

The Oregon PUBLIC EMPLOYEE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1994

The Mission of the Oregon Public Employees Union/SEIU Local 503, AFL-CIO, CLC, is to Improve the Quality of Life through Worker Empowerment and a Progressive Labor Program.

Delegates launch campaign to defeat attacks on pay and retirement benefits

Delegates to the OPEU/CAPE 1994 Leadership Conference launched an ambitious campaign on February 12 to defeat initiative petitions that threaten our pay and retirement benefits and to elect a pro-labor Legislature.

PERS, Lies, & Videotape

The nearly 200 delegates to the conference learned the truth about the Public Employees Retirement System — and how to respond to the misrepresentations of state Representative Bob Tiernan, R-Lake Oswego. (Examples of Tiernan's "tirades" can be found on Page 6. A summary of Tiernan's misrepresentations about PERS, along with the facts, can be found on Page 7.)

Delegates practiced the skills that will move the campaign with our coworkers,



CAPE board members show off their "Public Employee Enemy #1" magnet, at right, following a recent meeting.

Union members, friends, and neighbors.

Legislative candidates who have received OPEU's early endorsement joined us for dinner on Saturday. (Legislative candidates receiving OPEU's early endorsement can be found on Page 10.)

The conference spotlighted other initiative petitions, one of which has already qualified for the ballot, that would require a public vote on all new taxes and fees or to change — even to lower! — the rate of existing taxes or fees; one that would peg average public employee pay and benefits to averages in the private sector without taking into account differences in the composition of the workforces; and one to remove the prevailing wage law that requires contractors on government jobs to pay their workers family wages. (Details on these initia-

tives can be found on Page 8.)

Delegates heard from Sandy Felder, the president-executive director of SEIU Local 509, a public employees local union in Massachusetts, about the politics that can cost jobs to contracting out, about losing bargaining rights to the whims of a conservative governor, and programs cut because of a failure to enact fair taxation. (Find a summary of her talk on Page 11.)

And, delegates agreed unanimously to recommend to the membership that we "put our money where our anger is" and approve a \$2 per month dues increase for 12 months to fight the Tiernan initiative. (More details about the dues vote can be found on Page 9.)

