



Coming soon . . .

Death & Destruction

Local member answers the President's call when disaster strikes anywhere in the country.

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Cold & Rainy

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High & Mighty

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 Monday-Friday

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Upcoming challenges require greater activism from members

Upcoming negotiations and the future of ambitious organizing drives are two topics about which I am quizzed by members these days no matter what the locale.

So far we have not received the list of demands the major food retailers will most certainly put forward as we begin negotiations. Much of it is predictable. The part where they justify how much worse next year is going to be than the previous year and so major cuts in costs are necessary. Every word uttered by the major employers in 2011 will attempt to justify those cuts. Simply fill in the blank with the words "non-union competitors" and "market share" and you will have the heart of every formal employer statement until the end of our negotiations.

We know this much to be true; that the major food employers have over the past year sought to squeeze their employees, union and non-union alike, with full frontal assaults on Pension Funds and Medical Benefits at their root. Fortunately, strong memberships on the East and West Coasts have successfully staved off potentially devastating raids on member's benefits. But in many of those cases, Arizona and Seattle to name a couple close to home, strikes were avoided after lengthy negotiations with last minute compromises on both sides.

The precedent of recent regional contract talks is telling, but only partly. More often than not, the shape, form and substance of new collective bargaining agreements tend to mirror the model we establish here in Southern California. And as we know that model will be only as strong as the depth of your solidarity.

As the major grocery retailers emerge from this recession looking healthy and rested, we are seeing profits beckon to the days of when all three of the major national chains reported profits. It is always amusing to see how the major employers try and explain two opposite points to different groups.

To union negotiators, every one of them is barely clinging to life financially. But to investors, companies publish reports that assess their future in glowing terms and point to record-breaking profits as a signal of a high tide of money that surely awaits the buyer of their stock.

The truth is usually somewhere in the middle.

On another front

Our Local's ability to bring more workers under our umbrella starts off 2011 on a highly encouraging note.

Newly organized union members at JATAR in Long Beach stand today as the newest worksite

to vote to join us. Let me extend my congratulations to them and at the same time acknowledge the textbook example of just how powerful an organizing campaign can be when the workers are as committed to winning as we are.

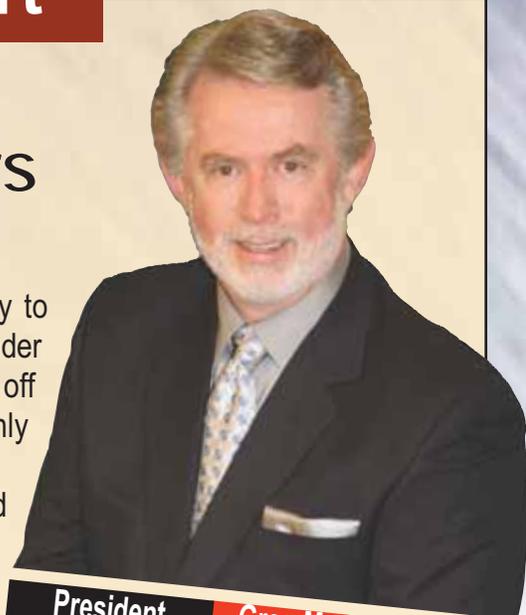
Workers at JATAR not only called us for help but they did everything we asked of them with as much enthusiasm and drive in the homestretch as they were the day they called.

We are currently in contact with several leaders at Henry's Farmer's Markets who have formed several strong committees throughout Southern California.

At Fresh & Easy, the heroes have already emerged—most notably from the two stores that have already asked for union representation and the several others that will soon.

In the same way John F. Kennedy called on his fellow Americans to seek ways they can contribute to society, allow me to invite every one of you to ponder the same thought.

2011 promises to be a pivotal year for our union. Imagine how invincible we would be if every time we raised our voices the roar of thousands of volunteers could be heard by every employer in America.



President

Greg M. Conger

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Covering all bases



Member Olivia Toscano, left holding yellow bag, and Rocky Pebley dole out reusable synthetic shopping bags to customers at Albertsons in Fullerton.

Union members demonstrate unity as contract talks near

All six Southern California locals took a major step in preparing for negotiations on a new Retail Food contract that will cover the bulk of the region's UFCW membership. The current collective bargaining agreement is set to expire in March.

The locals selected the busiest stores at which to set up folding tables stacked with pledge cards that gave customers an opportunity to reaffirm their support for the workers that have, in many cases, become trusted neighbors and friends.

Union stewards and rank-and-file members joined reps in what turned out to be a dreary rain-soaked four hour stretch.

But despite the inclement weather, Local 324 alone managed to pass out 10,000 reusable grocery bags bearing the union's name and logo.

It was a tougher than normal day because of the cold and rain, but I think we managed to inform a lot of customers about what's coming up for us," said local volunteer Olivia Toscano.

In the meantime, members

have been encouraged to wear the bright gold and blue lapel pins that read simply: March•2011.

The pins have inspired curious customers to inquire further. When told the date's significance customers reportedly have shown strong support.

"We've had a lot of response to our outreach so far," said President Greg Conger. "It's clear to me that the public is every bit as supportive of our goals today as they were four years ago.



Customers throughout Southern California signed cards pledging to support grocery workers in their pursuit of a fair collective bargaining agreement .



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Scholarships show our commitment to helping members and their families reach higher

In 2011, higher education in the state of California will cost about 50% more than it did in 2008. Based on the current budget woes in Sacramento, revenue shortfalls for our public university system and increasing tuition costs are a sad reality. Less available classes, more students per class, less students admitted onto campuses annually, and mandatory furloughs for professors and other campus employees are all certainties for our foreseeable futures.

Even two-year colleges are suffering, being overburdened by record breaking attendances and constantly diminishing funding, while attendance at a private university these days is practically a guarantee of many years of heavy post-graduate debt.

All these reasons are why, this time of year, I often remind our Local 324 members of the excellent scholarship programs available to them.

I cannot think of a time in our history when I have felt more passionate about the tremendous value of these benefits.

As is apparent from our past July / August issue of U magazine when last year's scholarship winners were announced, many UFCW members and their children have proven themselves worthy of such assistance. In fact, over the last five years, Local 324 has dedicated more and more resources to our Local scholarship programs because the number of deserving candidates keeps growing.

Each and every year at our main office, we get

excited to read about the many achievements and aspirations of our members and their dependents. Please do not delay. These scholarships are an opportunity not to be missed, and higher education will only continue to become more difficult to attain.



Secretary-Treasurer Andrea Zinder



The scholarships come from our Food Trust fund, from our International Union and from our own Local 324 scholarship program, for those members not eligible for the Food Trust Fund program. They are awarded based on academic performance, community service and to a lesser extent need. The first deadline is February 28, 2011 for the Retail Food and Meat division scholarship.

If you are currently thinking of enrolling in school for the Fall of 2011 or have a child who is in or entering college, we encourage you to apply for one of our scholarships. Information is available on our web site or you can call 714-995-4601 ext. 209 for application information.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea".



A Martyr blooms in the Lettuce Fields

—By Matthew Hart

Shortly before noon on Saturday, February 10, 1979, Rufino Contreras and a half-dozen other United Farm Workers walked onto a lettuce field owned by Mario Saikhon. They were into the 22nd day of a bitter strike against Saikhon and had hoped to convince the scab workers to honor their line. But as they approached the scabs, three armed company foremen opened fire on them. As they scrambled to safety, Jose Luis Contreras, also amongst the group of farm workers, turned to see his brother, Rufino, laying face down in the mud. For over an hour, Jose Luis and the other men attempted to rescue Rufino as he lay dying in the field, but were fended off by gunfire. Only after the arrival of the police were they able to get to him. Unfortunately, it was too late; Rufino Contreras later died at the local hospital.

This strike began in the lettuce fields of Imperial Valley. The United Farm Workers (UFW) had been trying to negotiate a contract with 28 growers, but were far from any agreement. Agricultural workers were only paid a wage of \$3.70 an hour, \$4.50 less than Teamster drivers. With their families living in squalor-like conditions, the farm workers wanted a 40-60% wage increase. The employers, however, would only agree to an increase of 7%. With such a gap between the two sides, UFW members from ten of the 28 growers walked off the fields.

Rufino worked along side his father and brother in the Saikhon fields. He was a loyal union member. Cesar Chavez, the president of the UFW, noted that Rufino would often function as his security when they traveled together throughout the Imperial Valley. So, it came as no surprise to anyone that Rufino took on a leadership role when the strike began. However, even before his death, tragedy would strike Rufino. His wife was severely burned in a kerosene accident at their home, receiving third-degree burns over most of her body. Rufino took time away from the picket line to stay with his wife in the hospital as she was recovering.

Rufino was a loyal family man, but he also felt an obligation to his union. On February 10, he returned to the line. He was elated that his wife had been approved for the union's medical insurance. His emotions and pride in the union ran high that day. Sadly, as

he approached the scab workers, a single bullet pierced his head.

Cesar Chavez calmed demands for vengeance by fellow UFW members and called for the immediate stoppage of all vegetable farming in the Imperial Valley, nearly ceasing production completely.

Days later, on February 14, Chavez stood in front of 7,000 mourners, offering the eulogy at Rufino's funeral. "Rufino is not dead," he said. "Wherever farm workers organize, stand up for their rights, and strike for justice, Rufino Contreras is with them." Sitting in a wheelchair, still in bandages, and holding their two children tight was Rufino's wife. Also amongst the mourners was Governor Jerry Brown.

On February 22, still emotional over Rufino's death, 1,000 or so farm workers clashed with police in the lettuce fields of Imperial Valley. Governor Brown had to call in the National Guard to restore order.

The three foremen who initially opened fire on the farm workers were arrested, but released on bail. A judge would later exonerate them, ruling that there was insufficient evidence to prove which of the three killed Rufino. The same judge, William Lehnhardt, would later rule that the UFW engaged in acts of violence during the strike and order them to pay 1.7 million dollars in restitution. Even though his wife worked as a scab for one of the growers during the dispute, Lehnhardt refused to excuse himself from the case.

As for the strike, it continued throughout most of the year, expanding throughout California and into Arizona. By mid-August, some growers began to negotiate their own contracts separately. By December, most growers had reached deals with the union that included wage increases ranging from 43-57% during the duration of the contracts.

Rufino's death became the battle cry that rallied the union to victory. His blood planted a seed of defiance in the rich soil of the Imperial Valley. On that tragic day, something other than lettuce began to grow. Farm workers demanded more than a meager existence, and Rufino symbolized their willingness to obtain better lives. In those fields, a martyr bloomed, never to be forgotten.



‘Enough is enough’

Delivery service workers fight back, vote union



Triumphant JATAR employees celebrate with Organizers after seeing the federally-monitored election show a victory for the workers and union, 22-8.

Imagine working at the same job for 17 years without ever receiving a raise—unless you count periodic increases in the minimum wage. How much more indignity would most workers tolerate before throwing their weight behind a union in their workplace?

For 32 employees of JATAR in the Signal Hill area of Long Beach, the answer came shortly after the company’s owner took away the one week vacation they had once enjoyed. That was in August of 2010.

According to James Bush, a five-year veteran of the facility, management had been using the same excuse for as long as he could remember.

“We kept hearing that everything was tight because of the economy and that we were losing money and had to cut back,” said Bush.

But Chris Savone, another two-year employee at JATAR, recalled that it grew increasingly transparent that economic hardship was not the reason for the company’s cutbacks.

“It also made us wonder how the company was losing money given the fact that they had not lost a single client since 2008, the time this recession was supposed to have begun,” Savone said.

Employees of the facility wasted no time in addressing what had become too much to take. They formed a committee and voted to seek the protection of a union at work.

Within two weeks, the group of employees had contacted Gilbert Davila, Local 324’s Organizing Director who saw his role, in large part, as similar to an air traffic controller rather than an instigator.

“These guys knew what they wanted and had all the courage and endurance it took to bring a union to their worksite,” Davila said.

The pro-union sentiment at the facility still had its detractors, but two bold missteps by the company’s owner, one of which was the firing of Savone sealed their fate. When the company agreed under pressure to re-hire Savone, pro union activists felt empowered as never before. The drama came shortly after the union filed for an on-site election with the National Labor Relations Board.

In the end, the most damning element in the campaign came from Wall Street itself.

Union researchers provided detailed economic reports on the company’s annual profits. Those records were easily obtained given the company’s status as a publicly traded corporation.

Those reports showed that last year alone JATAR had earned \$4.54 million in profits.

Those who opposed the union had little to hang their hats on, according to Organizer Jose Perez. And on Nov. 10, 2010, JATAR employees voted 22-8 to be represented by UFCW Local 324.

Mistress of Disaster

When catastrophe strikes, member Sylvia Balfour stands ready to deploy at a moment's notice with her team of federal relief workers

Anybody who has bothered to peek behind the window of a grocery store pharmacy during its busiest peaks can understand how some pharmacy technicians have likened the scene to a panicking mob in the wake of an oncoming storm. But somehow Pavilions pharmacy tech Sylvia Balfour has earned a reputation for keeping a cool head when the workload seems more menacing than an oncoming hurricane.

Balfour explains her seemingly unflappable temperament comes from one simple fact: she's been in the path of a hurricane and, well, this aint it.

"People are always commenting on how calm I am when things get crazy and I just tell them that I've been through real disasters and this is an inconvenience maybe—but not a disaster."

Balfour's internal yardstick comes from her experience as a member of the federal government's disaster relief squads—a role she has filled for the past 15 years.

During that time, Balfour has been sent to help with relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina in 2003 and later Hurricane Ike in 2005.

The sheer depth of human deprivation she encountered during Katrina alone was enough to make any rough day at work pale by comparison.

"You get a sense of what is really important in your life," she said as she recalled setting up tents and stocking makeshift bookshelves with medication upon arrival in Louisiana after Katrina.

Tears well up in her eyes and her voice cracks as she remembers a young mother of two who was trapped for nearly three weeks in a remote shack on the outskirts of New Orleans proper.

"The woman was in bad shape because after all that time trapped inside she started drinking the water," Balfour said. Aid workers were particularly moved by the woman's story of valor and desperation and took up a collection and purchased bus tickets for the family of three to join relatives in Texas—an option that seemed hopelessly out of reach.

While the impact of Katrina stands as the most prominent of Balfour's life-changing experiences, her two-week activation two years later when Hurricane Ike struck the Gulf coast could be a close second.

She remembers playing what seemed a lot like a game of chicken with the storm as the 50 members of her unit moved up and down Texas's Gulf Coast sev-

eral times as the storm's trajectory changed.

When the storm finally settled on Galveston as its destination, Balfour helped set up for what turned out to be another multi-faceted operation.

Balfour's commitment to the cause requires that she be available for two weeks out of every year for training drills.

Such routine exercises have taken her all over the country to perform everything from mock response to a chemical and biological terrorist attack to an earthquake.

Balfour has expressed gratitude for her company's willingness to follow federal guidelines governing her time off for drills and emergency call-ups and strictly forbids employers from penalizing employees who participate in emergency readiness squads in the same way it protects military reservists called to active duty.

President Greg Conger commended employers such as Vons/Pavilions for accommodating employees like Balfour just like the law requires.

In fact, Conger said, Southern California boasts one of the system's most ardent supporters—Stater Bros. Markets.

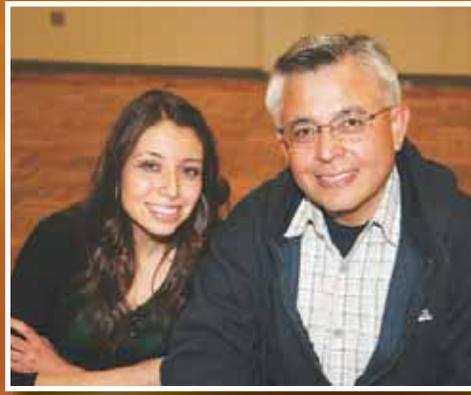
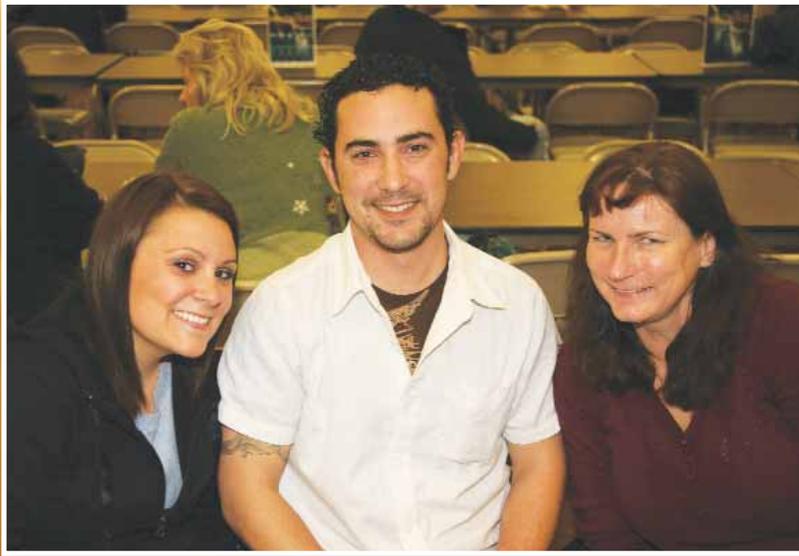
"Stater Bros. has really led the way in supporting employees who must take a leave of absence to serve the well-being of the country," Conger said. "In fact Staters takes pride in being able to employ people who readily sacrifice their personal comforts for a greater cause. It's obviously a sign of exemplary character."





Vons/Pavilions Pharmacy
Tech Sylvia Balfour

**December 2010
General Membership
Meeting**



Hot Topics

Words of wisdom to help you keep your job

Keep us informed of address changes... please!

—By Field Director Chuck Adinolfi

Have you changed your address with the Local? Help save us postage and money.

Every month our Local receives hundreds of pieces of returned mail that was sent out to the membership for various reasons.

This mail includes contract updates, dues billings and *U-Magazine* to name just a few.

Each piece of returned mail costs the Local postage two times, once when we send it and one more time when it is returned to us because the address is incorrect.

We also spend countless hours trying to track down these members in an attempt to deliver their mail. This can cost the Local hundreds of dollars each and every month.

We will soon be starting negotiations with the food division and our members can expect to receive numerous updates through the mail. We will also be using

<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal Card Request
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change of Address Form
Member's name: _____
SSN: _____ DOB: _____
Address _____
City _____ zip _____
Phone # _____
Cell# _____
email _____
<i>If requesting withdrawal, what was your last day worked? _____</i>

e-mail and text messages to keep the membership informed throughout the process.

It will be extremely important that we have your contact information including your correct mailing address, email, home and cellular phone numbers.

Please take a couple of minutes and let us know if you have moved and update all of your contact information.

This can be done easily in several ways by either: calling the General Office (714) 995-4601, ext. 4, sending in a change of address form by mail, contact your representative or by clicking

on the "contact us" link at our website, (UFCW324.org).

Giving a new address to your employer or to the Trust Fund does not change your address with Local 324. Please make sure to notify us.

Enjoy Your Retirement!

For fun and friendship join the UFCW Retirees' Club!

- *Monthly Luncheons
- *Semi-Annual Pancake Breakfasts
- *Annual Fashion Show
- *Annual Indoor Picnic
- *Regular Bingo
- *Party Bingo
- *Bowling
- *Arts & Crafts
- Easter, Patriotic, & Christmas Boutiques
- *Reduced Travel Trips

As a member of Local 324 you are welcome to participate in many of our activities. For information please call: Barbara Hamilton (562) 431-7545, Carole Peterson (714) 521-6820, or Marion Jones (714) 536-7315



How To Apply For A Non-Food Scholarship Award

(Disney, Food 4 Less, Rancho Federal Credit Union, CVS, Rite-Aid, Kaiser Permanente, and Pharmacists at Albertsons, Stater Bros., Ralphs and Vons)
 Complete and sign all sections of this form. If the Applicant is different from the Member, both persons must sign and date the form. Mail the application to the Union Office at the address above, Include all documents listed below in Section 3.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All applications and accompanying documentation must be postmarked no later than May 2, 2011 in order to be eligible for consideration.

1. Member's Information

Member's Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial	Social Security Number	
Mailing Address		City	State	Zip Code		Date Of Birth
Home Telephone Number	Employer		Work Telephone Number		Union Local	

2. Applicant's Information (if dependent of member)

Applicant's Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial	Social Security Number	
Mailing Address (If Different From Above)		City	State	Zip Code		Date Of Birth
Home Telephone Number	Employer, if currently employed		Work Telephone Number		Union Local	

Current Academic Information: Are you Currently enrolled in school? Yes No

High School: _____ (name of institution) Undergraduate College/University: _____ (name of institution)

Date of High School Graduation: _____ Technical/Vocational School: _____ (name of institution)

Degree objective: College/Undergraduate degree Technical school credential Vocational license or credential
 Graduate Degree

Do you have a bachelor's degree? Yes No

School or Schools you plan to attend.

(name of institution)	(address)	(telephone number)
(name of institution)	(address)	(telephone number)
(name of institution)	(address)	(telephone number)

3. Documents you must attach to your application:

a. Transcript

Obtain a transcript of courses you have completed and grades you received from your high school and other schools including undergraduate colleges and universities that you have attended.

Your official transcripts MUST show your cumulative GPA and SAT scores. (SAT scores not required if you have attended college for 2 years or more.)

b. Teacher's Appraisal Forms

There are two Teacher Appraisal Forms with your applications package. You must sign and date each form and give them to two teachers who have taught courses you have taken. The courses may be academic, technical, or vocational subjects. **Letters of recommendation are required.**

Instructions for Written Portion of this Application

On a separate sheet or sheets of paper, type your response to Questions in Part A or Part B below. Be sure to caption your sheets as "Part A" or "Part B" responses. Your responses must be numbered to correspond to the questions. Your name must appear on each sheet.

Part A	Part B
Applicants who are graduating high school seniors or who graduated high school last year	Applicants who graduated from high school two or more years ago
QUESTIONS FOR PART A APPLICANTS	QUESTIONS FOR PART B APPLICANTS
Limit your answers to the last three years of high school and first year of college, vocational or technical training school.	Restrict your answers to your post-high school years.
<p>4A Describe your academic, vocational, and/or other technical goals State whether you plan to attend a two- or four-year college next year, or a technical or vocational school. State your long-term goals for your education. Name the institutions to which you intend to apply.</p> <p>5A List major events, honors, scholarships, awards, and athletics List honors, scholarships and awards you have received. Describe your participation in athletics and other major school activities.</p> <p>6A List membership and responsibilities in organizations List positions and leadership roles you have held in school or community organizations</p> <p>7A List volunteer, community service, and/or other extracurricular activities List volunteer work and community service that you have performed and any extracurricular activities you have participated in.</p> <p>8A List your employment history</p> <p>9A Describe your career and life goals and how this scholarship will help you attain them Your college entrance application essay may be used to fulfill this requirement.</p>	<p>4B Describe your academic, vocational, and/or other technical goals State your academic plan for the remainder of your post-high school education. Name the institutions to which you intend to apply.</p> <p>5B List major events, honors, scholarships, awards, and activities Describe your participation in major campus activities and list honors, scholarships and awards you have received.</p> <p>6B List membership and responsibilities in organizations List positions and leadership roles you have held in college, vocational or technical training schools or community organizations</p> <p>7B List volunteer, community service, and/or other extracurricular activities List volunteer work and community service that you have performed and any extracurricular activities you have participated in.</p> <p>8B List your employment history or participation in career internships</p> <p>9B Provide an explanation of how you see your career and life developing.</p>

10 Return this application and all documents to:

UFCW Local 324
8530 Stanton Avenue
PO Box 5004
Buena Park, CA 90620-5004

REMINDER – Be sure to include:

- Your transcript Two Teacher Appraisal Forms
 Your separate pages with your response to Part A or Part B Questions



11. Sign And Date Below Both Member and Applicant must sign this form.

I/We hereby certify that all information supplied above is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge.

Member's Signature

Applicant's Signature

Date

Word on the street



What impact do non-union stores have on our ability to get a good union contract?

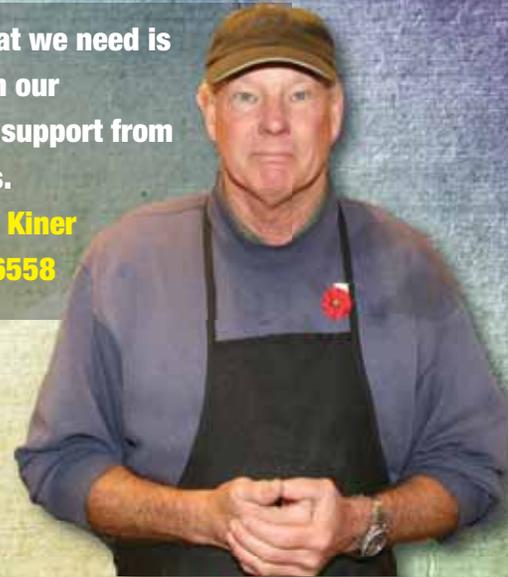


Non-Union stores are not paying any type of retirement and the Union Companies will try to use that as an excuse as to why they can't continue ours.

Maureen Baxter
Ralphs 163

Very little. What we need is solidarity from our members and support from our customers.

Kent Kiner
Albertsons 6558



Non-Union stores have cheaper wages and therefore the appearance of cheaper products, which the stores will try and use to their advantage.

Chris Martin
Albertsons 6508



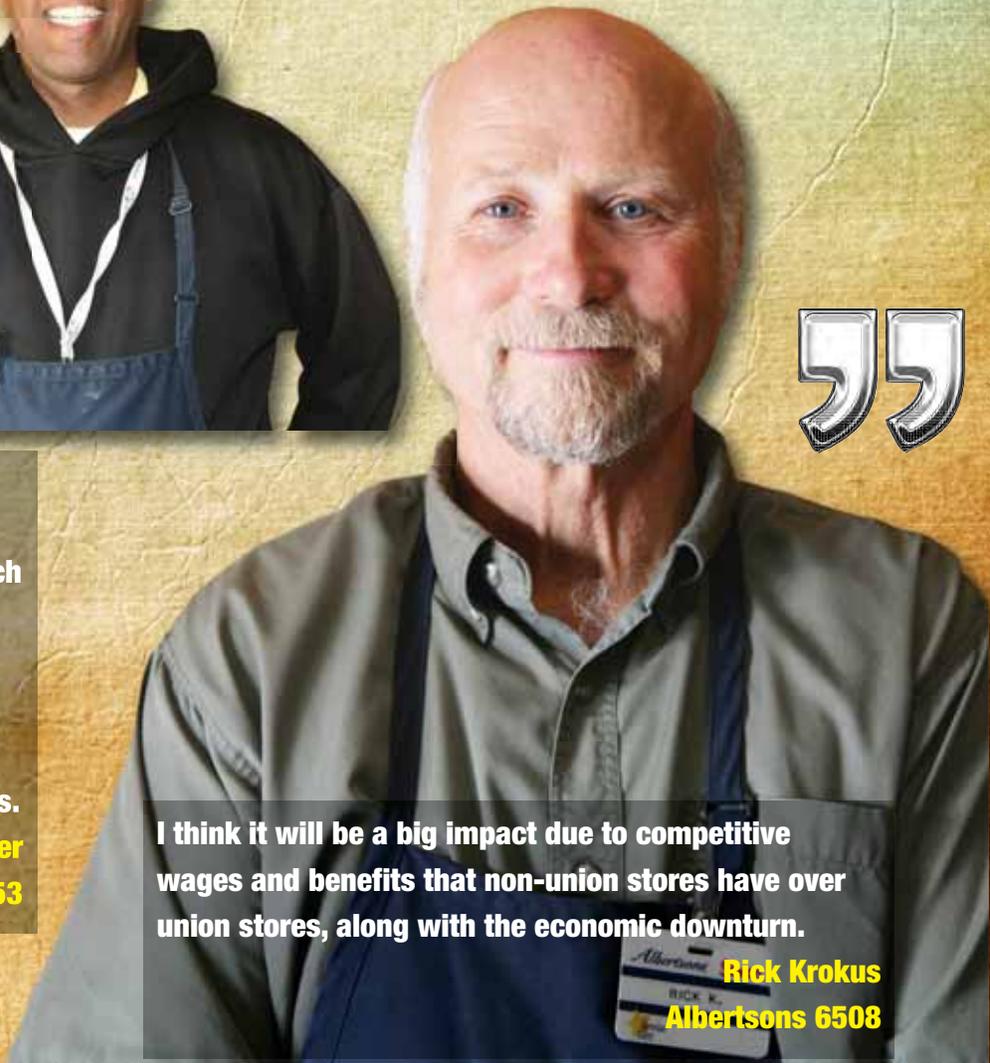
It doesn't because the stores know that we provide them with a much higher level of professionalism in everything we do, which leads to repeat customers.

Greg Gardner
Rite Aid 5753



I think it will be a big impact due to competitive wages and benefits that non-union stores have over union stores, along with the economic downturn.

Rick Krokus
Albertsons 6508



Off the wall



Amuse Yourself...



Attraction	Adult Price	Children Price
Disneyland Park Hopper	\$92	\$84
Seaworld	\$55	\$48
Universal Studios	\$64	\$64
Legoland	\$54	\$54
Legoland Park Hopper	\$64	\$64
Six Flags Magic Mountain	\$25	\$15
Aquarium of the Pacific (on-line only)	\$16.95	\$9.95

Movie Tickets

AMC
\$7.50

Regal Entertainment Group
\$7.50
(Regal-Edwards-United Artist)

Krikorian Theaters
\$6.50



... at a discount price!

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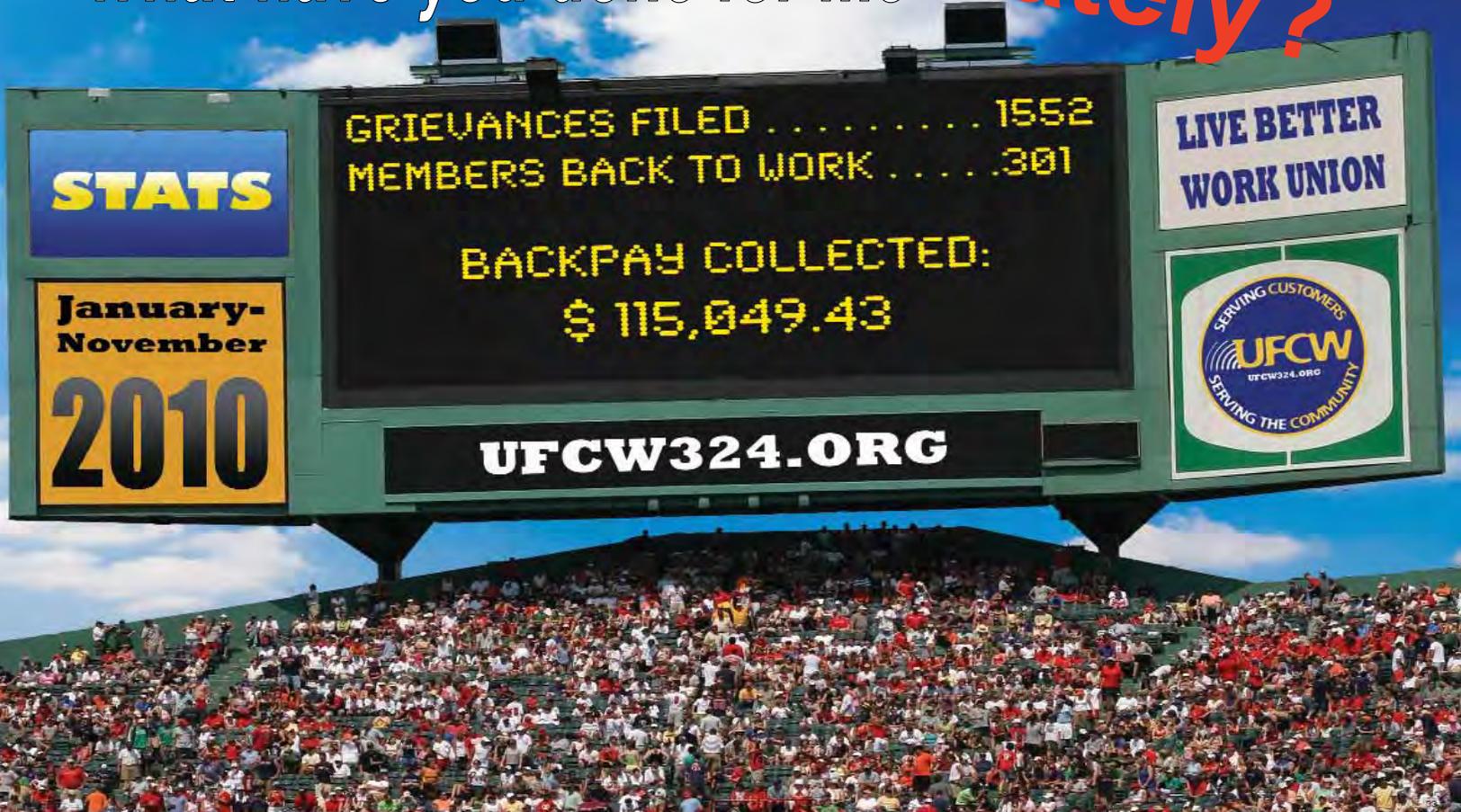


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PERIODICAL
POSTAGE
PAID

What have you done for me *Lately?*



STATS

January-
November
2010

GRIEVANCES FILED 1552
MEMBERS BACK TO WORK 301

BACKPAY COLLECTED:
\$ 115,049.43

UFCW324.ORG

**LIVE BETTER
WORK UNION**

