



Negotiating Food4Less, CVS and Quest Contracts
Don't Chase After Shoplifters!
Steward of the Quarter: Vicki Locke



The Worker

The Newsletter of the UFCW Local 135
San Diego, CA

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The Worker

April 2017



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President's Message



By Mickey Kasparian
President
International Vice President

It's April already and we have a lot of work and negotiations ahead of us starting with Food4Less contract negotiations at the end of the Month. The contract expires in June and in the past Kroger has tried to make Food4Less employees agree to an inferior contract to what was negotiated for Ralphs employees.

Last year we all stood together with our brothers and sisters at Albertsons, Ralphs, and Vons and we will need to do the same with our Food4Less brothers and sisters to make sure they're not treated as second-class citizens.

We must remember that this is the same Kroger executives who make millions of dollars a year while our own Food4Less members struggle to make ends meet.

The same goes for our CVS brothers and sisters. The CVS Union contract

2017: What a busy year it is!

expires on June 30, 2017 and we are preparing for the next collective bargaining agreement. For many of you this will be your first experience with negotiations.

Negotiations provide us with the opportunity to make changes to our working conditions and improve our wages and benefits.

For your Union Leadership to negotiate the best possible contract, you and your coworkers must be strong and unified. This will send a strong message to management that you support your Union's actions and are willing to take action – if necessary – to obtain a fair and equitable contract.

Last month we sent you a questionnaire to get your input for bargaining. We

"For your Union Leadership to negotiate the best possible contract, you and your coworkers must be strong and unified. This will send a strong message to management that you support your Union's actions and are willing to take action – if necessary – to obtain a fair and equitable contract. "

hope you have returned them so we know what is most important to you and to your coworkers.

Food4Less and CVS workers work as hard as the rest of us and we must show them that we won't back down. We will stand in Solidarity to make sure all of our members enjoy affordable health care for their families, fair wages and a decent pension.

We are currently in negotiations with Quest Diagnostics, and we have

some actions coming up to support our Quest brothers and sisters. On February 21, the phlebotomists voted in favor of strike authorization. We organized Quest Diagnostics workers more than a year ago and we have been unable to negotiate a fair contract with the company as yet.

One of the biggest sticking points is that Quest phlebotomists are on Medi-Cal because they can't afford Quest's insurance for their families, and we would like to bring them into our Trust. It's a terrible thing to have full-time workers on public assistance when the company is earning billions of dollars.

In March we held a rally and press conference outside of Quest

Diagnostics in Chula Vista on 4th Street. We had two more days of negotiations following that action and it looks as if Quest workers are going on strike as soon as April 19. We could use your help on the picket lines, so I hope you will join us out there.

This is our entire membership's opportunity to show Food4Less and our new CVS and Quest members that their fight is our fight. This is also our opportunity to have new members step up and show leadership so we can fight for many of the issues that energize our members.

Together we can win a fair contract for each – Food4Less and CVS. Over the coming months your union representatives will be reaching out to you to support you so you can get active in these campaigns. ■

Executive Assistant's Report



By Richard Barrera
Executive Assistant

Since the Presidential Election, our Local and in fact, all of Labor, has been focusing on threats from the federal government to undermine workers' rights, including National Right-to-Work legislation.

But perhaps the most serious threat to workers in our community comes from the potential mass deportations of our sisters and brothers.

Donald Trump campaigned on a pledge to round up and deport 11 million undocumented people. He has now issued two executive orders paving the way to put that plan into action.

In San Diego County alone, estimates are that 250,000 people in our community are without documentation.

This means that in a union the size of UFCW Local 135, we have our own members who are under threat or who are living with the fear that parents, children and our neighbors could at any moment be taken away from us.

Working Together to Stand in Solidarity

We have already seen examples of mothers and fathers being detained and deported, separating them from their children. Fearful parents are signing papers for friends or clergy to care for their children in case they are deported.

The threat to our working families is particularly serious in a border community like San Diego because federal immigration agents are allowed extraordinary power within 100 miles of the border – this includes our entire jurisdiction in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

This includes the power to question and detain people in their cars, on public transportation and at work – without a warrant.

What can we do to protect ourselves and our coworkers? The first step is to become familiar with your rights.

Last week UFCW Local 135 staff participated in a training session run by the California Labor Federation and the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council. This training provided important information on understanding the rights that we all have.

Our local will follow up with similar know your rights workshops for our members and the community including turning out attorneys who can provide individual counseling.

Secondly, we need to work together with our sisters and brothers throughout the labor movement to advance state policy that protects workers here in our community. We will bring our voice in support

of efforts to declare our local cities and school districts as sanctuaries – meaning local government agencies will in no way cooperate with the Trump Administration to deport our families.

At the state level we strongly support legislation authored by local legislative champions such as State Senator Ben Hueso (who is authoring a bill to provide state funding for immigration attorneys for individuals who face deportation) and State Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, who is authoring legislation to protect our veterans from deportation.

The highest priority bill in Sacramento is SB54, the California Values Act, authored by Senate Pro Tempore and San Diego native, Kevin de León. This bill will prevent the use of state and local resources for federal immigration enforcement actions that will separate families and hurt the state's economy.

Finally, in addition to knowing our rights as individuals and advocating for policies at the state and local levels, we must stand up as part of a mass movement to demonstrate that an attack on any workers is an attack on all of us.

Our local is part of a coalition of labor and community partners that is planning a mass action on Monday, May 1. We hope to have thousands of people march in Downtown San Diego as a show of strength to both the Trump Administration and to each other.

Look for communication from the local over the next few weeks about how you can participate in these efforts. ■

From the Grievance Director



By Todd Walters
Grievance Director

It seems everyone has seen the videos where workers try to stop shoplifters. They're everywhere. They're on the news and on the internet. These videos seem to pop up on a daily basis.

With the technology we have today, there are cameras everywhere, at our worksites and in all of our smart phones. If you attempt to stop a shoplifter, there is a good likelihood that it will be recorded on video.

Over the past 10 to 15 years, retail employers, such as Albertsons, Gelson's, Ralphs, Stater Bros and Vons, plus CVS and Rite Aid, have taken drastic steps when it comes to employees' safety and, believe it or not, even shoplifters' safety.

Because workers, customers and even shoplifters have been injured or had property damage, there have been claims and lawsuits brought against our companies, costing them millions of

Guidelines for our Retail Brothers and Sisters – Don't Chase After Shoplifters

dollars. This is the reason they do not want you getting involved.

You should notify the person in charge of your store if there is a possible shoplifter. Companies have their own security or loss prevention as well as policies in place on how to handle these situations. It is all in your training packets that you sign-off on when you are hired. If you don't know the policy, ask your store manager.

Numerous UFCW Local 135 members have been suspended or fired for confronting shoplifters. Once you have

deemed a citizen's arrest, which could cause your company to be sued. With the new law regarding grocery bags, some customers are putting things in their pockets to avoid paying for a bag. It can be difficult to determine whether they are going to pay for the product or not. Notify a store manager and let them handle it.

It's interesting that shoplifting is one of the most widespread crimes and no one talks about it much.

The National Association for Shoplifting Prevention reports that there are 27

"Numerous UFCW Local 135 member have been suspended or fired for confronting shoplifters. Once you have been disciplined, you would likely have to go through the grievance process to get your job back."

been disciplined you would likely have to go through the grievance process to get your job back. As mentioned above, the incident could be caught on camera, and if you violate store policy, the companies will use it against you and try to get you fired.

We recently had members terminated for stopping a shoplifter in the store when they could have called police. There is also an incident when a shoplifter had friends outside who came in and assaulted our member.

Also, if you stop a customer, it can be

million shoplifters in the U.S. today. That's 1 in 11 Americans with sticky fingers, and \$35 million-worth of merchandise is estimated to disappear from store shelves each day.

It is tempting to go after them, but don't.

If you are not in charge of the store, don't do anything on your own, like confronting possible shoplifters or going outside after them. It could cost you your job. A good way to think about it is, you are always on stage when at work and everyone is watching. Be Safe! ■

Union News Briefs

AT&T Workers Prepare to Strike



In February, 21,000 working people at AT&T's wireless division voted to authorize a strike.

The workers needed to send a message to AT&T because the company is demanding workers do more work for less. Despite making \$13 billion in profits last year—and record profits in its wireless division—AT&T has cut more than 8,000 call center jobs and outsourced many of those jobs to low-wage countries.

The company continues to outsource jobs and demand cuts to benefits, while the working people at AT&T Mobility helped AT&T earn record profits last year, yet they have seen their commissions cut and health care costs rise.

AT&T's CEO Randall Stephenson met with President Trump recently and discussed how AT&T can help “stimulate job

creation in America,” yet he chose to close more than 20 call centers and eliminate more than 8,000 call center jobs in recent years. Some of that work was sent overseas.

He has also outsourced the majority of AT&T retail stores to low-wage third-party dealers, undermining the standards of AT&T's employees. If he cared about creating good jobs in America, he would start with AT&T.

AT&T's greed is bad news not only for workers at the company, but for our communities. If AT&T executives are able to get away with this, it will embolden other corporate CEOs to do the same.

AT&T was able to turn a massive profit last year because of the hard work and quality service of retail store workers, call centers representatives and technicians. Instead of sharing in the profits, AT&T is determined to continue to keep the big compensation packages flowing to its executives, while forcing working people to sacrifice.

Unions help to restore Jewish Cemetary after Vandalism



Two unions provided free services to help repair and secure Philadelphia's vandalized Mount Carmel Cemetery. More than 100 gravestones were toppled and damaged at the Jewish cemetery in the Wissinoming section.

Bobby Henon, a Philadelphia City Council member with union ties who represents the Wissinoming neighborhood, tweeted that the Philadelphia Building and Construction Trades Council offered to replace the toppled headstones and that the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Union Local 98 offered to install additional lighting and security cameras.

Labor leader John Dougherty of the Philadelphia Building and Construction Trades Council told reporters that the vandalism is a “cowardly act of anti-Semitism that cannot be tolerated.” His workers also offered to re-sod and clean the cemetery grounds.

Nissan Accused of Wrongly Blocking Union Activity at Mississippi Plant

The United Auto Workers union said Nissan Motor Co. broke federal labor law last month, less than two days before a rally where U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders spoke in favor of unionization.

The UAW said a company security guard wrongfully stopped workers from handing out literature and asking fellow employees to sign cards authorizing a union vote.

A union lawyer emailed an unfair labor practice charge to the National Labor Relations Board late Thursday. It's one of several now pending over the union's years-long campaign to represent some or all of the 6,400 people who work at the complex.

Sanders, a Vermont independent, told The Associated Press in a phone interview Friday that pro-union workers are fighting an uphill battle against an unfairly hostile company.

"I think the workers in the Nissan plant in Mississippi have shown an enormous amount of courage," the former candidate for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination said. "When people stand up and fight for their rights, it's important to stand with them."

Steward of the Quarter – Vicki Locke



Vicki Locke is fearless. As a shop steward for 17 years, she's not afraid of management, although she says a couple of managers really don't like her. She's a fighter. In October of this year, she will have been with Albertsons for 24 years. She has worked all over the county including North Park, Santee and Coronado, but for the past four years she's closer to home in Alpine (Store 6704).

"I got around over the years, but when this contract is up, I'm thinking of retiring," she said. "I'm looking for someone who wants to step up [to become a steward]. I have a couple of good ones. I need someone younger, someone who will be in the stores for a long period of time."

She encourages new members to join the union and to go to your new member meetings. She pushes them in the right direction if they want to move up or move to a different department and lets them know that if they have problems to "come see me before taking other steps."

She supports fellow union members. She talks to them, encourages them to ride share to meetings, and lets them know to talk to other members if they see someone doing something they shouldn't be doing. Let them know before they get into trouble.

She sees her position as steward as important for the workers, and says sometimes

workers have questions about their rights during probation and she lets them know they have the same rights, but there's a different way of approaching it.

"If they're being harassed, I like them to go with the flow, get past probation, take notes, etc. As long as you have detailed notes. Sometimes management doesn't even talk to people who file grievances and they are denied. I tell them to refile.

"If they [management] were doing the right thing, they wouldn't have to worry about me," she said. "I've learned over the years that they have never been at store level. I think I've only met one who became management and then as

soon as things started going south they jumped back into the stores."

"I like all people to be treated fairly," Vicki said. "I see so many who get flustered and I like to help them take the right steps so they don't end up leaving."

She enjoys fighting for her co-workers and for her friends.

"I just think that we have to support everyone that's union. Any of our union brothers and sisters. We've got to support each other."

When not at work, Vicki has her hands full with her seven grandchildren when at home in Campo.

"I have grandkids that I'm always with. I have one that's 20, and I'm always with the three-year-olds. I have two identical boy twins and a great granddaughter that just turned three.

"We love to go to the library, walk around the lake. Go to the park. My 11 year old granddaughter is learning horse husbandry. Three I've raised. The 14-year-old likes to play paintball, so we do that sometimes. He nails me every time."

She likes to volunteer at the high school and elementary school. It gives me time to spend with them while they grow up.

In her "spare time" Vicki is an avid reader. "I read a lot of biographies, I just finished a whole series on China. And I like mysteries. I go to the library a lot. Four dogs, two cats and a fish. I have a husband of 42 years in May. That's a job in itself." ■

UFCW Local 135
Members At Work
On Union Representative
Rick Lloyd's Route





Meet some of your Brothers and Sisters at Spreckels Sugar

In Brawley, CA, we have about 500 members of UFCW Local 135 at Spreckels Sugar Co. During the winter, the factory goes into Inter-campaign when sugar beet crops are not producing, they lay off the majority of workers, keeping about 80 to work on maintenance, clean the machines and make sure all the machinery is safe for when the rest of the workers come back to work.

All the workers return to work in April, when the sugar beets are grown and delivered and production of sugar can start again.

During the summer, when Spreckles is in full-campaign mode, temperatures in Brawley are often over 100. Inside the factory, temperatures reach 118 to 120, so workers must have plenty of water. Safety is a huge issue.

Spreckles Sugar has been in business for more than 100 years. It packages and sells sugar in 50 pound bags and 2,000 pound totes, by bulk truck and bulk rail as well. Spreckles is sold to commercial companies like Pepsi.

Meet some of the Shop Stewards below:



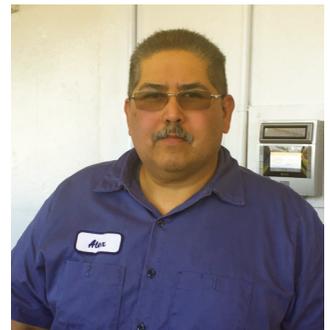
Alicia Rosas has been a UFCW Local 135 Steward for eight years. She is the only woman to work year-round in the yard and factory. She is in charge of cleaning and making sure the warehouse and silos are clean.



Juan Hernandez has worked at Spreckels Sugar year-round for 20 years as an oiler. He checks on the machines to make sure they are maintained. He said it gets to be 120° to 130° and safety is an issue, but they have an air conditioned room where they go to cool off.



Ray Mendoza wears to work a UFCW Local shirt every day. "I like walking in and making sure they [management] see it," he says. He has worked there in welding fabrication for 20 years.



Alex Ojeda has worked as a boiler operator since 1983 and says the working conditions have improved over the years because of better equipment and procedures, and the Union Spreckels generates its own power during campaign.



Quest Diagnostics Phlebotomists Hold a Press Conference



Monday, March 20, Quest Diagnostics workers held a press conference outside of the Chula Vista office on 4th Avenue to engage the community in their fight for a fair contract. Workers are gaining a public network of support – a reminder they are not alone in this struggle. The press conference was also held to add pressure to their contract negotiations.

Quest, a billion dollar company whose CEO makes more than \$9 million a year, can afford to hire more people, give them better health care options and give them raises. The phlebotomists have gone for more than a year without a contract, following their affiliation with UFCW Local 135 and certification by the National Labor Relations Board on December 24, 2015.

Speakers included Quest Phlebotomists, members of the faith community from Interfaith Worker Justice San Diego (IWJSD), representatives from Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez's

office, and Chula Vista Mayor Mary Salas's office. Everyone came together because when phlebotomists don't have enough staff or help at the laboratories, patients and the community are at risk.

Phlebotomists Juana Perez, Jack Corpuz and Chere Gamez addressed the news cameras to illustrate to the community, their problems with understaffing including long patient wait times. As a result, phlebotomists are forced to process high volumes of patients under high pressure deadlines – all in service of increasing this company's bottom line.

"We are the face of Quest Diagnostics, we are the ones on the front lines of patient care. All we want is respect and a fair contract," Juana said.

"On a daily basis, we are abused by patients, they yell at us and they throw things at us," Chere said. "I think it's unacceptable to have patients waiting three to four hours, we have elders, diabetics and children. I feel that Quest

can do better for their patients, the community and their employees."

Following the press conference, a reporter from Univision interviewed Juana and Jenny Ferrer and they made it onto the 11 p.m. news.

"Patients are forced to wait for hours in our waiting room even after they fast for 8 to 12 hours before they arrive, which puts them at risk," said Jack Corpuz.

Jack Corpuz says he had a 94-year-old man, after fasting for eight to 12 hours, he waited for four more hours at Quest to have his blood drawn.

The Quest phlebotomists deserve a fair contract. We need our UFCW Local 135 brothers and sisters to come out and fight alongside them. We will update you as negotiations progress.

See more pictures on the next page.



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2017

General Membership Meetings:

6 p.m.
April 19
July 19
October 24

New Member Meetings:

9 a.m. & 6 p.m.
May 3
August 2
November 1

All meetings
will be held at
**UFCW Local
135 in Mission
Valley**

2001 Camino Del Rio
South, San Diego, CA
92108



If you have moved or will move soon, please change your address with us. Call in your new address to the membership department at (619) 298-7772, ext. 6

Grievance Highlights: February 2017

- ★ A CVS member did not get their correct payout upon termination and received \$716 in back pay.
- ★ A Ralphs member did not get their correct payout upon termination and received \$1,358 in back pay.
- ★ A CVS member received a wage correction with back pay in the amount of \$872.
- ★ A Food4Less member was returned to work from suspension and received back pay in the amount of \$530.
- ★ A Vons member received corrected vacation back pay in the amount of \$1,208.



MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

With your membership you get the benefit of a union that will fight for you in every way we can: collective bargaining, support from our Union Representatives for grievances and support from our Benefits Department for Health and Welfare, plus our membership department offers you extra perks.

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We are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed from noon to 1 p.m. for lunch), and we are closed holidays.

Contact us at (619)298-7772, Ext. 6 or (800)545-0135, Ext. 6

BENEFITS & PENSION DEPARTMENT

If you have a question regarding insurance benefits or pension, call our benefits department at (619) 298-7772, Ext. 8. We are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed from noon to 1 p.m. for lunch), Monday through Friday except holidays. If you would like to read a list of frequently asked questions or would like to download a form, please go to one of the links below:

**UFCW Food Employers Joint Trust Fund
(Southern California United Food &
Commercial Workers Unions and Food
Employers Joint Benefit Fund) (Food Trust)**

Contact the Food Trust at, (877) 284-2320
www.scufcwfund.com
www.scufcwfund.com/contact-us

**Drug and General Sales Trust Fund
Southern California United Food &
Commercial Workers Unions and Drug &
General Sales Employers (Drug & General
Sales Trust)**

Contact information for Drug Trust:
1 (877) 999-8329
www.ufcwdrugtrust.org
www.ufcwdrugtrust.org/office-info.html

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<http://ufcw135.com/discount-tickets>
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Adult.....\$82.00
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AMC Theaters: \$10.25
 Reading Theaters: \$7.50
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SAN DIEGO ZOO
 SAN DIEGO ZOO
SAFARI PARK
 Adult: \$45.00
 Child (3-11): \$36.00

Members must be present to purchase tickets. All ticket prices subject to change, tickets subject to availability, credit cards accepted. NO CHECKS. ALL SALES FINAL. NO REFUNDS.

All Disney and Universal Studios ticket sales are credit card only. Disney tickets are limited to 8 per person per month, Magic Mountain tickets are limited to 10 per person per month, and all other theme park tickets are limited to 12 per person per month. All movie theater tickets are limited to 20 per person per month. Purchases must be made in person.



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PERIODICALS



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a
Question?
Call
your
UNION!
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298
7772**

Your Union Fights For You!

Back Pay Awarded to Members

February 2017:	\$6,573.58
YTD (2017):	\$13,340.94

Members Reinstated as Result of Grievances

February 2017:	11
YTD (2017):	17

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