

# Contract Ratified

## Ready and Willing

*Picket Captains meet in Buena Park in preparation for strike that never came.*

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## Over & Over

*Members send resounding NO vote to employers in hopes that bargaining will resume.*

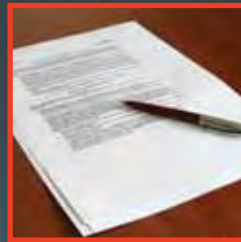
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## Hoots & Hollers

*What do your colleagues have to say about the deal that averted another strike?*

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Members ratify contract that almost wasn't.



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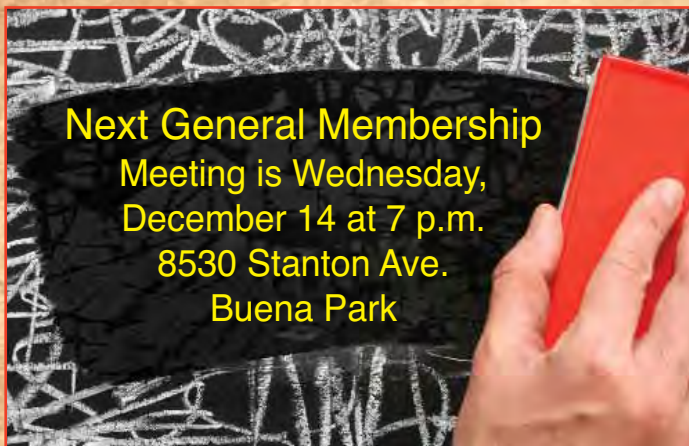
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**For negotiation updates  
the minute they happen**



**Next General Membership  
Meeting is Wednesday,  
December 14 at 7 p.m.  
8530 Stanton Ave.  
Buena Park**

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

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**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!**



# President's Report

## Your strength will stand as an example for others to follow

Brothers and Sisters, congratulations on your newly ratified contract. At no time in my memory has a group of workers been so deserving. Your sacrifice, focus and grace under pressure will stand as an example when other workers in other places in different times are called into action. And believe me, the times you were called into action and the atmosphere that prevailed were designed to make this process a very difficult one.

A strategy of attrition evolved into high precision intimidation. You never flinched. When the contract expired and months passed without any progress, some feared that the strategy was taking its toll. A few members called the union office clearly agitated by the differing assessments (management had their own spin on the issues) regarding progress at the negotiating table.

But after almost eight months and a brand-new menu of pressure tactics, you saw what was going on and stood your ground. The process of discovering the sometimes duplicitous nature of management is as deflating as a first romantic breakup. The feeling of being let down by someone who once showered you with compliments and even calls you "great" was now promising to be loyal to a corporate competitor and lock you out of your job. Such harsh blows make apathy or disillusionment easy infections to catch.

Andrea and I urged you to be patient in the days when the flow of information slowed to a trickle. The torment of uncertainty can be as corrosive as

a worst case scenario. All of us at the table knew this all too well. You made all of us proud to serve you by showing that you cared enough about your jobs to keep them in the middle class.

I said in my final negotiations update a sentiment I will echo here. In a year that will wind down with organized labor on the defensive yet again in the nation's capital and in states all across the map, our contract is a notable standout. Organized Labor has had few reasons to openly celebrate over the past year and a half. Some even claim to have forgotten what it feels like to want to brag.

Brothers and sisters you have earned the right to brag — take a deep breath and enjoy it. Very soon your brothers and sisters on the front lines of other contract battles in Northern California and around the country will be looking to you for advice on exactly how David should act if he's going to stand a chance against Goliath.

And don't forget **you** stayed strong, **you** stayed united and **together** we did prevail.



President

Greg M. Conger



A stylized, handwritten signature of the word "Greg" in black ink.

# Down to the wire

*Big 3 move in union's direction only when a strike looked all but certain*



**G**rocery workers from seven UFCW Locals voted in overwhelming numbers September 24 to ratify a contract that took nearly eight months to negotiate and had Californians from Bakersfield to the Mexican border preparing for what appeared to be an imminent strike.

The far-reaching impact of the impending crisis was evident in the faces of those who stopped by union halls Friday and Saturday to get an update on the vote. Business leaders, clergy, community activists even politicians ultimately played a role in the workers' struggle as the campaign reached into local neighborhoods for public support.

The heightened role for the public was the result of a massive sweep into neighborhoods surrounding the highest volume stores in every local. Community organizations adopted stores, pledging to assist union leaders by walking the picket lines and even providing food and drinks to line volunteers. Research designed to

measure public attitudes toward the players in the dispute as well as the issues involved confirmed beyond any doubt that the public was squarely on the side of workers. That polling found sizeable pools of public support for grocery workers and a diminishing opinion of the Big 3 supermarket chains.

"They saw the writing on the wall that the public wasn't going to cross our picket lines," said Executive Vice-President Rick Eiden, who added that much of the public saw their own struggles at work playing out in the drama between grocery workers and the companies.

The ratification concludes the most protracted negotiating process ever for all seven locals. Progress came to a screeching halt when healthcare took center stage in the talks, causing divisions so deep that seven months of discussions brought the players no closer. Wages and a handful of other peripheral issues remained contentious all the way to the end, according to

union officials.

The deal came literally at the last conceivable moment when it appeared that a 30-hour marathon session had failed to move the parties close enough to avoid the union from pulling thousands of workers off their jobs and onto picket lines in front of one of the three grocery chains. The remaining two companies pledged to lock out their employees as soon as a strike was called against any of them.

Friday for some, Saturday for others marked the first time workers got a chance to hear what was in the contract that many say would have looked much different were it not for the unity shown by grocery workers. Most appeared positive when their union leaders stepped up to the podium to share details that included:

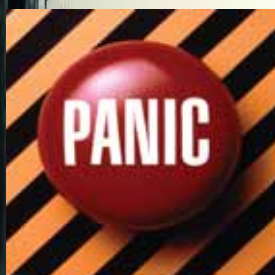
- Sufficient funding for comprehensive healthcare
- Cash bonuses
- Pension accruals protected.

Union leaders said that the decision to strike one of the three chains was minutes away from being executed when employers dropped one of their primary demands. That paved the way for a dramatic 11th-hour-announcement that a tentative agreement had been reached.

"We owe our success to our members, who stood united and strong and to all of our loyal customers who pledged their support for the workers," said union leaders in a joint statement.

Word of the deal spread just as a growing chorus of political, civic and economic experts were predicting that a work stoppage could prove even more costly than the 2003/2004 strike/lockout.

President Conger used the occasion to thank members for their solidarity throughout the negotiations. "Virtually everything you see in this contract aside from pension happened in the past 72 hours; they moved when they realized that you were serious about fighting with everything you had. When they were convinced that you weren't backing down, they blinked."





# Next Up- Food 4 Less

Albertsons, Ralphs, and Vons members showed incredible perseverance and solidarity during the eight months Retail Food negotiations dragged on.

Remaining strong until the end and sending a message through two strike votes while resisting a lot of pressure from management, our Retail Food and Meat members held the line on health care, pension, and wages in an extremely difficult economic environment. At the store level, rumors flew, management snooped, and corporate handbills lied.

Our seasoned members knew the routine, and our newer members quickly learned. As a union, we stood strong and we prevailed.

Waiting patiently for their contract negotiations to begin are our Food 4 Less members who deserve the same attention and support from all their union brothers and sisters. Food 4 Less stores operate more and more like traditional grocery stores, and Food 4 Less continues to be one of the most profitable Kroger divisions.

Our members' dedication and hard work has made this company's success possible. Our goal in these negotiations will be to lessen the gap in the most meaningful and positive way possible between our Food 4 Less and Ralphs members.

We hope to begin these negotiations soon, capitalizing on the momentum of a hard fought victory that will surely survive as a case study long after this contract

expires. Securing the best possible contract for our Food 4 Less members is everyone's battle. For those of you involved in the recent Retail Food negotiations, if you have friends or family working at a Food 4 Less or if there is one near you, stop in

and tell your brothers and sisters about management's tactics to wear you down and the victory we achieved by standing united.

We will continue to update our Food 4 Less members through our Union Reps, web site, and text messaging service. Getting the facts from reliable and trusted sources allowed our Food Division members to pass

through management's mine field of rumors, propaganda and gossip undeterred. Staying strong and not showing weakness in your stores or with management is essential. Once again, together, we will prevail.



**Secretary-Treasurer** Andrea Zinder



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





# Look for the Union Label

—By Matthew Hart

For most who grew up in the 70s, the phrase “look for the union label” will cause an immediate reaction. Some will begin humming, while others will break out in song. Those old enough to remember will reflect back upon the commercial responsible for this musical reaction. Beginning in 1975, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) began airing a commercial to promote products made by union workers and to encourage shoppers to look for the union label. While the commercial aired only 60 times in seven years, the song and its message reached 86% of the American public. Millions of Americans were now aware of the union label (a.k.a. the union bug) and why it was something worth searching for.

The history of the union label reaches back to the 1400's; craft guilds often decorated their halls and seals with coats of arms containing visual symbols of the tools of their crafts. This continued until the advancement of printing technology in the 1800's, which expanded other avenues of promotion for craft unions (i.e., membership cards, buttons, badges, etc.) As the labor movement began to take hold in 19th century America, trade unions would continue to use the tools of their craft on their logos combined with the name and local of their union. At this point though, there was no signifying mark to indicate a product was union-made.

In the 1860's, 8-hour leagues developed throughout the United States in an attempt to reduce a day's work from ten to eight hours a day. In 1869, one of these groups, the Carpenter's Eight-Hour League in San Francisco, adopted a stamp to be placed on products produced in mills and factories whose employees worked eight-hour shifts. This stamp is considered to be the precursor to the union label.

During the same period, a less admirable side of the labor movement was also forming on the west coast. With the rise of Chinese immigration and their exploitation as cheap labor by employers, a wave of racially motivated hysteria swept through the West. In the midst of economic depression, Chinese workers were imagined as complicit partners of big business, their cheap labor driving organized, white laborers out of work. This

hysteria led to numerous race riots and eventually to the Chinese Exclusion and Geary acts.

While most craft unions were never directly threatened by Chinese labor, small-producer guilds (shoemakers, boot makers, cigar makers) were finding their handcrafts displaced in the market by cheaper goods that were mass-produced by Chinese labor in San Francisco. As a response, in 1874, the cigar makers in San Francisco created a “white labor” label to indicate that unionized white men rather than non-union Chinese workers made the product. The Shoemakers' Protective Union also followed suit, adopting their own “white labor” label.

The Cigar Makers International recognized the potential support that working class consumers could provide in encouraging the production and sale of union products. They initiated the first national union label in 1880, this one blue in color, thus doing away with the racially motivated white label from the West. Other unions rapidly followed suit in the next decade, including those representing typographers, garment workers, coopers, bakers and iron molders.

By 1909, the American Federation of Labor formed the Union Label Department to spread the use of the union label. As William Green, President of the AFL in 1939, noted, the label's presence on a product is representative “of those conditions surrounding working men and women which make for a higher and better standard of living.”

Today, the union label represents a broad, multi-ethnic labor force. While we know it as a symbol for products made by union workers, it is also symbolic of labor's past. Even in its birth, with the struggle for the 8-hour day and the “white-labor” label, the union label represents the movement's mixed history of pride and shame. But, within that history, there also exists many great labor leaders, like A. Philip Randolph, Addie Wyatt, Dolores Huerta, and Rose Pesotta, who fought against racial intolerance and gender discrimination. Despite its shortcomings, labor has continued to be at the forefront of progress for all workers, regardless of race, gender, or creed. It is also because of this that we should continue to look for the union label.





# Members reject second contract offer

*Over 90% show they are willing to fight for their health care*

Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons employees turned out in droves Aug. 19 in Buena Park where they cast votes on the latest contract offer from the Big 3. The message was clear—a resounding NO.

Upwards of 90 percent of the votes cast were rejections of the Big 3's laundry list of takeaways and cutbacks. Both sides returned to the bargaining table at the federal mediator's request Aug. 29.





# Signs of the





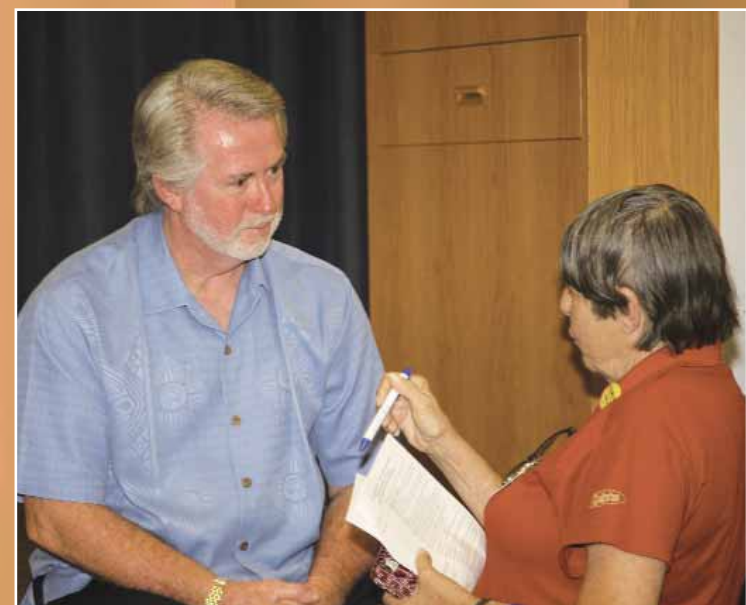
# Times





# Eyes on t

## Members overwhelming



Steady streams of members made their way to the union's Buena Park headquarters Sept. 24 to see first-hand what resulted from nearly eight months of bargaining between management and seven UFCW locals. President Greg Conger and Secretary-Treasurer Andrea Zinder were on hand throughout the day fielding questions about every aspect of the contract. Conger addressed standing room only crowds at separate hour-long meetings held to brief the membership on contract specifics. Thousands of others studied a union-provided breakdown of the collective bargaining agreement, consulting with



# he prize

## ly ratify new contract



union representatives to clear up any lingering doubts before voting Yes. Ultimately, a stark few uncertainties remained as overwhelming numbers gave the document well over the majority it needed for ratification. News of the agreement has been subject of enormous interest since Monday when nearly 62,000 grocery workers were about 10 minutes away from walking off their jobs.



# Word on the street

Q

■ What do you think of the new agreement?

“



I feel the companies are starting to value us, and showed us that with the final agreement. It was hard to accept what was offered considering what the CEO salaries and bonuses are.

**Yvonne Warren**  
**Vons Pavilions 2209**



I'm happy with everything in it. We ended up getting a fine contract without having to take it to the streets.

**Obdulio Placido**  
**Ralphs 154**



Overall, I'm feeling pretty good about it and it doesn't look like we lost too much. I didn't think they were going to let us go on strike.

**Leo Frias**  
**Vons 3519**



I'm very happy with it. We work very hard and we deserve it. I think it's funny that the company's tactics made the union stronger.

**Sylvia Jaime**  
**Ralphs 250**

This contract makes me proud. I've got 36 years in and every time the companies have tried to lower my standard of living, the union has been there to help me.

**Carol Rach**  
**Albertsons 6105**



It's a whole lot better than I thought we were going to get. The best thing is that we kept our benefits intact.

**Tiffany Driscoll**  
**Vons Pavilions 2209**

”



# Hot Topics

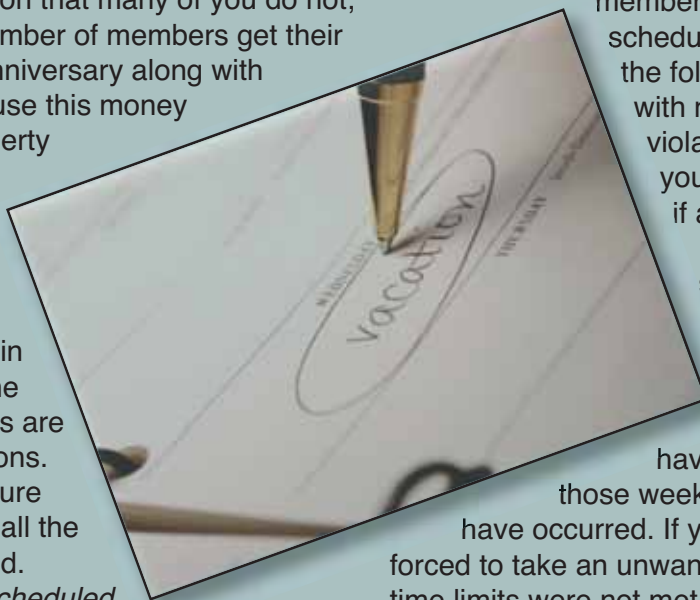
Words of wisdom to help you keep your job

## The company may force you to take vacation

—By Field Director Chuck Adinolfi

We have seen an increase in the number of companies requiring our members to schedule and take all earned vacations. Even though it is a good idea to take all the vacation that you have earned, we understand the reason that many of you do not; extra money. A large number of members get their vacation pay on their anniversary along with unused sick pay. They use this money to pay bills, tuition, property taxes, etc., along with saving some for vacations. As hours get cut from the payroll and stores try to avoid lay-offs and try to work within their budgeted hours, the first place that managers are told to monitor is vacations. They are told to make sure that all employees take all the vacation that they should.

Vacations *may be scheduled by the employer* in the Master Food contract (Albertsons, Ralph's and Vons), Stater Bros. and Gelson's contract; CVS and Rite Aid contracts. In all food contracts that were listed, **the employer must give the employee at least a two weeks' notice before scheduling a forced vacation.**



In the Drug contracts (CVS and Rite Aid), **the employer must give at least thirty days' notice before scheduling a forced vacation.**

We have seen a flood of complaints that members find themselves scheduled to be on vacation on the following weeks schedule with no notice at all. This is a violation of your contract and you may have some recourse if a timely grievance is filed. We have been successful forcing the employer to put members back on the schedule where proper notice was not given and we have also recovered pay for those weeks that these violations have occurred. If you find yourself being forced to take an unwanted vacation and these time limits were not met by your employer, please do not hesitate to call either your representative or the union office.

Remember, employers can require you to take all vacation time so it would be in your best interest to schedule it and take it when you want it before someone else does it for you.

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# Off the wall



U magazine can say with confidence that it knows of no cashier who has worked at a checkstand for more than an hour and does not have a funny customer story to share. We want to be the geniuses who came up with the idea to make a regular column out of these hysterical follies. But we will settle for being the 1000<sup>th</sup>. We think our members will have funnier stories than those other guys who came up with this idea a long time ago. Don't prove us wrong by leaving our mailboxes empty. Allow us to spread the tales of knee slapping hilarity to the furthest corners of the Labor Movement.

**Mail your stories to:**

UFCW 324 Funnies  
8530 Stanton Ave. PO Box 5004  
Buena Park, CA 90620-5004

**or email them to:**

[RetailFunnies@ufcw324.org](mailto:RetailFunnies@ufcw324.org)





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

**STATS**

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