



Contract Negotiations STATUS

Members tell Big Three that their contract offer won't fly

Contract #	STATUS
742	DELA
801	DELA
485	DELA
70	DELA
42	DELA
1	DELA
7	DELA
MEDIA	B34
WAGES	A14
PENSION	C89
STEWARD	G12
OVERTIME	C5
HOLIDAY	D13
SCHEDULE	A4
TRANSFER	
SICK PAY	

Loud & Clear

Strike Vote serves as marching orders for Union negotiators to stand strong.

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Used & Abused

Contract offer earns harsh rebuke from members interviewed randomly. Do you agree?

Pages 10 - 11



Black & White

Read exactly how the Big Three reward the people who helped them survive a recession.

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Editor: Todd Conger
Asst. Editor: Mercedes Clarke



UNION OFFICE HOURS
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday-Friday

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: Orange County: (714) 995-4601 Lake Forest: (949) 587-9881: Long Beach-Downey-Norwalk Limited Area Toll Free: (800) 244-UFCW

MAIN OFFICE: 8530 Stanton Avenue, P.O. Box 5004, Buena Park, California 90622

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Text
UFCW324
to
37398

**For negotiation updates
the minute they happen**



**Next General Membership
Meeting is Wednesday,
June 8th at 7 p.m.
8530 Stanton Ave.
Buena Park**

- Withdrawal Card Request**
- Change of Address Form**

Member's name: _____

SSN: _____ **DOB:** _____

Address _____

City _____ **zip** _____

Phone # _____

email _____

If requesting withdrawal, what was your last day worked? _____

**If we don't know where you live or how to reach you, there's
no telling what you might miss out on in the future.**

U have to tell us!

How can you not take it personally?

Despite living through more than a dozen negotiation cycles with grocery chains in my career, I'm still surprised by the sheer gall of management's all-too-predictable bargaining position. For me, it is impossible to view the current offers on the table as anything other than a monumental insult directed at the very people most deserving of their gratitude.

But instead of shopping for thank you cards for those who helped them survive the economic recession of recent years, the Big Three chains have been shopping for excuses. The constant drumbeat of advice urging me not to take these things "personally" has done little to temper my bitterness.

No matter how hard I try to strip this situation of human emotions, I am fixated on the fact that the loyal employees, the support staff, the rank and file soldiers who helped these giant corporations successfully exit the economic minefield of recession are being asked to work for less rather than rewarded for their devoted service.

At best, this practice is the result an overreliance on numbers over names. At worst, it is downright insulting.

Allow me to use a couple of analogies to illustrate my point. The most fitting probably comes from military campaigns that ended in victory. After all, in a recession that produced as many casualties as several of America's high profile conflicts, comparisons involving foot soldiers and field officers is not out of character.

On that note, when was the last time anyone can recall the spectacle of a decorated general taking the podium and proudly declaring that the victory he was celebrating was, indeed, the result of his superior skills? Now imagine if this same fictitious leader looks at the delegation standing beside him on stage and declared that his loyal troops were good people perhaps, but probably slowed him down and may have even delayed victory by a couple of days.

The sincerity of the political and military leaders we most often associate with glorious periods in our history have all handled the spotlight similarly—they all humbly deflected the public accolades with eloquent pronouncements of praise for those whom they led.

It is perhaps one of the factors that distinguish statesmen

from politicians and heroes from villains. Humility and gratitude are character traits we have come to expect from those in power. Strangely, the behavior we would never tolerate in leaders of any stripe is overlooked—even applauded—when the battlefield is the free market and the foot soldiers are the employees of large corporations.

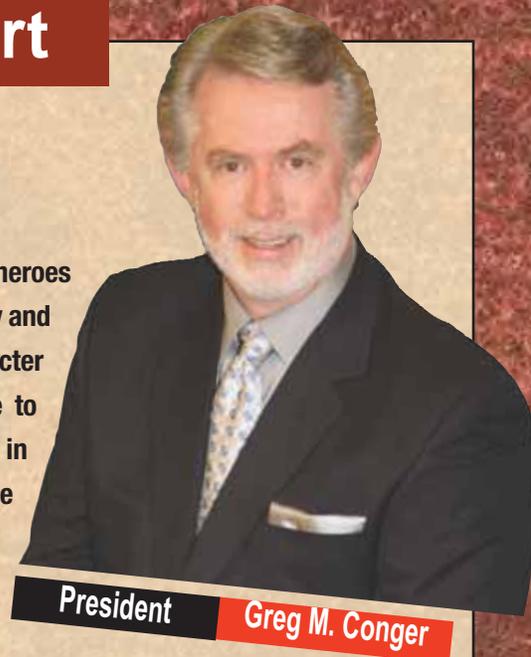
The latest round of negotiations supports my point. Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons all managed to survive a recession that claimed its share of casualties from coast to coast. But instead of saying thank you to the people who kept the customers coming back, each of the three Fortune 50 corporate goliaths chose instead to look back at the battalions of veterans and asked them to take pay and benefit cuts.

In what other setting would such ingratitude be tolerated? Not in international affairs, military campaigns or even sports can leaders treat their subordinates with such disdain and maintain the respect of the masses.

The executives at Kroger, Safeway and Supervalu have acted in sync as they surveyed the pitfalls they successfully avoided then promptly patted themselves on the back for their own endurance.

Have we become so battle weary that basic manners are no longer expected from our crop of leaders? Since when did the simple "thank you" become a potential liability instead of the language of a civilized society?

Some folks see this spectacle and dismiss it as tacky but not surprising. I see it and wonder how any one of them manages to shave each morning considering that it involves looking at themselves in the mirror. I know, don't say it. It's nothing personal, right?



President

Greg M. Conger

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg".

Negotiations enter critical stage

The crowds began forming even before the union's Buena Park headquarters had even opened its doors for business the morning of April 20.

By the time the day was over, thousands of Local 324 members had registered their opinion on the latest contract offer currently being pushed by Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons seven weeks after the expiration of the previous collective bargaining agreement on March 6.

If there was any doubt about the sentiment of union members it was laid to rest at about 8 p.m. that evening when President Greg Conger announced that members had overwhelmingly given their leaders the authority to call a strike if the Big Three grocery chains didn't substantially change their current bargaining position.

The bulk of the membership descended on the Local's auditorium in two shifts, one in the morning and one in the evening, at which Conger briefed them on the progress of negotiations so far.

Conger lambasted all three companies for intentional delay tactics, openly accusing them of stalling progress.

"All UFCW locals sent a letter to management as long ago as December 6, 2010 that we had cleared our calendars," Conger said. "We agreed to meet anywhere at any location for the purpose of bargaining a successor agreement. We met with your employers for the first time February 10 and even now aren't meeting more but 2 or 3 days a week."

Conger cautioned members that the authorization vote was neither precedent setting nor unusual. To help support his request, Conger came to the podium armed with details of management's formal contract proposals.

If the strategy was to get members riled up before

voting then it succeeded. Members sat and listened as Conger outlined more than a dozen formal offers submitted by the Big Three grocery chains (see page 7 for details).



Members study contract proposals intently before voting April 20

Reaction from members appeared universally negative with some even growing visibly angry as more details emerged.

On the whole, veteran members who have been through the process before appeared to take the vote in stride. Several expressed that

giving negotiators strike authorization was routine and necessary to get negotiations back on track.

Younger, less experienced members had various reactions.

One member from Albertsons reviewed her employer's offer with two colleagues who did what they could to console her. Melissa Martinez sat stone-faced as she explained that she fully expected to see pay raises or other rewards from a company she said wastes few opportunities to tell her how much she is appreciated.

"I just can't believe that I work as hard as I do and they want to take things away from me not make things better. It doesn't make any sense," Martinez said.

She said Sundays at her store had become particularly trying as managers directed her to escort a blind elderly customer home with her groceries. She said she never complained about the weekly chore, despite the customer's demanding disposition.

She shook her head in disgust as she pointed to a line item on the handout that listed the company's proposals. "Isn't that ironic. That's the same day they want to cut my pay by 50 cents an hour."

Companies would be wise to see contract as a chance to attract top pharmacists

In August 2008 the pharmacists at Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons voted to continue to be represented by the UFCW but to have a separate bargaining unit from the Clerks and Meat employees.

This decision by the Pharmacists recognizes the value of their UFCW representation while also establishing their professional obligations and the need for a unique contract to address the differences. All around, this vote was a huge victory for the pharmacists employed by the Retail Food companies.

Shortly after the vote, the UFCW local unions requested that negotiations begin on a separate contract for pharmacists. The Companies found a loop hole and refused to bargain until the normal 2007 – 2011 contract bargaining cycle.

In the fall of 2010, Local 324, along with the other Southern California UFCW locals requested that bargaining commence on the Pharmacist contract.

It was your union's desire to bargain as much of the contract as possible before the retail food and meat negotiations began in order to have adequate time to fully discuss all pharmacist issues.

Again, we met with major resistance. Stalling appears to be the preferred bargaining tactic at Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons.

As negotiations continue for the retail food stores, some time has been set aside for pharmacist bargaining. Unfortunately, the negotiations are taking much longer than they should and several difficult issues have not yet been settled.

The role of pharmacists is increasing as the public and health plans recognize the convenience and expertise of pharmacists providing immunizations and other health screenings. The Retail Food Stores have a great opportunity in the coming years to capture more

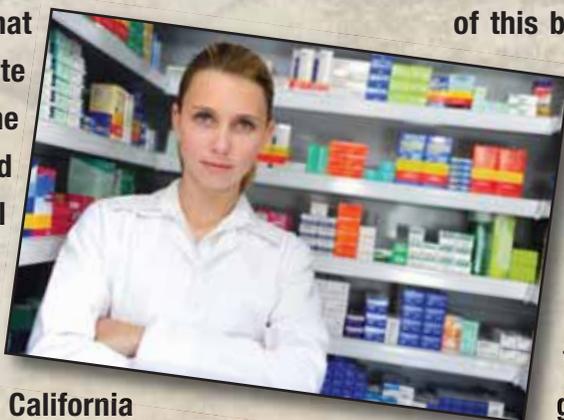


Secretary-Treasurer Andrea Zinder

of this business and bring more customers into their stores.

But the companies can only succeed if they continue to attract and employ the best pharmacists. These negotiations are one step towards achieving this mutual goal.

Your union will continue demanding full discussions on contract language and a wage and benefit package which serves this mutual purpose. And although there are now two separate bargaining units – one for the pharmacists and one for the rest of the store, the combined power of the UFCW will make the difference in assuring that Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons recognizes that their success as companies is dependent on their work force.



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



Weingarten Rights: The story of Leura Collins

—By Matthew Hart

Short of the right to organize and join a union, there are few rights more sacred to the labor movement than the right to have union representation during an interrogation. Known as Weingarten Rights, these rights have protected millions of workers in the U.S. from harsh interrogations, coerced confessions or written statements and even legally binding promissory notes. For every right won, there is a story of a person who took a stand against injustice. Weingarten is no different. But what makes this story so unique is that it involves one of our own, a retail clerk named Leura Collins.

Leura Collins was a sales clerk at Weingarten Supermarket. Originally founded in 1948, Weingarten expanded its operations to 100 stores by 1972, some of which included "lunch counters," others included "lobby food operations." These counters/lobbies provided eat-in or carry-out dining options for customers. Between 1961-1970, Collins was employed at the lunch counter at store no. 2. As per the contract, she had often taken advantage of a free daily meal offered to all employees who worked the lunch counter.

In 1970, Collins was transferred to store no. 98 in Houston, where she worked in lobby food operations. She worked at the new store for two years, when, in June 1972, she fell under suspicion of taking money from the cash register. Weingarten sent in a loss prevention specialist (LPS) by the name of "Hardy" to investigate the claims. He observed Collins for two days and determined that she was not taking money. Hardy identified himself to the store manager and reported his findings.

During the conversation, the store manager informed the LPS that another allegation was made against Collins, alleging that she purchased chicken in a box that was marked at \$2.98 but had paid only \$1. Collins was questioned by the LPS and store manager regarding this new charge.

Leura Collins repeatedly asked throughout the interrogation for her union representative or shop steward; each time the request was denied. She explained to the LPS and store manager that she purchased four pieces of chicken for which the price was \$1, but that because the lobby department was out of the small-size boxes she put the chicken into the larger box normally used for packaging larger quantities. The LPS verified her statement with other employees working in the area and

apologized to Collins for the inconvenience. Humiliated and angry, Collins began crying. She then proclaimed that the only thing she had ever taken from the store without paying for was the free lunch provided to employees.

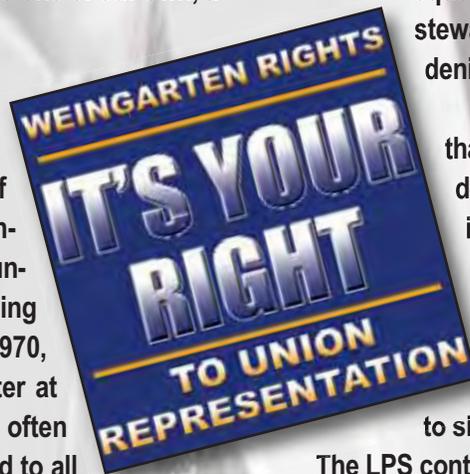
After hearing this, the interrogation continued. The LPS's interpretation of the free lunch policy was that it was available to those employees working at the lunch counter but did not extend to those stores with lobby food operations. Collins again requested that her union representative or shop steward be present and her request was again denied.

During the investigation it became clear that the manager and other employees in the department routinely took lunch without paying. Despite this information the LPS, Hardy, prepared a statement for Collins to sign, including acknowledgement that she owed the store approximately \$160 for the lunches she had taken. Collins refused to sign the statement.

The LPS contacted the corporate office regarding the interrogation, but he soon discovered that the employees at the store might not have been informed that lunch was not provided as part of their benefits. The LPS apologized to Collins and told her she was free to go.

Despite orders by management not to discuss the matter with anyone, Collins immediately contacted her Union Representative, who then filed an unfair labor practice with the National Labor Relations Board. The case eventually found its way to the Supreme Court, which issued a decision giving union employees the right to have a union representative present during any investigative interview if the employee believes that some kind of disciplinary action will occur as a result.

In June of 1972, Leura Collins decided to buy some chicken. Chicken that she planned to donate, along with a cake, to a church dinner. She had no idea that this decision and the demands for union representation would take her name all the way to the Supreme Court. Her courage and determination won such important rights for workers that her name should be engraved as one of the most important figures in labor. The cost of the chicken may have only been one dollar but the rewards have made us all the richer.





Companies' Contract Demands Way Off Target

Healthcare

- Management not willing to contribute enough money to maintain current benefit plan.
- Eliminate HMOs.
- Reduce doctor choice for PPOs.
- Increase Premiums.
- Increase Deductibles.



Sets new policy requiring drug and alcohol testing for all incidents involving personal injury or destruction of company property.



Scrap provision calling for overtime pay for part-timers for work performed on the sixth day in a week.



Eliminate premium pay on Sundays for courtesy clerks.

Pension



Refuse to sufficiently fund Pension Plan to maintain current benefits.



Scrap overtime pay for hours worked on the seventh consecutive day for full-time employees.



Expand store transfer limit from 25 miles to 40 miles.



Eliminate all night premiums between 10 p.m. and midnight.

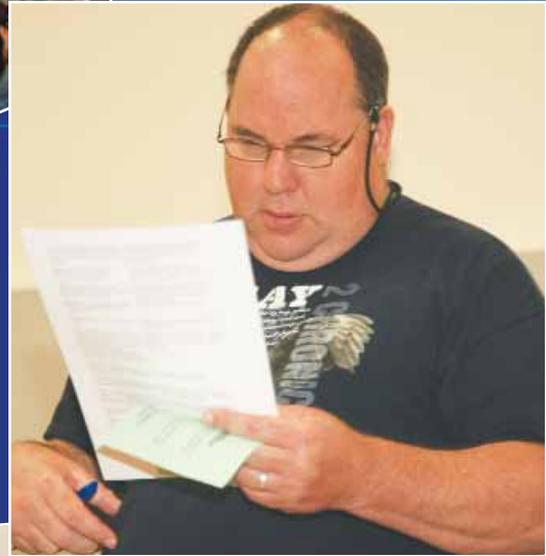
Eliminate 8-hour guarantee for meat cutters.



Change from 15% to 25% limit on courtesy clerks performing cashier duties. Proposal also establishes special 'holiday weeks' in which there would be no limit.

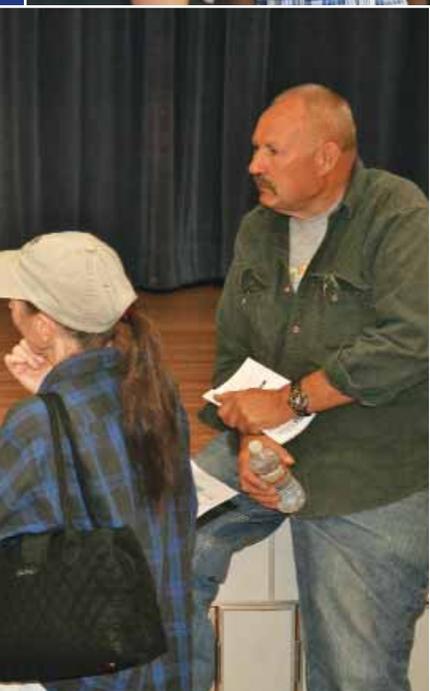
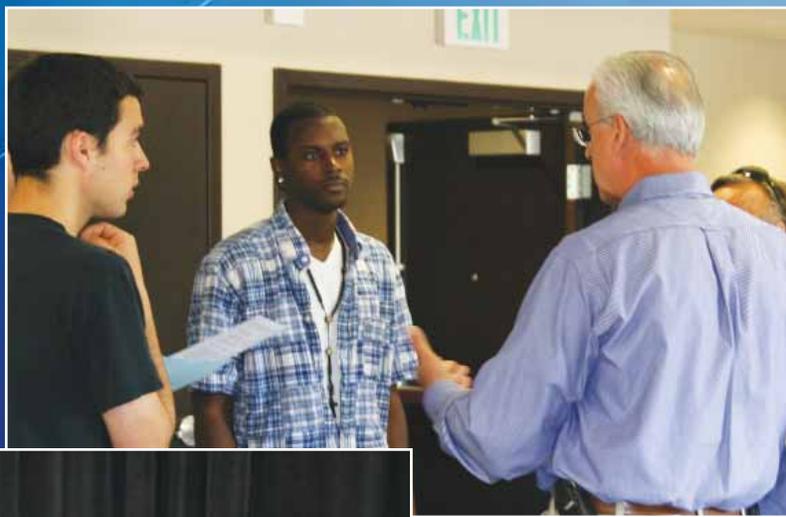
Member

Strike autho



's solidly back union goals

orization gives negotiators vital tool



Word on the street



What do

■



I think it's crap.

Cliff Cowan
Ralphs 78

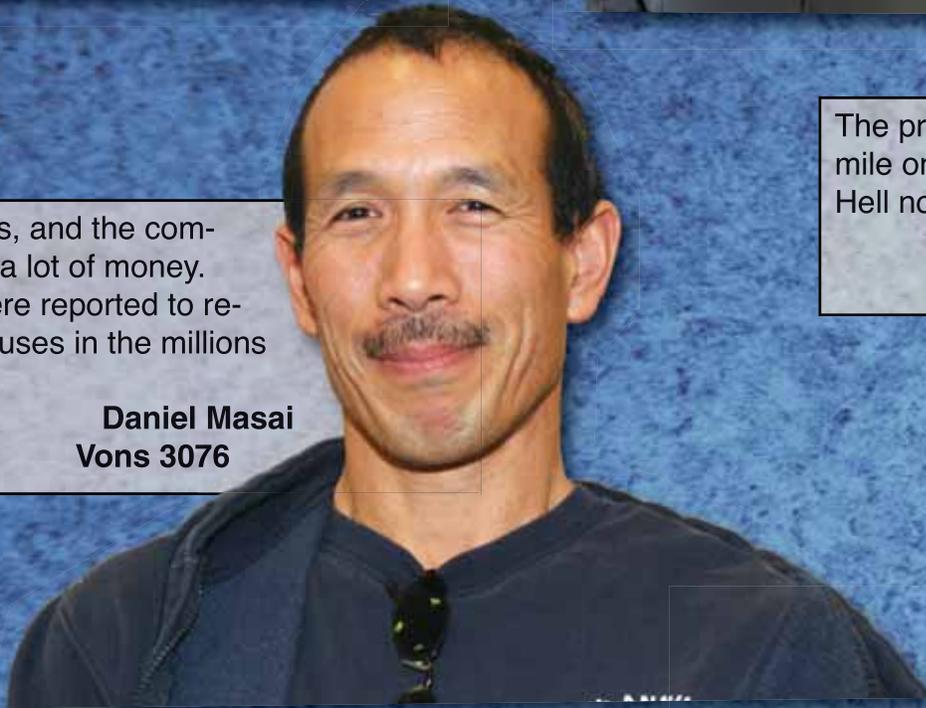


This is a terrible offer. We don't want to strike, but we will.

Brittany Vergara
Albertsons 6507

This sucks, and the company has a lot of money. CEO's were reported to receive bonuses in the millions last year.

Daniel Masai
Vons 3076



The proposal sucks. The 40 mile one way trip is terrible. Hell no.

Debbie Harris
Albertsons 6154



Not even close. We need to get back to the table and the employers need to get serious.

Joe Bilyk
Ralphs 148



It's scary to put yes, but we need to stand for what we want.

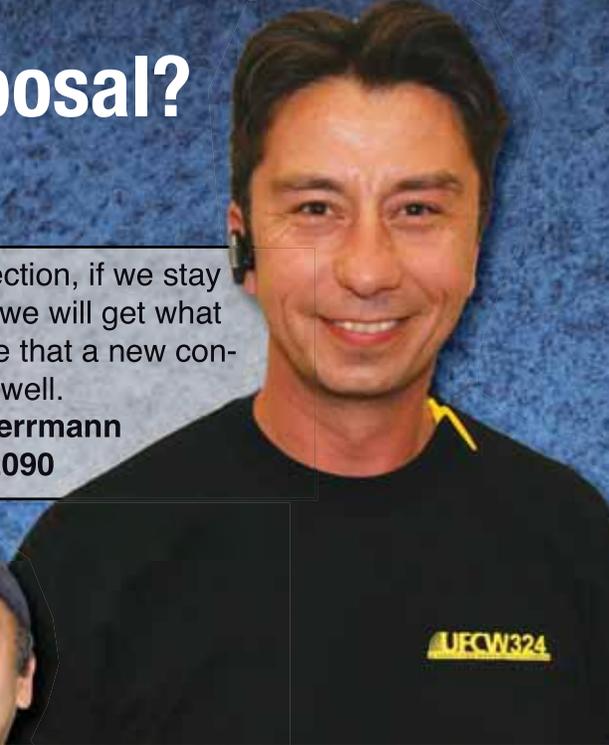
Christina Saldana
Albertsons 6507



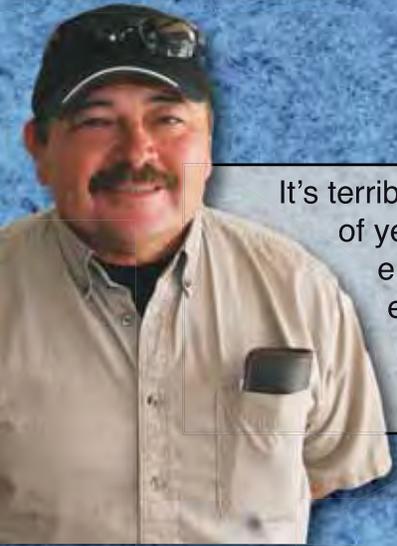
you think of the contract proposal?



We are going in the right direction, if we stay united and trust in our union we will get what we need. We need to be sure that a new contract helps the least of us as well.
Inan Herrmann
Vons 2090



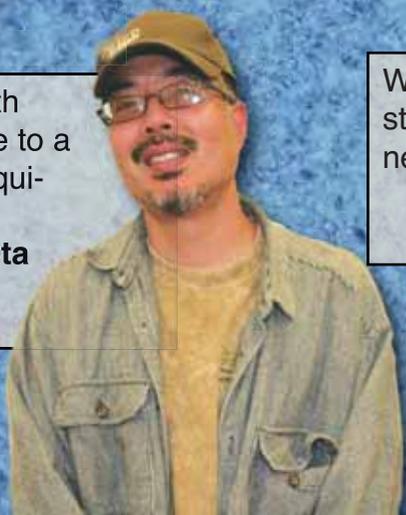
Not good. We need authorization to facilitate talks and get something fair.
Michael Kumashiro
Albertsons 6128



Ridiculous-taking things away is terrible. I guess I could live with the changes in vacation policy but everything else is terrible.
Edeltraut Riedel
Albertsons 6134

It's terrible we worked a lot of years and the employers are using the economy as a crutch.
Rudy McAfee
Vons 2524

Disappointing- both sides should come to a reasonable and equitable solution.
Steve Ota
Albertsons 6191



We need to stick together and strengthen the contract for us, the new employees.
Ramona Melendez
Albertsons 6128



Randall K. Mizuno

AUGUST 30, 1948 – MARCH 9, 2011

Randy was born and raised in Hawaii, mainly on the Island of Oahu. After graduating from Waipahu High School in 1966 he entered the Army. He was stationed in Korea for six months and then did three tours in Vietnam and honorably discharged in 1971.

Randy's UFCW career actually started by stuffing envelopes at the Drug Trust Fund (a job his brother had turned down). From there he was hired as a box boy at Ralphs. As soon as a meat cutting position opened, Randy applied and worked as a meat cutter for 21 years.

Randy was recognized by the Meat Cutters Local and appointed to the Executive Board and became a Union Representative in 1993. Local 551 merged with UFCW Local 324 in 1994 and



Randy remained as a Union Representative for the next 10 years until he retired in 2003 at age 55 along with his wife Bobbie who worked in the Health Benefits Dept.

Shortly after retirement, Randy had a massive heart attack and later had a triple bypass. A year later he was diagnosed with Renal Carcinoma which traveled to his lower back. Randy battled his cancer for six painful years but never complained. Randy lost his battle when the cancer eventually metastasized to his bones and lungs.

His caring personality and sense of humor will be missed by all who knew him. Randy is survived by his wife Bobbie, son and daughter, four grandchildren, mother, brother and two sisters.

Stay informed about negotiations



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Go right to the source



Don't rely on rumors

Hot Topics

Words of wisdom to help you keep your job

What you should know about Relief Periods (breaks)

—By Field Director Chuck Adinolfi

It is very important to follow the rules established by your employer when taking your breaks. Your contract spells out exactly the time that you are allowed to take, depending on the length of your shift, but there are certain established company policies that you should follow to keep out of potential trouble.

Most all employers have a restriction of where breaks are to be taken and designated smoking areas outside the premises. They also have policies about leaving the premises while on a break.

We have seen a number of disciplinary



suspensions for taking excessive time while on a break, leaving the premises to run an errand without permission and for taking an unauthorized break.

Remember to ask for permission from your supervisor before taking a break. If you are delayed by a customer and you were not able to start your break on time, let someone know that you started late and will be making up the time. Do not leave the store and run errands

without permission. Do not combine breaks (two or more) without permission. Lastly, be careful not to take longer than the time allotted to you.

If you are not getting your breaks or you have questions about your contractual rights, please call your representative. The Rep on Duty is also available to answer your contract questions at extension 296.



Enjoy Your Retirement!

For fun and friendship join the UFCW Retirees' Club!

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- *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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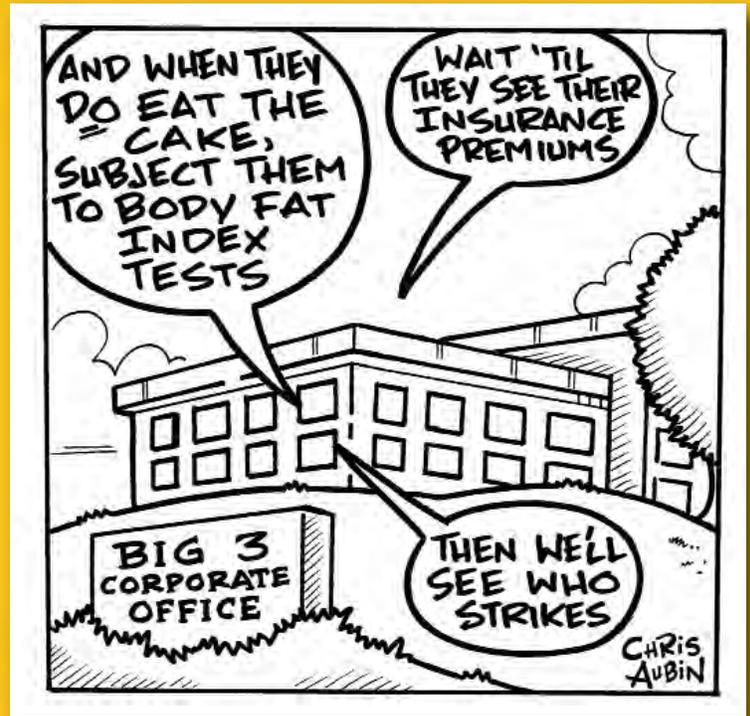
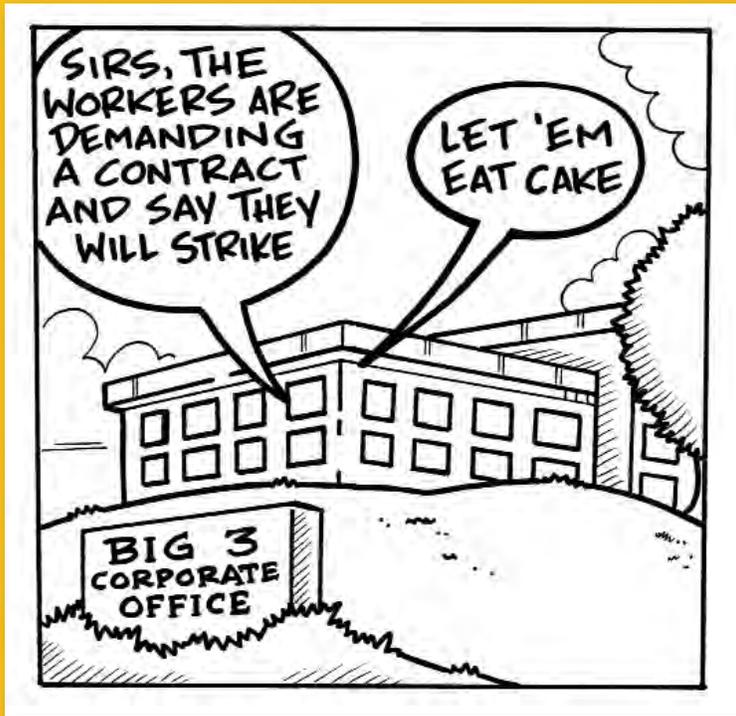
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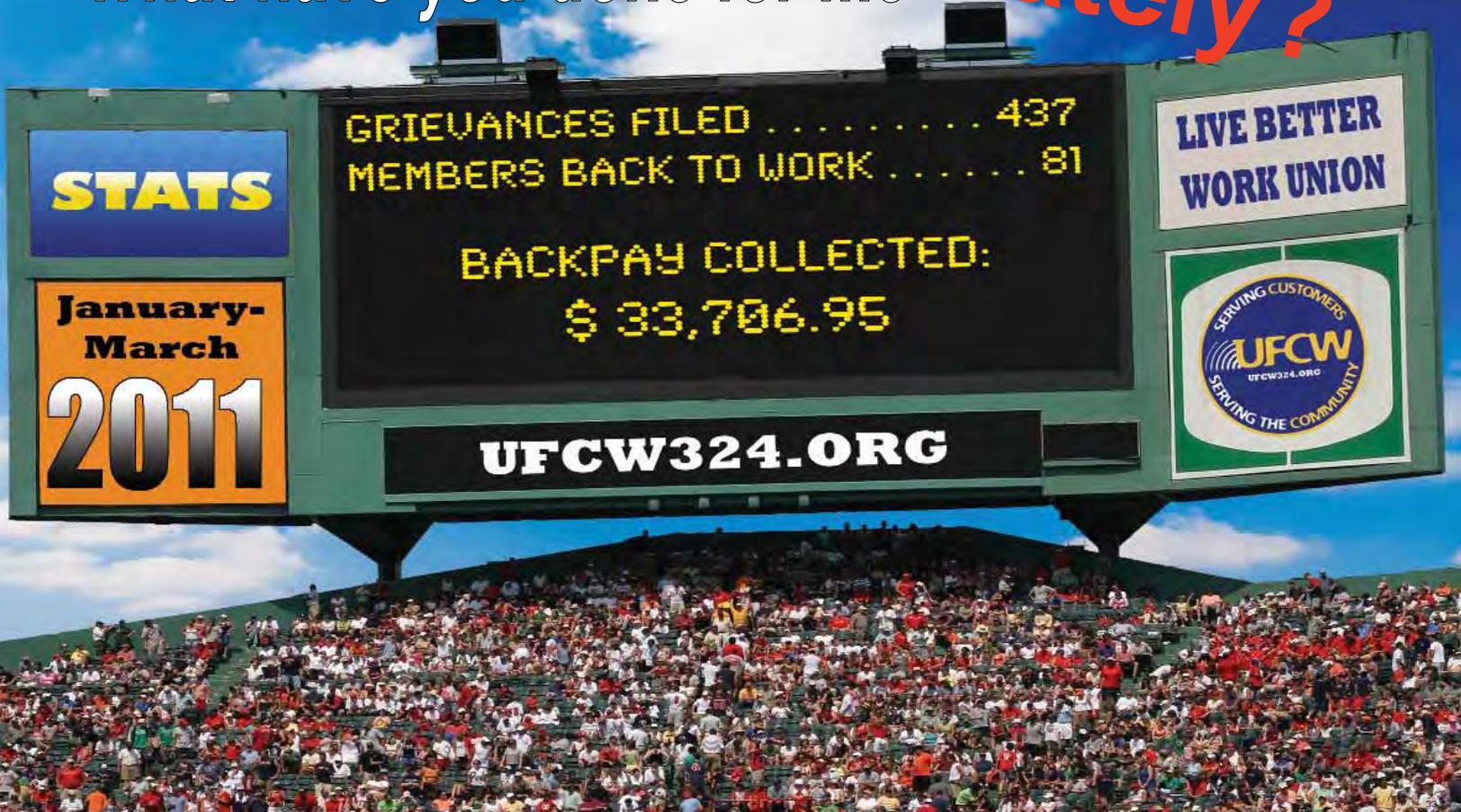


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STATS

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March**

2011

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UFCW324.ORG

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WORK UNION**

