



# Major Hurdles Remain as Contract Talks Enter **Overtime**

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## Tough days ahead at the bargaining table

Negotiations for a new Master Food Agreement are underway and dates have been scheduled through the month of March. We will provide updates as information is available but for now, please know that your Union is doing everything possible to move these negotiations forward toward a successful conclusion.

Many of you have already heard from management with rhetoric similar or even identical to past negotiation cycles. Anyone who has been in this industry long enough to see more than one contract negotiated is likely to share my opinion of this tradition. It is predictable, uninspiring and at times belongs in the fiction section of a children's book store rather than in envelopes containing your paycheck.

They are always transparent attempts to gain sympathy and continue to make the same misleading claims.

The subject of declining market share for the big three employers is their way of avoiding their responsibility to you, the employees who keep them in business. Here's what the employers fail to include in this saga:

Stater Bros. continues to be a successful union market in Southern California with over 165 stores. Gelsons continues to be a successful union market in Southern California with over 15 stores.

Both companies pale in size when compared with the Big Three goliaths and currently are signatories to contracts that improve on language in the Master Food Agreement. However, both companies manage to post impressive profits and continue to grow. If much smaller companies can operate successfully with an all-union workforce despite facing the same pressures as the competition then clearly the union's proposals are neither crippling nor unreasonable.

Another argument put forward by management has me all torn up inside. Actually I don't know whether to laugh or cry. Even a superficial examination of the facts surrounding the growth of non-union grocery stores in Southern California easily exposes management's claim that they are innocent victims of non-union competitors.

The main reason that there are fewer union markets in Southern California today than there was 10 years ago is because the national employers merged and as a result many locations were sold to non-union

companies. Although the sales were divestitures required by the government, union employers had the opportunity to sell to anybody they wanted to. They made their choices and are now bemoaning the consequences.

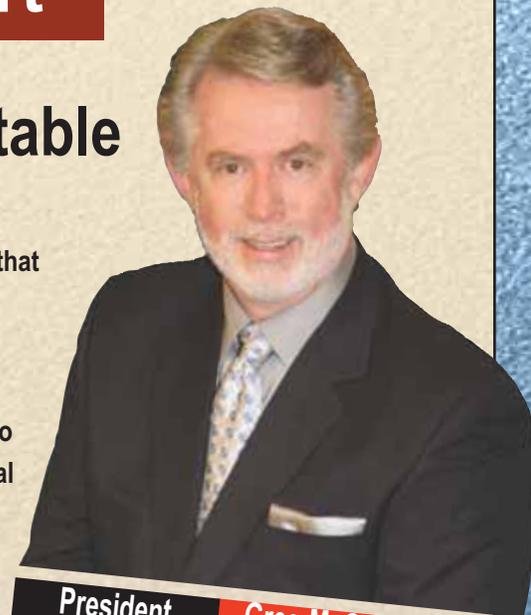
But rather than admit that their own decisions are now coming back to haunt them, they gloss over the issue entirely and now have the gall to suggest you should be forced to pay for those mistakes.

Tax incentives have repeatedly been offered to the major chains to provide them the opportunity to move in to "food deserts", specifically in the inner city Los Angeles area. Imagine that: The taxpayers actually offered to subsidize expansion and Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons turned down the offer. Not one union chain has taken advantage of the tax incentives but yet they complain bitterly about their growth prospects.

I guarantee you; Fresh & Easy, Henrys and Sprouts have no problem lining up at the public trough.

As always, negotiations are difficult and complicated. New laws concerning health care reform and pension funding requirements will affect our bargaining. During the negotiation cycle, we urge you to check our website for updates. Your union representatives will also be in your stores regularly with any new information.

Stay strong, stay united and we will be successful in these negotiations.



President

Greg M. Conger

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

# Organized Labor under seige Nationwide

## Unions now facing the consequences of election defeats

If election analysts can agree on anything following the midterm election catastrophe suffered by pro-union candidates at the ballot box, it is that union members in Wisconsin probably have the most to fear.

That is where President Obama's party lost the governorship, a U.S. Senator, the State Senate and the State House of Representatives.

During election night victory speeches, several newly elected Republicans whipped huge crowds into a fervor by pledging to exact a heavy price from unions in the state for their longtime opposition to GOP policies.

As *Umagazine* went to press, the new leaders were making good on the threat and were poised to pass legislation that would strip state employees of their collective bargaining rights. Right-to-Work laws were waiting in the wings.

"This is the nightmare scenario that we spend so much time warning members about. This is what happens when we don't get our supporters to the polls," said Local 324 Political Director Rick Eiden, who also happens to be from Wisconsin. About the only conciliation to this "doomsday scenario," as described by President Greg Conger, has been the enormous outcry on the part of Rank-and-File members throughout Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Tens of thousands of workers literally shut

down the state capital, crowding into the capital building while chanting slogans of Solidarity.



The state's public school teachers closed K-12 schools all over the state when they walked out in protest.

Wisconsin's unrest is likely to be repeated in state capitals elsewhere as newly elected Republican officeholders seek to pass similar laws aimed at reducing the influence of unions:

- In Ohio, state senators have introduced a bill to eliminate collective bargaining rights for tens of thousands of workers—including nurses, firefighters and child care workers. But yesterday, more than 5,000 people flooded the Ohio state capitol building.

- In Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana and New Hampshire, CEO-backed groups and legislators are working together to pass laws to lower wages, undermine benefits and weaken workers' collective bargaining power. But hearing rooms in state capitols are packed—overflowing with workers who demand their legislators stop these bills now.

And in Florida, the governor is leading a charge to force public employees to pay more into their pensions, while slashing taxes on Big Business. So workers are banding together to make sure we are not told to bear the brunt of an economic collapse that isn't our fault.

## Fill out your HRQ—for your sake

As negotiations over our 2011 Retail Food Agreement begin, we know our health benefits will once again be a major issue. Over the years, our members, like other union employees, have foregone other forms of compensation in return for quality medical coverage.

Such health care is costly, but your hard work has more than earned these benefits. So, regardless of forecasted increases to the future costs of providing quality health care and your employers certain resistance to bearing such costs, your labor has warranted the medical coverage you now possess and are accustomed to relying on. Remember, these benefits are part of your overall wages and not some gift.

In 2007, the last time we negotiated with the food employers, we made some changes to the health plan. These changes were designed to help our members better understand their own physical well-being and to encourage healthier life styles in general. But, unlike some corporate plans, our changes were designed to reward members and to ensure their confidentiality.

One of these changes is the annual HRQ (health risk questionnaire). This must be completed each year between the months of February and May by all members and spouses in the Indemnity PPO medical plan.

The HRQ provides money to offset your deductible and out of pocket expenses. The information you provide is completely undisclosed and useful in providing you with personally tailored health guidance.

Members who do not complete the HRQ are just letting their employers keep money that should go into their own pockets. If you have a good year and rarely see a doctor or fill a prescription, the money stays in your account for the next year. It increases annually when you complete your HRQ. Since it is completely confidential, there is no good reason not to complete it. To access the questionnaire, go to [www.2011hrq.com](http://www.2011hrq.com) or call 888-901-0477.

This year, we are also urging anyone who has received a call to participate in the disease management program. If you or your spouse suffers from asthma, coronary artery disease, or diabetes, this program can provide you with personalized resources to help you

improve your health and quality of life. OptumHealth, the company that provides this benefit, develops its list of potential participants by reviewing the Trust Fund's medical and prescription drug claims and then determining good candidates.

If you choose to enroll in this program, you will receive educational materials and will also be invited to work with a team of professionals to develop your own personalized health care plan.

The program is provided at no cost to participants and offers significant financial incentives, including extra HRA contributions and zero or reduced co-payments for prescription drugs relating to the covered conditions.

The Disease Management Program is available only to those invited to participate and is confidential. No information will be shared with your Employer.

Both of these programs are important to keep in mind as we bargain for our new contract. We know that negotiations will be difficult and that your employers will resist the costs of providing quality medical coverage.

Taking advantage of all the healthcare opportunities available to you helps you receive the best overall compensation for your hard work and also demonstrates to the employers that our members understand their health benefits and will do everything in their power to maintain the most optimal health care possible.



**Secretary-Treasurer** Andrea Zinder

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



## The Pullman Strike and Battle for Los Angeles

—By Matthew Hart

On the night of June 27th, 1894, the American Railway Union sent out a telegram calling for a boycott of all Pullman sleeping cars. Early the next morning, a switchman at the La Grande Station in Los Angeles refused to attach two Pullman sleeping cars to a train departing for San Francisco. Similar incidents transpired throughout the country as other workers stood in solidarity with striking Pullman employees. Soon the U.S. found itself embroiled in a nationwide labor strife, impacting both its railway system and postal services. The Pullman Strike, as it came to be called, laid the foundation for a twenty-year long war between capital and labor in Los Angeles.

The prologue to the Pullman strike began with a serious economic crisis that hit the U.S. in the 1890s. In response, companies cut wages and reduced their workforce. George Pullman, the owner of the Pullman Palace Car Company, while priding himself as a benevolent employer, reacted as other employers did, with wage cuts and job reductions.

Frustration among Pullman workers rose when they discovered that the company stockholders still received handsome dividends. In addition and despite wage cuts, George Pullman refused to reduce the cost of rent and goods at the company-owned homes and stores. The striking workers organized with Eugene Debs' American Railway Union (ARU) and sent a delegation to meet with employers over wage demands. The company responded by terminating the delegation, which led to 3000 workers walking off the job. The company then shut down the factory.

After several week of stagnation, the ARU called for a national boycott of all Pullman cars at its annual convention. Within four days, 125,000 workers on twenty-nine railroads had quit work rather than handle Pullman cars. Local 80 of Los Angeles enthusiastically supported the boycott and immediately refused to handle Pullman cars.

Within days, over three thousand union members in Los Angeles were on strike. Thousands gathered at the Hazard's Pavilion to hear speeches and demonstrate their support. Other unions, including the printers, pressmen, carpenters, and retail clerks, provided financial aid. On the other side, Harrison Gray Otis, publisher

of the Los Angeles Times, used his newspaper to attack the ARU and its members. The union responded by moving their picket lines over to the Los Angeles Times building.

Attorney General Richard Olney intervened on behalf of the railroads. He sat on the board of directors for several of the companies. Olney used the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to place an injunction against the ARU. He claimed they were interfering with interstate commerce and the delivery of mail. Authorities arrested ARU President Eugene Debs, the union's board, and local leaders

who disobeyed the injunction. Debs was sentenced to six months in Federal prison, while the rest of the board served three. In Los Angeles, a grand jury indicted six local ARU leaders, who were all sentenced to 18 months in prison.

Throughout the country, the military was brought in to squash the strike. On July 4th, six companies of army regulars arrived in Los Angeles. Under the watchful eye of the U.S. military, trains began to move out of Los Angeles train stations

the following day. The strike in Los Angeles was effectively subdued. Within a month, the ARU was forced to admit defeat.

While the strike lasted just a few weeks, it ignited a war in the City of Angels. Harrison Gray Otis, a man known for his hatred of unions, began to build the local Merchants Association into a powerful vehicle to keep unions out of Los Angeles. He soon found an ally with Henry E. Huntington, the nephew of the man who owned Southern Pacific Railroads. Together, they led the open-shop campaign and worked tirelessly to keep unions out of the city. For decades, the city streets were the battlegrounds between labor and capital; one-side armed with the finances of the elite and the other with picket signs.

The Pullman strike is acknowledged by many to be the birth of Los Angeles's labor movement. And, though this movement had a tumultuous past, it survived the likes of Otis and Huntington. Today, at 16.6%, the union density of Los Angeles is 4.1% higher than the national average. And, while the city's labor movement still has a lot of work to do, its current status is a far cry from what Otis's Los Angeles Times had once hoped to report.





## Management seen as hiding behind brick wall of questionable projections as contract talks continue

At press time for *U magazine*, negotiators for six UFCW Locals and the “Big Three” grocery chains continued unabated with critical issues as yet unresolved, according to union officials.

The formal expiration of the Master Food Agreement on March 6 was the first significant signal that negotiations had hit a critical stage.

Although the passing of the March 6 date came as a disappointment to some, it surprised virtually no one involved in the talks.

In the past year, negotiations in other major markets nationwide also continued past the contract’s expiration date, often resulting in joint agreements to extend its terms and conditions.

None of those contract talks resulted in strikes, but talks in Washington State and Arizona came close.

Union officials involved in negotiations said that although talks have gotten heated at times, they have not devolved to the point where a full-scale job action was seen as inevitable.

Both sides continue to operate under a “news black-out” in which they pledged not to discuss details with media.

At press time for *U magazine*, the situation remained intense, but has been noticeably absent the hostility that marked past negotiations.

Management has, so far, refrained from posting help wanted signs in storefront windows and unions have not held rallies aimed at galvanizing anxious members.

Local 324 officials urged members to remain united and cautioned against reading too much into developments so far.

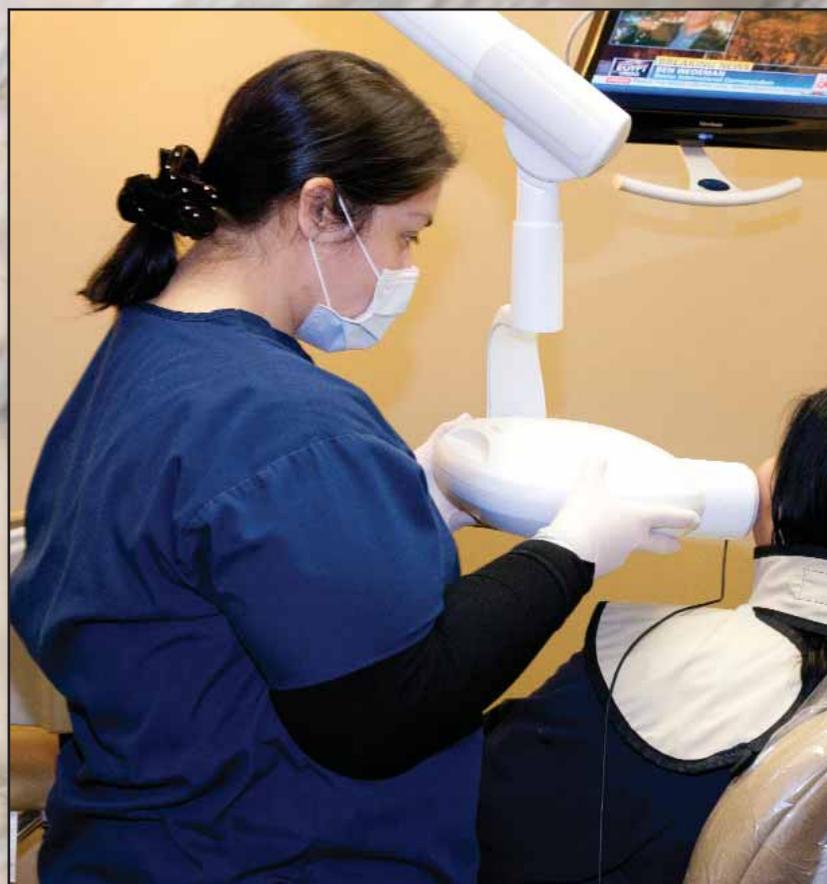
“Every negotiating session is unique with its own set of contentious issues,” said President Greg Conger. “So predicting an outcome based on signs and signals is as reliable as reading the morning horoscope.”

# It can

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Their success comes, at le...  
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whom are Local 324 members.



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...got around to hiring them,  
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...oughly 40 percent union.  
...ast in part, from the hard  
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In addition to the generous benefits that came with membership, Sabo's business-minded family discovered that a niche' market consisting largely of union families had tremendous potential. Union officials noted that the Company's successful business model is proof that businesses can do right by their employees and still post healthy profits. According to one union official, Sabo has probably produced as many smiles from her pro-union business practices as she has in her capacity as a dentist.

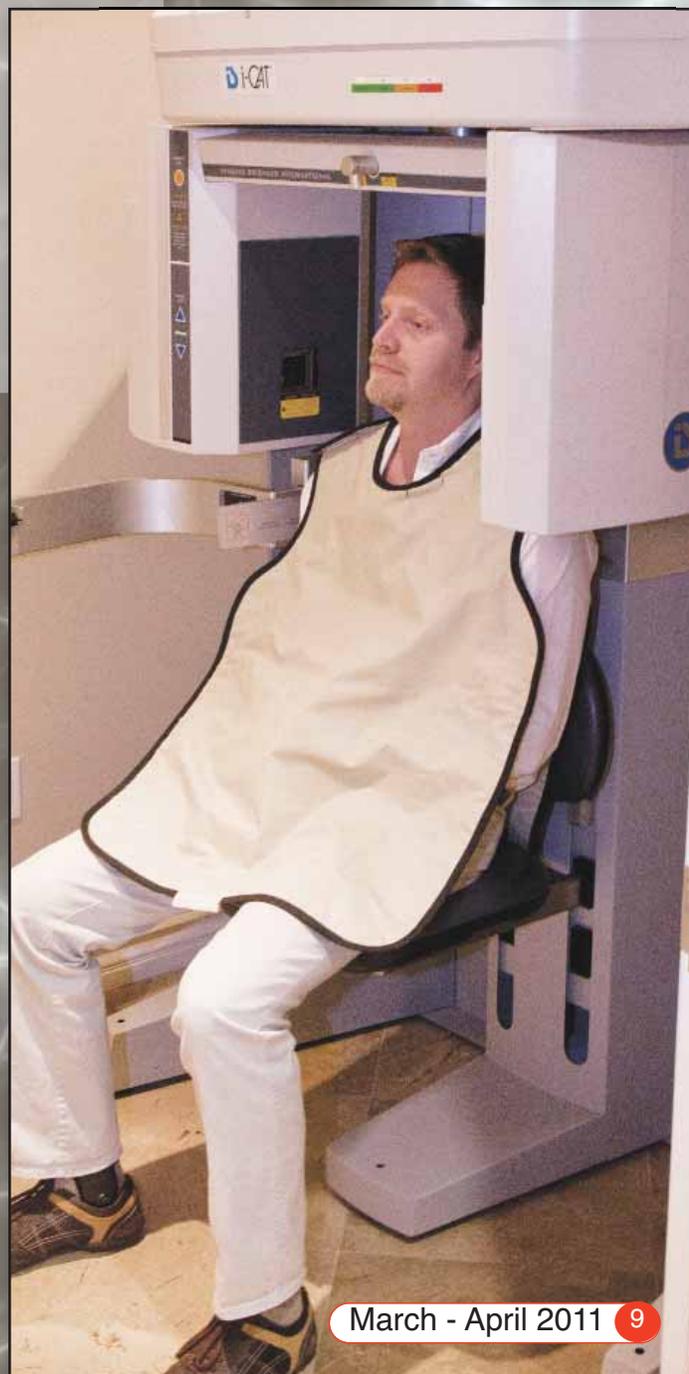


## Serving Local 324 members in 3 Locations

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(949) 461-0000

**OC Smile**  
1950 Sunnycrest Drive #1100  
Fullerton, 92835  
(714) 441-1414





# LOCAL 324 NON-FOOD SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

RULES AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2011**

**The deadline for Scholarship Award Applications is May 2, 2011**

## Who Is Eligible

1. Applicants must establish basic eligibility by applying for a scholarship award and completing the "Local 324's Scholarship Award Application." Application available at your Union office or on our website [www.ufcw324.org](http://www.ufcw324.org).
2. Those eligible to compete are current members of Local 324 working at Disney, Food 4 Less, Rancho Federal Credit Union, CVS, Rite-Aid, Kaiser Permanente, and Pharmacists at Albertsons, Stater Bros., Ralphs and Vons; affiliated and paid-up life members, their spouses, their dependent children and stepchildren, unmarried and receiving financial support from parent(s) and who are claimed as dependent(s) with the Internal Revenue Service. Not eligible to compete would include sisters, brothers and grandchildren.
3. Additionally, any member who is eligible to compete in the Southern California UFCW and Food Employers Scholarship Award Program is not eligible for the benefit.
4. Applicants whose eligibility is based on current member status (working in the industry) can apply if they are part-time students. All other applicants must be full-time students. All Applicants will need to submit last 2 years of official transcripts. (SAT scores required if you have not yet attended college.)
5. Applicants must be at least seniors in high school.
6. Eligibility is based on Local 324 Membership affiliation beginning no later than July 1, 2010, and remaining in continuous good standing through June 30, 2011. The member whose eligibility is used cannot go suspended, take a withdrawal or transfer out of Local 324 for one full year prior to June 30, 2011. Failure to comply with these eligibility rules disqualifies the applicant.
7. Winners are selected by the Scholarship Committee based on:
  - academic record • leadership record • community service and volunteer activities
  - personal achievement
8. Awards will be made to undergraduate or graduate applicants at the sole discretion of the Committee.
9. Finalists selected by the Committee must provide proof of academic record. The following documents may be accepted as proof of attendance: enrollment verification, registration notice/statement, and current class schedule. If you are an incoming freshman, other acceptable documents are; acceptance letter and Statement of Intent to Register (SIR). Additional forms will need to be completed by the applicant (blank forms to be provided by the Scholarship Committee) listing leadership activities, community service and volunteer activities, personal achievements and goals; substantiated by two teacher appraisals.
10. Awards are contingent upon the student being accepted by and registering at an accredited school.
11. Awards are determined at the discretion of the Scholarship Awards Selection Committee and its decision is final and binding.

**Late applications, incomplete applications and those missing required documentation will not be considered after May 2, 2011.**

# Hot Topics

Words of wisdom to help you keep your job

## Gratuities and Samples can be costly

—By Field Director Chuck Adinolfi

Sales reps and merchandisers are in and out of your store on a daily basis. They sometimes offer merchandise to our members that is either discontinued or a new item as a gratuity or a sample.

These items can be as small as a pack of gum or as valuable as a bottle of wine. Every company has a strict policy on accepting these free items and it is important that you understand it and closely follow it.

Your job may be on the line if you remove these items from the store in violation of these policies. Several members have recently been terminated for doing just that. The severity of this discipline may seem heavy handed, and in our view it is, but companies have prevailed in past arbitrations when the unions have tried to defend their members.

There is no protection from possible discipline by asking the sales rep to put the merchandise in your car for you, so that it appears that you are not

removing the product. Some members have used the excuse that the merchandise that they received was a gift from their friend, the sales rep, or a donation to their favorite charity.

The rules are the rules and these excuses will not exempt you from possible termination.

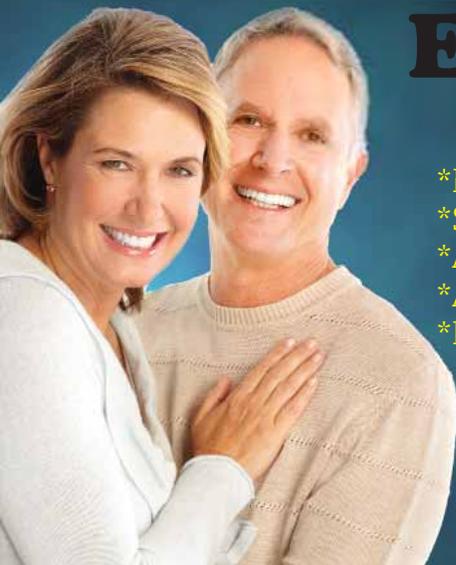
Most policies require your store manager or district managers' approval before you can accept and remove this 'free' merchandise. Every one of these past terminations could have easily been avoided if members just fol-



lowed the rules.

Always get permission from management before accepting and removing product from a sales rep. If you are not sure of the policy, ask management.

The best advice that we can give is to not accept free stuff from vendors. It is not free; it can cost you your job.



## 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

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when you refi  
your auto loan  
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lender to  
Rancho Federal  
Credit Union!

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for all NEW  
members who  
open a full  
service  
relationship  
account.



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12 March - April 2011

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Adults  
(ages 10+)  
**\$16.95**

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(ages 3-9)  
**\$9.95**

Tickets are on sale now in the General Office of Local 324,  
at our Branch Office in Lake Forest and online at [www.ufcw324.org](http://www.ufcw324.org)

Prices are subject to Change and Availability  
NO RETURNS OR EXCHANGES

Tickets are for Southern California Local 324 Members Only



# ... at a discount price!

# Word on the street



**What are you doing to show solidarity during contract negotiations?**



I check the union website to keep updated on what is happening with negotiations.

**Fadi Kanifati**  
**Ralphs 73**

I am sure to let management know what we are looking for in a contract, like wages and benefits. I also wear my button.

**Minerva Vaz**  
**Ralphs 73**



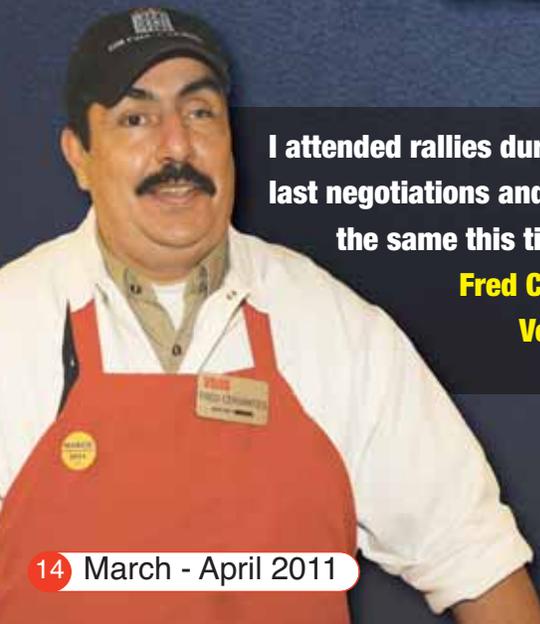
I make sure my co-workers wear their buttons and keep everyone updated on what is going on. I am going to let everyone know that text updates are available on their phones too.

**Ruth Hall**  
**Vons 2803**



I attended rallies during the last negotiations and will do the same this time.

**Fred Cervantes**  
**Vons 2803**



I do my best to ignore company rumors at the store and support my co-workers.

**Mireille Sou**  
**Ralphs 605**



# Off the wall



## Thank You Retirees

1025

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Local 324 Strike Fund \$ 10,000

Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents DOLLARS

MEMO Local 324 Retirees Club

⑆0000000000⑆ ⑆0000000000⑆ 1025

Security Features Excluded Details on Back

On behalf of every member of UFCW Local 324, President Greg Conger thanks the union's Retirees Club for their \$10,000 donation to the Local's Strike Fund. The donation came at their monthly meeting in February and was made possible through a series of fundraisers held throughout the year. "The generosity of our retirees club is without precedence. They built our great union and now they are shoring up its very foundation," Conger said.

Umagazine is published by

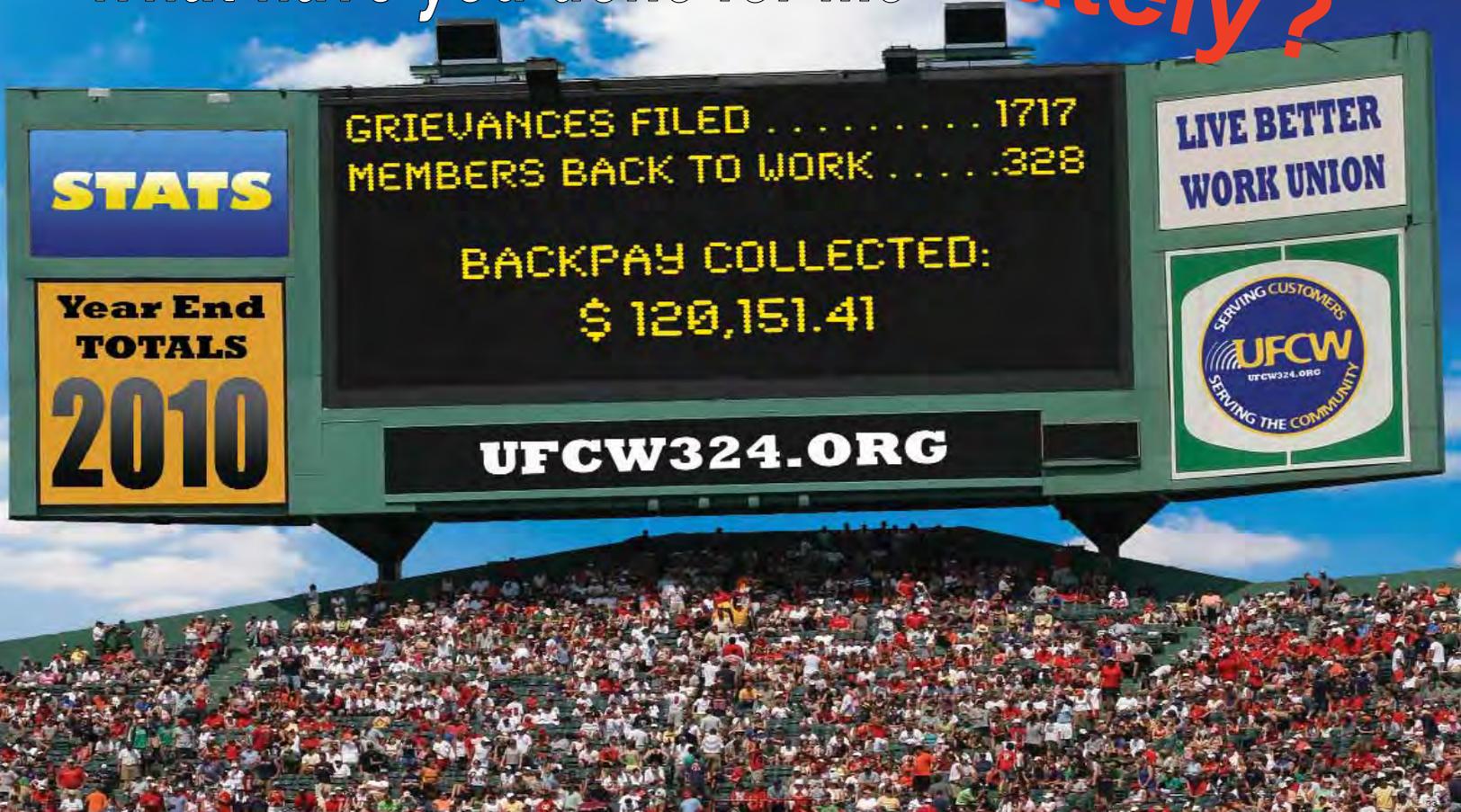


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PERIODICAL  
POSTAGE  
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# What have you done for me *Lately?*



**STATS**

**Year End  
TOTALS  
2010**

GRIEVANCES FILED . . . . . 1717  
MEMBERS BACK TO WORK . . . . . 328  
  
BACKPAY COLLECTED:  
\$ 120,151.41

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**LIVE BETTER  
WORK UNION**

