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union; Labor's Community Service Agency; United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555's HOPE Foundation, and as an employer trustee on the Western States 401(k) plan of OPEIU. He'll continue on the LCSA and credit union boards for now.

In retirement, he'll spend more time with his wife Lori, a retired school library assistant, and their two grown daughters and four grandkids.

Gutwig never missed a press deadline, and he leaves the newspaper in good financial health. The paper's board of directors is promoting McIntosh to editor effective Jan. 1. Gutwig will help with the transition as needed through the end of 2022.

"You don't stay at a job this long unless you enjoy the people you work with and respect and enjoy the people you're working for — which is the labor community," said Gutwig. "It has been a truly wonderful adventure and I feel fortunate to have been given the opportunity to do it."

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

Our Credit Union family wishes  
 all Union families a Very Happy  
 and Healthy Holiday Season and  
 New Year!

IBEW AND UNITED WORKERS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION  
 NCUA

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