



## Local Labor News

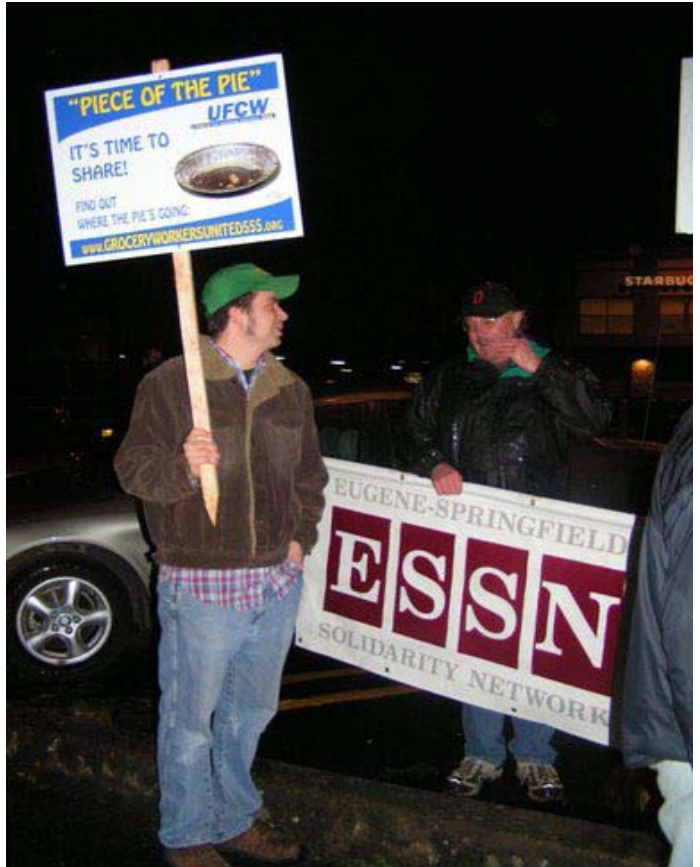
**Teamsters Local 206**—Wildish Sand and Gravel Companies are continuing their efforts to take away long-standing Teamster pensions and healthcare from local employees this winter. The Wildishes earned the dubious honor of being the recipient of

ESSN/JwJ's Annual Grinch of the Year Award, sweeping the election at the ESSN/JwJ Holiday Party with 101 votes. Stay tuned for upcoming actions and events to support Teamsters Local 206 members at Wildish!

**UFCW Local 555**, representing local grocery workers at Albertson's, Safeway, and Fred Meyer stores, had a very successful contract campaign rally on November 28th with many Local 555 members, ESSN/JwJ activists (more than thirty!) and community members attending. Also speaking in support of the grocery workers were a number of local political figures, including Sen. Prozanski, Rep. Nathanson, Rep. Holvey and Rep. Barnhart. Local 555 expressed gratitude to everyone from ESSN/JwJ who participated.

During the first week of December management and Local 555 had three long days of negotiations. It was apparent the first day that both sides had come to the table willing to move towards an agreement but are still far apart on wages, healthcare, and other language. There are three more days of negotiations in early January and UFCW Local 555 will be holding a contract

campaign rally in conjunction with the first day of contract bargaining. The Rally will be on Tuesday January 8<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00pm to 6:00pm, in front of the Albertson's store on Coburg Road (near the intersection with Oakway), in Eugene. Hope to see you there!



**ATU Local 757**—Members at Lane Transit District Approved a New Contract!

The recently-approved three-year contract includes NO TAKE-AWAYS!!! Workers will receive a 1.75% raise every 6 months. Mechanics will also get a 2 % raise every July 1st. The EMX drivers will get \$2.00 more per hour. All trainers will get a new training wage. There are also improvements to the healthcare, and an increase in retirement every year of the contract.

Workers will receive retroactive pay on everything from July 1st to the present, including a shoe allowance, and tool allowance. Congratulations to ATU Local 757 members at LTD!

## National

**Alabama**—Workers at a plant in Mobile owned by New Era Cap Company, Inc., are being laid off in unprecedented numbers. Employees at the Mobile plant claim that the lay-offs are retaliatory, as management is resisting their drive to organize a union in their workplace. The New Era Cap Company, a supplier for Footlocker stores, is being investigated by the NLRB for unfair labor practices, including intimidation, interrogation, and termination of workers trying to

organize with the Teamsters. The company has announced plans to lay off 20 workers permanently, and 15 more temporarily. Teamsters and Students against Sweatshops members held a demonstration in Buffalo, NY (where the company's headquarters are located) and leafleted in support of the workers in Mobile last month.

**Starbucks**—The Starbucks Workers Union (SWU), a union of IWW Starbucks Baristas, is demanding that Starbucks Management make Martin Luther King, Jr. day a paid holiday for Starbucks employees. According to the SWU website, "Starbucks claims a commitment to diversity but has a poor record when it comes to equal opportunity. While 30% of Starbucks employees are people of color, only 15% of Starbucks executives are of color, according to the company. Starbucks will hire workers of color for low-wage barista positions, but such workers are significantly underrepresented in upper management." SWU says that making Dr. King's birthday a paid holiday would be a step in the right direction for the coffee giant, which spends lavishly to promote an image of social responsibility, but pays workers in some states as little as \$6 per hour. Put your money where your mouth is, Starbucks!

**Hollywood**—Striking writers for television and film are still walking the picket line. Polls suggest that as many as 66% of the American public supports their strike. Writers are striking for a bigger piece of the pie, especially when it comes to new technologies and different ways of broadcasting, but they're also aiming for something larger. The union is pushing the corporate studio owners to agree to a contract for the thousands of writers who work on animated and reality TV shows. The writer's union is looking to shift power out of the hands of the corporate bosses and into the hands of the workers. With such a large base of support in the public the bosses must be worrying.

#### International

**Russia**—Workers at a Ford plant near St. Petersburg have resumed work after a four week strike. Workers won a wage increase of 30% (from \$860 to \$1,140 US per month) after a hard-fought struggle against management that employed many harsh strike-breaking tactics, including the use of police to protect scabs as they crossed the picket line. Production in the plant is beginning to return to normal, but workers warn that they may affect another work stoppage if management does not reach a fair agreement on other contract issues with the union by their February, 2008 deadline.

**Greece**—Workers in Greece have affected a general strike in reaction to the conservative government's attempt to change their pension system. All commercial flights in and out of Greece are grounded and hospitals are working on emergency staff only. "Thousands of citizens will be on the streets, almost no public or private sector service will operate," said spokesperson Efstathios Anestis of the umbrella workers' union GSEE. The government has proposed that workers stay on the job past 65 and is "reviewing" pensions for women and the handicapped. This administration was re-elected in September on the promise that there would be no changes to the pension system.

**Iran**—On December 14<sup>th</sup>, nine teachers in Iran were imprisoned for "disturbing social order, issuing announcements and holding illegal gatherings." These teachers were trying to form a union. According to Education International, [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org), the harassment of teachers trying to form a union has been relentless since classes started in September. Along with beatings, arrests and dismissals from work, "Over 700 teachers who have been identified in the protests have had pay cuts, 86 teachers have been suspended and 39 teachers have been banned from teaching."