

The Worker

Stater Bros. pact eliminates two-tier system

Members vote overwhelmingly to ratify new agreement, which sets the tone for talks with 'Big Three'

In a development that sets a precedent for upcoming negotiations with the national supermarket chains, members of UFCW locals voted on Jan. 17 to ratify a new three-year contract with Stater Bros. Markets in Southern California.

The contract eliminates the notorious two-tier system that was imposed by the previous agreement in 2004. Under that system, new employees earned lower wages and received fewer benefits than veteran employees did.

The new agreement with Stater Bros. also increases health and pension trust fund contributions by the company and raises wages by \$1.25 over the course of three years.

Agreement raises wages by \$1.25 over three years.

"This is a fair contract that treats our members with respect," President Mickey Kasparian said. "Stater Bros. understands that success in this industry depends on its employees, and the company has taken steps that are necessary to ensure that its workers are treated with fairness and respect.

"We expect this contract to set the pattern for upcoming negotiations with the national chains," Mickey continued. "After all, if Stater Bros. can

eliminate the two-tier system and remain competitive, why can't much larger national chains like Vons, Albertsons and Ralphs?"

Negotiations with Albertsons began in the middle of January and are expected to commence with Ralphs and Vons in coming weeks. Contracts with these three chains expire on March 5.

The UFCW represents approximately 13,000 Stater Bros employees in 162 stores. Throughout Southern California, the union represents approximately 70,000 workers in the supermarket industry.



Two Stater Bros. members give "thumbs up" after voting to approve their new contract.

President's Message



Mickey Kasparian

Stater Bros. contract a victory for all UFCW members

On Jan. 17, our members who are employed at Stater Bros. Markets voted overwhelmingly to ratify a contract that eliminates the two-tier system of wages and benefits.

The contract includes wage increases for all classifications and renewed commitments by the company to sustain and improve our union's health and pension plans. It also preserves our strong job-protection language.

Details of the health and pension plans are still being worked out. Much depends on the other supermarket employers doing the right thing for their employees as Stater Bros. has.

More improvements are possible in future contracts, but the current agreement represents a great victory for our union. It is a reason for every one of us to celebrate.

Stater Bros. is Southern California's fourth-largest supermarket chain, with 16,000 workers in the region. Its early settlement with UFCW local unions will put pressure on the Big Three — Ralphs, Vons and Albertsons — to come to terms as well.

Most of us recall how Stater Bros. avoided the labor disruptions of 2003-2004. As a result, hundreds of

thousands of customers were given a convenient option to shop at union-operated stores. While the Big Three's stores were empty of customers, Stater Bros.' stores were packed, leading to record profits.

With the ratification of the new contract with Stater Bros., the Big Three face the prospect of that scenario being repeated should they fail to bargain in good faith in 2007.

If Stater Bros. can reach an agreement, why can't the national chains?

The new contract also sets a standard that the Big Three companies will be under tremendous pressure to imitate. After all, if a regional chain like Stater Bros. can reach a constructive agreement

with the unions, why can't nationally-backed chains like Ralphs, Vons and Albertsons do the same?

Several other factors make it extremely unlikely that the Big Three chains will be able to share resources and coordinate their strategies as they did in 2003-2004, when they succeeded in forcing the abominable "two-tier" provisions onto us.

• The California Department of Justice filed criminal anti-trust charges against the big companies for entering into an illegal revenue-sharing agreement during the strike and lockout. That case is expected to

(Please see page 5)

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STEWARD OF THE QUARTER

We've begun to accept nominations for "Steward of the Quarter" for the **FIRST QUARTER of 2007**. The deadline is March 31. The procedure is the same as before. Use the form below to nominate your steward.

You may write a note summarizing the reasons you are submitting your steward's name – why he or she is deserving of this honor. You may include your name if you wish, but you don't have to.

Submit the name to your union representative or call the union office and submit the name to German Ramirez in the Grievance and Contract Department, ext. 153. Or you can mail this form to the Grievance Department, Local 135, 2001 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108.

You can also send us an e-mail by going to our web site, www.ufcw135.org, clicking on "contact us" and sending a message containing the pertinent information.

We will count up all the nominations, and the stewards with the most nominations in each quarter will be honored at a steward seminar. In addition, they will be highlighted with a story and picture in *The Worker*.

No question, Local 135 stewards do an outstanding job. They are our activists. They promote the union. They believe in the union. We couldn't succeed without them. But they don't always get the recognition they so richly deserve, so this is one way we will make sure that they get an extra pat on the back.

Steward of the Quarter Nomination

I nominate:

Company/store number:

Job classification:

Why I am nominating my steward:

My name (if desired):

My job class., phone (if desired):

Chew has been 'making days better' for 30 years

For more than 30 years, UFCW Local 135 member Donald "Skip" Chew has been doing what he does best: helping people. His fellow union members, his customers at Albertsons 6714 and others in the community have all benefited from Chew's compassion and resourcefulness.

"I'm really fortunate to work with so many wonderful people, especially customers," Chew added. "I've been trying for 30 years to do anything I can do to make their day a little better."

Chew has worked in the retail food industry since 1976. "I started with Alpha Beta as a bagger when I was 17 years old," he said.

Over the years, Chew has seen the grocery business change substantially. Although the technology has advanced, he sees "the competitive nature of customer service" as the aspect that has changed most.

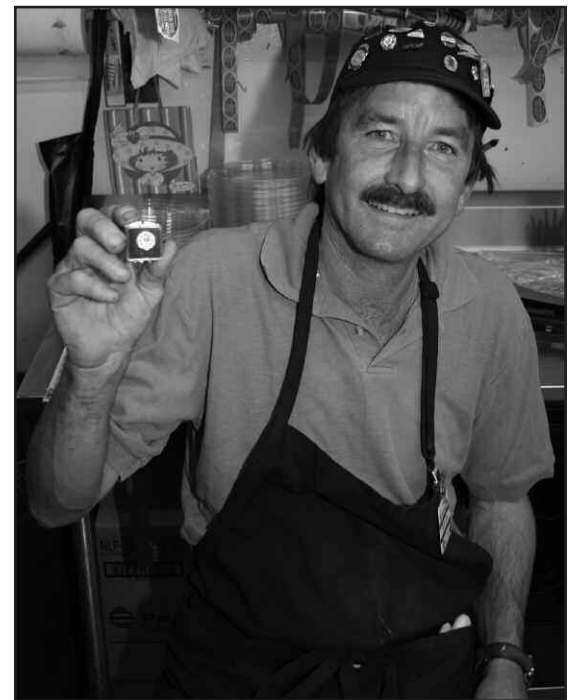
"There was always a desk for [customer service]," he said, "but it wasn't always to this extent of ensuring customer satisfaction at any cost."

Chew's involvement as a union member intensified during the Southern California supermarket strike and lockout three years ago.

"I was a picketer and was interviewed on TV a couple times," he said. "I guess I'm a pretty outspoken person."

"The strike was no fault of the union," he added. "We made our statement, the companies felt the effects, and now the public is more aware of our fight for wages, medical coverage and retirement benefits."

Chew predicts that the current round of contract negotiations will be smoother, at least for Albertsons/SuperValu stores. "The company will probably cooperate because



Donald "Skip" Chew shows a pin commemorating his 30 years of service.

they don't want to discredit their image or foul their market share," he said. "I have a feeling both sides will come to an agreement."

When Chew is not working at Albertsons, he volunteers his time doing odd jobs for the Normal Heights Children's Center. "A lot of the people who use the center aren't exactly rich, so if I can make an impact there, it gives me a great feeling," he said.

"Plus, Normal Heights really supported the union during the strike. They cut their prices for union members and changed their schedule around to help the strikers."

Chew has been married to his wife, Rhonda, for 20 years. "We like to play golf, take occasional trips to Laughlin, watch football and sip champagne out on the front porch," Chew said with a laugh.

MEMBERS OF THE FUTURE

Martha Barron and Michael Barron, Vons
• **Diego Maximus**, born on Dec. 12, 2006

Jose Valdez and Rose Valdez, Ralphs
• **Gloria Natalie**, born on Dec. 29, 2006

Holly Gaag and Antonio Gaag, Rite Aid
• **Aleina Odalbil**, born on Jan. 3, 2007

Jeffrey Valenzuela and
Christina Valenzuela, Kaiser
• **Jayce**, born on Jan. 3, 2007

SPECIAL THANKS

to members Russell Farrell, Ana Zamora,
Graciela Fonseca and John Bala for
their help with the Jan. 17 contract vote.

SERVICE PINS

Linda Schwab, Vons
• **30 years**

MEMBERSHIP AND NEW MEMBER MEETINGS: 2007

General Membership meetings are normally scheduled for the *fourth Tuesday of every other month at 7 p.m.*

The schedule for 2007 is as follows:

Jan. 23	Knights of Columbus, 515 W. Valley Pkwy. Escondido, CA 92025
March 27	Local 135 Meeting Hall
May 22	North County (location to be announced)
July 24	Local 135 Meeting Hall
Sept. 25	North County (location to be announced)
Nov. 27	Local 135 Meeting Hall



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News Briefs

National Grocery Worker Movement Grows Stronger

With nearly half a million UFCW grocery workers' contracts up for negotiation over the next 18 months, the workers are supporting each other through in-store actions and other support-building activities across the nation. A website, www.groceryworkersunited.com, offers downloads of fliers, videos, photos and news about the negotiations and the grocery industry.

During a five-day period in November, supermarket workers represented by the UFCW wore 850,000 stickers in stores to demonstrate their solidarity with other UFCW supermarket employees across the country.

Religious Leaders Call Out Wal-Mart

Following the release of a joint letter signed by 133 evangelical leaders that challenged Wal-Mart's CEO Lee Scott to make "Wal-Mart a Golden Rule company, one that is mindful in reflecting the best of Christian values," WakeUpWalMart.com released a joint interfaith letter signed by 68

Alta Dena dairy boycott continues

Local 135 continues to stand with Teamsters Local 630 and other Southern California UFCW locals in its support of the Food and Drug Council's boycott of Alta Dena dairy products.

Union members and staff will continue to raise awareness of the company's refusal to allow its warehouse employees to form a union.

To get involved, call Local 135 at (619) 298-7772 for more information.

religious leaders from across the country — bringing the total to more than 200 faith leaders calling for Wal-Mart to change.

The interfaith letter calls on Wal-Mart to "do what is morally right" and change for the better this holiday season. The 68 religious leaders, including

Rev. John H. Thomas, general minister and president of the United Church of Christ; Kim Bobo, executive director of the Interfaith Worker Justice, Rev. Markel Hutchins and Rev. Dr. William Jarvis Johnson represent more than 1.28 million people of faith in more than 5,700 congregations.

"We hope Wal-Mart will listen to the growing call among leaders of faith to do what is right this holiday season and change into a moral and righteous employer that puts faith and family first," said Chris Kofinis, communications director for WakeUpWalMart.com.

In the interfaith letter addressed to Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott, religious leaders point out that the teachings of all faiths call on them to implore Wal-Mart to change for the better. As the letter states, "Those of us who are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist or Hindu have scriptures that remind us that God is just and God's servants must practice justice in all of our words and deeds. As we celebrate our own unique spiritual traditions, we also ask ourselves, would our God

want us to support Wal-Mart's values and actions with our dollars?" The letter goes on to state that "Mr. Scott, you have the power to change Wal-Mart, to end these terrible policies, and to set an example of how corporations can reflect our faith's call for righteousness and justice."



Union gives toys and food to union families

Throughout the holiday season, President Mickey Kasparian (at left), Local 135 staff, members and volunteers helped union families in need across San Diego. Food and toys were distributed with the help of the Teamsters.



Local 135 Fights for YOU!

BACK PAY AWARDED TO MEMBERS:

December 2006	2006 Total
\$827.61	\$563,981.71

MEMBERS REINSTATED AS RESULT OF GRIEVANCES:

December 2006	2006 Total
3	65

Compare last	2002	\$82,259.19
year's back-pay	2003	\$36,604.18
award totals	2004	\$216,703.37
with those of	2005	\$36,604.18
previous years...	2006	\$563,981.71



WITHDRAWAL CARD REQUEST

If you are no longer working in the trade, are transferring to another local, or will be off work for one or more calendar months and would like to request a withdrawal card, please complete this form and mail it to the union office immediately.

There is no charge for a withdrawal card. However, your dues and assessments must be paid for the month in which the card is requested.

If you have any questions regarding the amount you may owe or need additional information regarding this procedure, contact the Local 135 office. Please give this matter your immediate attention in order to avoid paying dues for months in which you do not work or to avoid being suspended.

Name _____ S.S.No. _____

Current Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Employed at _____ # _____ Last Day Worked _____

Reason for Leaving _____ Phone () _____

Mail to:

UFCW Local 135, 2001 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108



Union Representative Odett Kaufman and Secretary-Treasurer Rosalyn Hackworth.



Member John Bala counts ballots as Grievance Director Tom Elbert looks on.



YES!

Hundreds of Stater Bros. members gathered on Jan. 17 to ratify a new three-year contract with improvements across the board.



Mickey gives a presentation to Stater Bros. members about the wage and other increases offered in the new contract.



Mickey explains the increased Trust Fund contributions outlined in the new contract.



What does this contract mean to you?



Frankie Rodger

Stater Bros. 163

"The benefits are what is so important. You can earn money anywhere, but a union job allows you to earn a living."



Jay Palalay

Stater Bros. 163

"This contract is going to be such a boost to the morale of me and my fellow members. It will also help make us stronger as a union."



Rene Duran

Stater Bros. 140

"This contract means a lot to me. We can all be equal now that the two-tier system is gone. We all work hard, so why should there be divisions among us?"



Brandon Chuppa

Stater Bros. 158

"We need to set the example to the other employers with this contract. It will help bring the members together as one strong bargaining unit."



Scott Bixel

Stater Bros. 158

"We're setting the bar high for wages and benefits with this contract. I think this will make more people come out and get involved with the union."



Sara Obenquer

Stater Bros. 151

"This is about my rights as a worker and a human being. Also, a good contract will benefit the employers in the long run since the stores run smoother when the employees are satisfied."

President's Message

Stater Bros. pact is a victory for all

(Continued from front page)

go trial later this year.

- A federal judge has put Ralphs under probation as part of the company's conviction for crimes it committed during the labor dispute. This time around, any hint of similar hanky-panky will result in immediate investigations and the threat of severe punishment for Ralphs executives.

- Albertsons stores in Southern California are now operated by SuperValu, a Minnesota-based company that has a relatively good relationship with the UFCW in other parts of the country. Also, with the company holding large amounts of debt, SuperValu is unlikely

to do anything that will jeopardize its profits (SuperValu reported a 51-percent increase in profits during the final quarter of 2006).

- The Big Three companies were whipped so badly during the Southern California strike/lockout that none of them had the stomach for similar disputes anywhere else in North America. They came to our bargaining table in 2003 determined to force a strike and to crush our union. They now realize the stupidity of such a strategy.

- The 70,000 UFCW members in Southern California are united more than ever, with a core of battle-tested veterans from the 2003-2004 dispute. Backing us are 1.4-million other UFCW members

across the continent who are being mobilized in a coordinated bargaining strategy.

As we approach the Big Three negotiations, we are determined to fight the two-tier system, which is both unfair to the workers and counterproductive for the companies. Our agreement with Stater Bros. is a big step toward eliminating this absurd system throughout the supermarket industry in Southern California.

Once again, Stater Bros. has demonstrated that it puts its employees and customers first, and that doing the right thing is good for the bottom line.

Let's hope that the Big Three supermarket companies are paying attention.

Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr. and his support for organized labor

As Americans celebrated the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., few were aware of the intensity of his support for Organized Labor, a cause he felt was interlinked with the struggle for civil rights.

"What good is it to sit at a lunch counter if you can't afford a hamburger?" he asked. King outlined his thoughts in greater detail in a letter to the Amalgamated Laundry Workers in 1962:

"As I have said many times, and believe with all my heart, the coalition that can have the greatest impact in the struggle for human dignity here in America is that of the Negro and the forces of labor, because their fortunes are so closely intertwined."

Dr. King was surrounded by labor leaders and activists throughout his career in the Civil Rights Movement.

The national broadcast of his "I Have a Dream" speech was made possible because technical assistance was provided by the United Auto Workers. In fact, the UAW and African-American labor leader A. Philip Randolph organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom at which Dr. King made his famous address.

Randolph was one of Dr. King's role models. As the founder and president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, he fought hard for 12 years to organize one of the most fiercely anti-union industries in the nation: the railroads. As a result of his work, the first black union in the United States dramatically improved the pay and working conditions of railroad porters nationwide. In the 1930s, Randolph's threat to march on Washington, spurred President Franklin D. Roosevelt to create



the Fair Employment Practices Commission.

Rosa Parks, whose refusal to surrender her bus seat sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, attended the Highlander Folk School, which was a Southern center for training labor organizers. E.D. Nixon, who organized the boycott, was a member of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

Fighting for working people

The AFL-CIO sponsored many of Dr. King's public appearances. The Packing House Workers of Chicago and New York District 65 of the

Distributive Workers of America contributed to Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference on a regular basis.

When Dr. King was stabbed while signing copies of his book, A. Philip Randolph paid his hospital bills. As Dr. King wrote his famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," the United Auto Workers was busy gathering funds to pay his exorbitant bail.

"Negroes are almost entirely a working people," Dr. King told the AFL-CIO in 1961. "Our needs are identical with labor's needs: decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children, and respect in the community. That is why Negroes support labor's demands and fight laws which curb labor."

On the day of his assassination, April 4, 1968, Dr. King was in Memphis to support 1,300 city sanitation workers, members of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, who were on strike to demand higher wages and better working conditions.

Side by Side with Workers

Marching under signs that read, "I Am a Man," the workers had brought Memphis public sanitation (Please see next page)

Groceryworkersunited.org

is the online campaign to unite workers in preparation for upcoming negotiations and to provide up-to-date industry information to members. This month, the spotlight is on the success of the holiday sticker campaign.

Picture yourself with a UFCW sticker

UFCW grocery workers and communities, standing together nationwide for good wages and affordable health care--that's what wearing the December sticker is all about.

"I'm wearing this sticker to show that we're willing to unite and fight as one--for better health care for all of us."

--MELISSA CHAMPION, Local 21, Safeway

"I'm wearing the sticker because I think national bargaining will help us stand together and fight for better benefits and wages."

--JEFF WARD, Local 81, Fred Meyer

Wearing the sticker. Fighting for good wages and benefits. Supporting our communities. Standing up for grocery workers nationwide.

Are you in?

"We're wearing the sticker to support union members and their communities, all across the country."

--THERMAN LUCAS, Local 400, Giant Foods

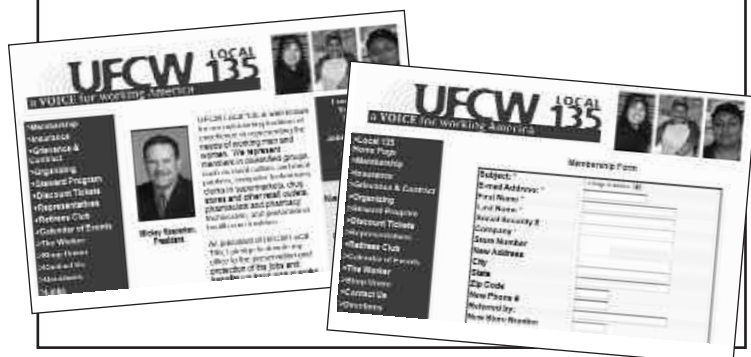
December 27-31, join with UFCW grocery workers nationwide in wearing the sticker--make your voice heard.

We're **powerful** when we **speak** together

Local 135 website now bigger & better

UFCW135.org now sports a new look designed to make it easier for members to navigate the site.

The cleaner, more spacious layout allows visitors to quickly access content such as the calendar of events, discount ticket information and updates on the Retiree's Club and Stewards program. Visit today, and tell us what you think!

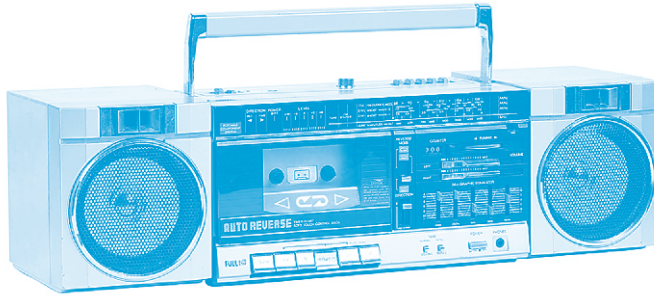


Union spirit rides the airwaves

Local 135 teamed with XX Sports Radio 1090 AM to bring a little cheer to those less fortunate during the recent holiday season,

Listeners to XX Sports Radio's "Too Much Show" were asked to bring non-perishable food items to Collins Family Jewelers. Those who brought in five items received a limited-edition XX Sports Radio Holiday T-shirt and those who donated 10 items were awarded with two tickets to the Poinsettia Bowl. There were also giveaways of Aztec tickets and items from Collins Family Jewelers.

All food donations went to



Operation Home Front, an organization that supports American troops and helps their families while they are serving overseas.

"It was an honor to be part of such a great charity drive, especially during the holidays," President Mickey Kasparian said. "Working with our partners in the community to help support our troops and their families was a great experience."

Update: Ralphs Disbursement

Claim forms were expected to be mailed to approximately 17,000 current and former Ralphs employees on Jan. 12, the court-appointed overseer of a \$50 million restitution fund said at press time.

Tom Roberts, the professional arbitrator who was assigned by a federal judge to supervise distribution of the money, said the workers will have until April 30 to return the forms. Restitution checks will be sent out sometime later this year.

Roberts said earlier that the forms might be mailed before the end of December 2006. He said the delay was caused by problems relating to composition of the forms.

A website, www.ralphsrestitutionfund.com, will keep members informed on developments relating to the disbursements.

WakeUpWalMart.com lights fire under Bentonville

WakeUpWalMart.com unleashed its latest publicity offensive against Wal-Mart over the holiday season. The organization's "Hope for the Holidays" campaign, with television advertisements that feature three Wal-Mart employees who reveal the real values of their company, has garnered national media attention since Wal-Mart posted lower-than-normal earnings during the November and December shopping rush.

The advertisements asserted that Wal-Mart's values are "salary caps, poverty wages and unaffordable health care."

The three Wal-Mart employees said that "Sam Walton would have never treated us this way," and encouraged potential Wal-Mart customers and the company to "put America's families first."

WakeUpWalMart.com also sponsored a nationwide "Our Children Deserve Better" flier campaign. Distributions of the fliers at Wal-Mart stores were covered by media in 27 states.

"Wal-Mart could easily change. They just don't want to," WakeUpWalMart.com Communications Director Chris Kofinis told *Fortune* magazine.

Remembering MLK, Jr.

(Continued from previous page)

system to a standstill. The police responded with teargas and nightsticks. A local court issued an injunction, that made any further demonstrations illegal and the mayor of Memphis threatened to fire every worker who continued to strike.

Dr. King came immediately to the workers' aid, but before he could join the strikers at a rally, he was shot to death on the balcony of his motel room. Reacting to the public grief that followed, the Memphis city officials quickly granted the striking sanitation workers almost every union right they had demanded, including a collective bargaining agreement, paid holidays and vacations, substantial wage hikes, and a seniority system that guaranteed promotions without regard to race.

Dr. King remains a model in the struggle for equality and justice for all people. Labor unions will continue to perform a crucial role in this struggle.

Protect the Union market share! Support the right to organize! Remember not to patronize these non-union stores that compete with ours:

- 99 Ranch
- Best Buy Foods
- Bristol Farms
- El Tigre
- Fiesta Food
- Fiesta
- Mexicana
- Foodland
- Grocery Outlet
- Henry's
- Jensens
- Jons Market
- Kmart
- King Ranch
- Mercado Vallarta
- Natural Foods
- Notricas
- Payless Foods
- Plaza Market
- R Ranch Market
- Sam's Club
- Sav-A-Lot
- Sav-U-Foods
- Seafood City
- Super K-Mart
- Smart & Final
- Superior/Frontier
- Supreme Market
- Target stores
- Top Valu/Valu Plus
- Trader Joe's
- Tresierras
- Valley Foods
- Wal-Mart
- Walgreens
- Whole Foods
- Wild Oats
- Sprouts
- Daniels Market
- Hometown
- Food Giant
- Longs Drugs
- 99 cent & More Market
- Lucky Seafood
- Food Palace
- Jimbos
- Windmill Farms
- Barons
- The Marketplace
- 97 Super Market
- Vine Ripe Market
- Boneys
- Food Mart
- Sprouts
- Daniel's Market
- Hometown

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Don't let history repeat itself

By Rosalyn Hackworth,
Secretary-Treasurer

Every year about this time I write an article that addresses common errors and infractions (of company rules and plain old work etiquette) that I don't want to see repeated. Since I am a creature of habit and like traditions, I decided that this year shouldn't be any different.

This year I will address some issues that are generic and others that are specific to a certain employer or industry. So here we go!

I have said time and time again that the one thing all of us can control is getting to work on time on a consistent basis. If you are one of those people who are chronically late, you need to do whatever you can to be on time for work.

If you have to set your clock earlier, do so. If you have to lay your clothes out the night before, do it. So what if you have to sit in the break room or in your car for a bit before going in — consider it “me time.”

If you know traffic has always been bad in your area, allow extra time. Heck, do you think it will magically get better? Of course it won't! Do what I do for my long commute: listen to music and sing off key.

Know the Rules

Whether you work in a grocery store, a drug store, Kaiser, one of the dental offices or any employer who sells a product or service to the public, you are held to a higher standard as an employee. You must take the time to familiarize yourself with company policies regarding purchases and discounts, especially when you are

asked to acknowledge in writing that there maybe ramifications if you don't follow the rules.

I can't count how many times I have heard “I intended to pay for it,” “They know I wouldn't steal anything” and the standard “I come in every time they have called me on my day off when someone calls in sick.” You may have the greatest intentions, but your actions dictate how you are judged.

New Year, Fresh Start

Remember when your mother told



Rosalyn Hackworth

you to keep your hands to yourself? Well, nowadays more than ever, you must follow Mom's advice. Unfortunately, our society has gotten to the point where sexual harassment is a common phrase. Sometimes it is a legitimate problem and sometimes it is a case of “crying wolf.” Whatever the case may be, you need to do what ever you can to avoid being dubbed a perpetrator.

I'd also like to address one of my pet peeves from the last

couple of years, the terms “first-tier” and “second-tier.” How about we start using the phrases “pre-ratification” and “post-ratification” (i.e. those who were employed prior to the contract vote and those who were hired afterward)?

And, last but not least, how many times have I heard “They (the company) were out to get me”? I always say, “If you knew it, why on Earth did you help them get you?”

Don't give your employer ammunition to ambush you. Keep your head in the game.

If you think a problem is on the horizon, please call your Union Representative.



EMAP

The healing power of laughter

Too tired to keep up with your jogging today? Turn on Letterman or watch one of the *Naked Gun* movies. Your heart won't know the difference.

According to a recent study at the University of Maryland School of Medicine at Baltimore, continuous laughter does as much to open up your arteries and aid blood flow as continuous exercise.

Scientists studied the endothelium, the inner lining of the arteries that regulates blood flow and secretes chemicals that prevent blockages. Since stress is known to have negative effects on the endothelium, including interruptions in chemical secretion and tightening of blood vessels, the researchers designed a test to study the effects of laughter on arteries.

The test subjects were divided into two groups. While being monitored by a blood pressure machine and ultrasound, one group watched a clip from a gruesome war movie while the other group watched a comedy.

Nearly 75 percent of the subjects experienced tightening of blood vessels when they watched the war film, while the arteries of almost all participants were observed as open and relaxed as they laughed at the comedy.

Since laughter produces chemicals in the brain known as endorphins, scientists believe there may be a link between endorphins and the healthy functioning of the endothelium.

Similar studies support the theory that a positive attitude can stave off health problems. Heart failure patients studied at Duke University were much more

‘Researchers designed a test to study the effects of laughter on arteries.’

likely to eat improperly, skip medications and die early if they suffered from mild depression. An earlier study at the University of Maryland found that those who have a history of heart problems didn't find any humor in everyday occurrences, unlike healthy individuals.

Scientists were quick to point out that laughter is no substitute for the benefits of regular exercise, even if the cardiovascular rewards do come without much effort or muscle aches. But including 15 minutes of laughter to your daily schedule, along with exercise, will likely improve your heart health.

F.R.O.G.S.

promotion extended!

RANCHO
FEDERAL
CREDIT
UNION

Our F.R.O.G.S. want to celebrate the New Year with us. We are extending the promotion for another month ending January 31, 2007. Open a New Account and receive a \$25 cash deposit into your savings account. Refer a family member or co-worker and receive a \$25 American Express gift check for every referral. Open a 9 mo. or an 18 mo. Share-Certificate and receive a Special Rate of 5.00%, 5.12% APY*. Don't miss out on our **Fantastic Rates On Great Shares**. Contact your credit union for more details. Our trained staff is more than willing to assist you with all of your financial needs.

*APY = Annual Percentage Yield

W2 FORMS

Get them from your employer!

Your employer is required to prepare and distribute W2 forms by Jan. 21. Please be sure that your employer has your current address.

The union does not prepare or distribute W2 forms.