

BY HENRY HOUSTON

NATIONAL PRISONERS STRIKE ENDS

No strike activity noted in Oregon's penitentiaries

Oregon Department of Corrections officials say incarcerated people throughout Oregon's 14 prisons did not participate in the National Prison Strike that officially ended Sept. 9.

Throughout the U.S. and in Canada, people incarcerated in prisons have been holding hunger strikes, withholding their labor and boycotting commissaries. According to the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee, the strike arose in response to a riot at a maximum-security prison in South Carolina where seven prisoners died.

The National Prison Strike was held to raise public awareness of a list of 10 demands, which were designed by prisoners. These demands included reinstating the right to vote, ending prison slavery and establishing immediate improvements to the conditions of prisons in the U.S.

Jennifer Black, communications manager for the Oregon Department of Corrections, says state prisons had normal operations throughout the two-week strike, which began Aug. 21. Black says she did not hear of any major occurrences in prisons, such as labor strikes or protesting.

She adds that prisons are spread throughout Oregon, but the system is run centrally. If any prison experienced a big change, such as participation in the national strike, she says she would be aware of it.

Organizers for the strike said in their Aug. 22 telephone



DETAIL FROM A 'SUPPORT THE NATIONAL PRISON STRIKE' PROTEST POSTER

press conference they weren't aware of anyone in Oregon participating in the strike, though they are skeptical of any official statement from government agencies.

The National Prison Strike did have activity on the West Coast. A California state prison in Lancaster has a group hunger strike, and New Folsom Prison experienced a hunger strike started by Heriberto Garcia, described by organizers as a political prisoner.

In Washington state more than 200 immigrant detainees in an ICE facility have declared a hunger strike. Due to fears of retaliation, the hunger strike has decreased to seven inmates.

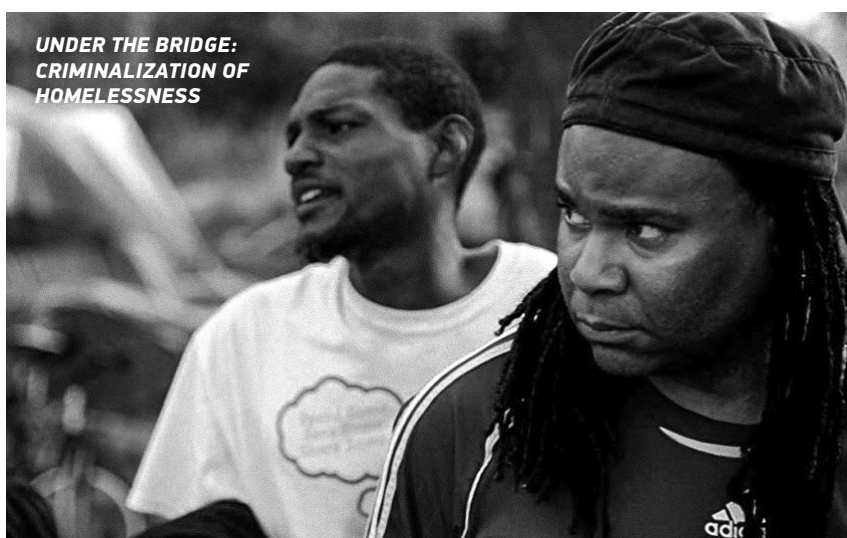
When asked if Oregon Department of Corrections had any comment on the list of demands, Black did not comment. ■

More information at incarceratedworkers.org.

ACTIVIST ALERT

• **The City Club of Eugene and League of Women Voters of Lane County are hosting candidate forums in advance of the Nov. 6 election**, "intended to give voters the opportunity to meet and hear directly from the candidates to help them cast an informed ballot." The forums will be at the Baker Center, 975 High Street. They are: Marty Wilde and Mark Herbert, State House District 11, Sept. 28; Julie Fahey and Rich Cunningham, State House District 14, Oct. 5; and Peter DeFazio, Art Robinson and Michael Bielstein, U.S. Congress, District 4, Oct. 19. The congressional debate is also sponsored by the AARP and all forums begin at noon. The forums are open to the public and free for City Club members. Nonmembers pay \$5 to attend the program. Lunch is \$15 for members, \$17 for nonmembers. Coffee and cookie only are \$5 for members, \$7 for non-members.

• **Under the Bridge: Criminalization of Homelessness is a documentary**



about a homeless camp in Indianapolis swept away by the city to make room for luxury condos, leaving its organized community of residents nowhere to go. The film will be shown by the Eugene Human Rights Commission Homelessness Work Group at 6:30 pm, Friday Sept. 14

at the Sheldon Community Center, 2445 Willakenzie Road and at noon Tuesday, Sept. 18, in the Campbell Center, 155 High Street. Showings are followed by discussion. Free event open to all.

• **What if Nature had Rights? A panel discussion** is 6 pm Thursday, Sept 20,

at the Many Nations Longhouse, at the University of Oregon, 1630 Columbia Street. Panelists include Cameron LaFollette, independent researcher and author; Craig Kauffman, associate professor of political science and environmental studies; and Chris Maser: ecologist, author, international lecturer and consultant.

• Rotary District 5110 is seeking team members for its 2019 Group Study Exchange program. This vocational and cultural exchange is for **young professionals between 23 and 40 who will spend three weeks in Israel** in May 2019. Through vocational visits, cultural experiences, fellowship and Rotary involvement, team members will develop personal and professional skills that they can then implement in their work environment. Cost of the program is \$700. Current Rotary membership not required. For further info, contact Rae LaMarche at 5110gse@gmail.com. Application deadline is Sept. 30.