

DESERT EDGE

UFCW LOCAL 1167

a VOICE for working America

Official Publication of Local 1167, United Food and Commercial Workers Union

January 2010



Delegates gathered in front of "Double Trouble," the FDC's big-rig truck, during a break in a convention that featured high-level speakers addressing the future of the Labor Movement.

At FDC conclave, labor leaders in food and drug industries plan united action

Leaders representing 350,000 union members in six states assembled in Las Vegas Dec. 13-16 for the Food & Drug Council's Annual Convention.

The delegates vowed to build on a string of successes in 2009 with an agenda of bold initiatives for 2010 and beyond.

The FDC coordinates cooperation among unions representing workers in the retail food and drug industries in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Utah and Washington. Its 42 affiliates include local and regional unions, as well as the UFCW International Union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, the International Association of Machinists and

Aerospace Workers and the International Union of Operating Engineers.

A large and diverse lineup of high-level speakers included San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, who urged FDC-affiliated unions to push for nationwide versions of progressive programs he has fought for in his city, including a minimum wage increase, paid sick leave and universal health care.

California State Senate Majority Leader Dean Florez said 2010 will be the year to "take back the ship" and make the state legislatures work for working people. He emphasized the need to unionize more workers, protect pensions and educate voters about the benefits of keeping jobs in the state.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Interesting times: curse or blessing?

It's part of modern lore that an "ancient Chinese curse" condemns the victim with these words: "May you live in interesting times."

If this really is an "ancient Chinese curse," it's news to the folks in China, because nobody there seems to have heard of it. Still, the words have a truthful quality that appeals to us in the West.

We live in "interesting times," for sure, but whether that makes us "cursed" depends on our point of view.

With that perspective in mind, let's review the events of 2009, a year that closes out a decade that no-one has yet given a name:

January — The year began with its most significant event: the inauguration of Barack Obama as President of the United States. Love him or hate him, you can't deny the historic scope of the moment. After President Obama signed several executive orders reversing the anti-union policies of his predecessor, Vice President Joe Biden told labor leaders, "Welcome back to the White House." Also during this month, Congress' new pro-Labor majority passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act, which the President immediately signed into law. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, a union pilot for US Airways, became a national hero after ditching his disabled plane in the Hudson River, saving the lives of all 155 people on board.

February — Hilda Solis, who served parts of the Inland Empire in Congress, replaced her anti-union predecessor as U.S. Secretary of Labor. Meanwhile, Vice President Biden kicked off the new Middle Class Task Force with a focus on environmentally friendly "green" technologies. Serving on this task force is UFCW International President Joe Hansen. President Obama signed a \$787 billion package to stimulate job growth during the deepening recession.

March — The head of Tesco's Fresh & Easy Markets admitted that his company "got it wrong" by setting its prices too high for consumers hit by the recession. Meanwhile, labor unions geared up for a campaign to pass the Employee Free Choice Act.

April — UFCW Local 1167 had its most successful Stewards Conference ever. Secretary-Treasurer Brent Denkers took the occasion to announce his pending retirement. Thousands of New Yorkers were

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By Bill Lathrop

Our next Quarterly Membership Meeting Wednesday, March 24, 2010

The meeting will start at 7 p.m. in the UFCW Local 1167 Auditorium,
855 W. San Bernardino Ave., Bloomington

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MAP

Membership Assistance Program

Eligible active or retired Food and Meat participants can call the toll-free MAP number at the Health Management Center at any time,
DAY OR NIGHT, 24 HOURS A DAY,
SEVEN DAYS A WEEK.

Food Division, call
(800) 461-9179
Drug Division, call
(866) 268-2510

(All calls are confidential)

You are interesting!

Tell us about yourself.

You are the most interesting thing about our union! If there's something unusual or newsworthy about your life, hobbies, abilities or talents, call us at the office and tell us about it so that we may consider doing a feature about you in the *Desert Edge*. Just ask for Kathleen Franks or your Union Rep.

President Bill Lathrop



JUST RETIRED

November brought several more members choosing to retire.

William Hatfield and **Joe Gonzalez**, both from Stater Bros., retired. William has worked there since 1974, putting in 36 years. Joe also only worked for Stater Bros., working since 1970 and completing nearly 40 years. ... **Michael Raphael** of Vons retired with 30 years in the industry. He started with Max Foods, went to Stater Bros. and finally to Vons in 2008. ... **Martin Estel** also retired from Vons. He started with Alpha Beta in 1976, went to Vons from 1978 to 1980, on to El Rancho from July 1980 until 1982 and returned to Vons until retiring after nearly 34 years. ... **Gino DiCocco** of Albertsons retired after nearly 23 years. He worked a few years on the East Coast before coming to California and starting with Stater Bros. in 1984. From 1990 until 1994, he worked for Ralphs, Hughes, Lucky and Albertsons, where he has remained until retirement. ... **Daniel**

Laponis of Ralphs retired after 34 years.

Daniel started with Alpha Beta Markets in 1976 and worked there until it was bought out by Ralphs, where he continued until retirement. ... **Nancy Lewis** of Ralphs also retired. Nancy started with Hughes Markets in 1986, working through the merger and staying until retirement. She was in the industry 24 years.

Congratulations, retirees! Enjoy yourselves. You've earned it!

JUST BORN

Jaimie Kirkpatrick of Vons announces the arrival of twin girls on June 17. **Emma Gene** weighed 5 lbs. 14 oz. and **Allie Nicole** weighed 4 lbs. 8 oz. ... **Adam Woods** of Stater Bros. has a daughter, **Lillianna Christine**, who arrived Sept. 17 weighing 7 lbs. 10 oz. ... **Chintal Ghadia** of Albertsons announces that she has a daughter, **Keya**. She arrived on Sept. 23, weighing 6 lbs. 14 oz. **Rebecca Anderson** and **Sergio Lozano**, both of Stater Bros.,

announce the birth of their daughter **Kendall Ashley Lozano** on Sept. 26. She weighed 7 lbs. 7oz. ... **Leslie Johnson** of Stater Bros. had a son on Sept. 30. **Justin Caleb** weighed in at 6 lbs. 9 oz. ... **Lindsay Amlee** of Stater Bros. announces the birth of daughter **Jordan Taylor**. She weighed 6 lbs. 5 oz. when born on Oct. 2. ... **Ericka Lopez** from Stater Bros. gave birth to a daughter, **Bella Christine**, on Oct. 6. Bella weighed 7 lbs. 2 oz. ... **Jesus Diaz** of Stater Bros. announces the arrival of daughter **Jessenia** on Oct. 10. Jessenia weighed 8 lbs. 4.3 oz. ... **Annamarie Fraser** of Albertsons had a little girl on Oct. 15. **Olivia Colleen Delatore** weighed 5 lbs. 6 oz. "Although Olivia is tiny, she's a big bundle of joy!" ... **Alex Gonzalez** of Food 4 Less had a son, **Aiden Nickolas**, on Oct. 15. Aiden weighed 8 lbs. 8 oz. ... **Ruben Torres**, also of Albertsons, has a son, **TJ Mitchell**. TJ was born on Oct. 20 at 3 lbs 15 oz. "Our precious baby boy arrived early, but he is doing wonderful!" ... **Maria Rosas** of Rite-Aid announces a little girl. **Carolyn Rosas** arrived on Oct. 2 at 6 lbs. 12 oz. and 18 inches long. ... **Kristina Treadwell** of Albertsons says that **Tabitha Nicole**, who arrived Oct. 21 at 7 lbs 3 oz., "is cute as a button!" ... **Michelle Perez** of Ralphs wants to thank "everyone at 681 for their love and support. She delivered twin boys on Oct. 23. ... **Mario III** weighed 6 lbs. 6 oz. and **Eusebio Jose** weighed 6 lbs. 15 oz. ... **Amber Smith** of Vons had a son, **Logan Cash**, on Oct. 27 at 8 lbs. 14 oz. and 21 inches long. "I'm so excited he's here! He's beautiful!" ... **Liz Beth Reyes** of Rite Aid had a daughter, **Ellaicah Marisse Santiago**, on Oct. 27. She weighed 6 lbs. 12 oz. ... **Kelly Ann Wells** of Albertsons had a daughter on Nov. 7. **Riley June Wilhite** weighed 5 lbs. 10 oz. ... Finally, **Vicky Anaya** of Rite Aid had a son on Nov. 27. **Aiden Alexander** weighed 7 lbs. 13 ozs. and was 20½ inches long.

Congratulations to our new moms, dads and growing families!



DESERT EDGE

Bill Lathrop
Editor

Official monthly publication of Local 1167, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, San Bernardino, Riverside and Imperial Counties, California.

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Bleivess Communications Incorporated
Publisher



Last 7 days in January and July...

Twice a year, members may change their availability status

The last seven days in January and the last seven days in July are the annually designated times when Retail Food and Meat members can change their status from "available" to "self-restricted" and from "self-restricted" to "available."

The next period for changing availability status is Jan. 25-31, 2010.

After that, the next period will be July 25-31, 2010.

Consult your Union Representative concerning limitations.

Your dues are now payable!

If you are one of the few members of the local who are not yet signed up for dues checkoff: **JANUARY DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. IF NOT PAID ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2010, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUSPEND YOURSELF.**

With dues checkoff, all future dues can be deducted automatically from your pay check. If you do not have an authorization form, call the local and one will be sent to you immediately.

Non-payment or payment of the incorrect amount will automatically suspend you — a costly and inconvenient mistake. Although not required, the local as a courtesy normally sends billing notices by first-class mail to those not on dues checkoff. It is the member's obligation to pay dues in a timely manner. Not receiving a notice is not an excuse for failure to pay dues on time.

Avoid suspension. Authorize dues checkoff today!

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

Friday, Jan. 18, 2010

Union offices will be open to serve you!

UFCW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Your union is about more than your paycheck and benefits.

That's why each year the UFCW awards several SCHOLARSHIPS of up to \$8,000 each to UFCW members or their unmarried dependents.

The application will be available online from January 15 - April 15, 2010. For more information, and to find out if you're eligible, please visit:

www.ufcw.org/scholarship



If you are unable to apply online, you may request an application by writing to: UFCW International Union, Attn: Scholarship Program, 1775 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006

If you need the scholarship rules or application in another language, please contact us at (800) 551-4010 and we will obtain assistance for you.



President Bill Lathrop honored as 'Labor Leader of the Decade'

Bill Lathrop, President of UFCW Local 1167 and President of the San Bernardino/Riverside Central Labor Council, was proclaimed "Labor Leader of the Decade" by the CLC on Dec. 3 in recognition of his support of the council's programs. Above, Assemblywoman Wilmar Carter (D-San Bernardino) and State Sen. Gloria Negrete-McLeod (D-San Bernardino) present Lathrop with a resolution in his honor from the California Legislature.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Shop where you work!

Invest in your store — and in yourself

As we consider our resolutions for the New Year, many of us think about getting in shape, losing a few pounds, quitting a bad habit or simply becoming a more ethical person.

I have another resolution for you to consider. Fortunately, it's an easy one!

Do your shopping at the store where you work.

Some union members spend hours driving across town to save a few cents because they think they can "save more and live better." But is it worth it to save two or three cents on an item they can purchase where they work? How much are they saving, really?



By Jose Correa

Not only are they wasting gas and contributing to air pollution and climate change, they are hurting their own employer. Ultimately, that employer will be forced to cut back on hours or even lay off workers.

Shopping at a non-union retailer like WinCo or Walmart to save a few cents on an item is no way to make your life better. In fact, it does the opposite!

When you shop where you work, you are investing in your own store, which means more hours for you and your co-workers.

This is especially important after the holidays, when sales are down and hours are already scarce.

Do yourself and your co-workers a favor by putting your money where you earn your paycheck. Get your family and friends to shop there, too. (Note: Be sure to abide by all of your store's policies regarding employee purchases!)

Who says a resolution has to be hard? This is one you can keep without any difficulty.

Happy New Year!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Interesting times: curse or blessing?

(Continued from front page)

alarmed when an Air Force One backup plane and an F-16 buzzed Manhattan's skyscrapers in a misguided "photo opportunity."

May — President Obama's campaign to pass health care reform went into full gear. Conspiracy theorists responded with cries of "socialism" and "death panels."

June — Labor unions urged U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein to reverse her decision to oppose the card-check provisions of the Employee Free Choice Act. Michael Jackson died at age 50 in Los Angeles.

July — Workers at the Smithfield meat packing plant in Tar Heel, N.C., ended a 17-year struggle in triumph when they ratified a UFCW contract. Workers at the JBS Swift packing plant in Hyrum, Utah, soon followed suit. Michael Jackson's funeral was one of the most-watched events in history. Former "Saturday Night Live" comedian Al Franken became the junior senator from Minnesota, giving the Democrats a potential filibuster-proof majority in the Senate.

August — Conspiracy theorists turned out in force at congressional "town hall" forums on health care reform around the country. The Senate confirms Sonia Sotomayor as Justice of the Supreme Court.

September — A congressman from South Carolina heckled President Obama as he addressed Congress about health care reform.

October — President Obama learned he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The parents of Falcon Heene told authorities their 8-year-old son had floated away in a homemade helium balloon that looked like a flying saucer; they later admitted that the "balloon boy" story was a hoax.

November — Grocery workers in Arizona narrowly averted a strike when UFCW Local 99 reached a last-minute contract agreement with three supermarket chains. The U.S. House of Representatives passed its version of health care reform, shifting the nation's attention to the debate in the Senate. The economy tentatively moved out from the Great Recession, but unemployment was stuck at a devastating 10 percent. Tareq and Michael Salahi became instant celebrities after crashing a state dinner at the White House.

December — Democrats in the Senate agreed on compromise health care legislation that does not include a public option. The measure overcame a Republican filibuster on a party-line 60-40 vote. The Senate then voted to pass the bill, sending it to a Senate-House conference committee. Meanwhile, members of UFCW Local 7 in Colorado voted not to go on strike against two supermarket companies. A Georgia couple that showed up at the White House a day early for a tour somehow wound up having breakfast with President Barack Obama and the first lady. A Colorado judge sentenced the "balloon boy's" parents to jail time and barred them from profiting from their hoax.

★★★

Were we "cursed" by the events of 2009? I don't think so. At least we have hopes of better days ahead and an administration that listens to the needs and wishes of working people. That makes me feel blessed to live in these "interesting times."

It PAYS to be UNION!

	DECEMBER 2009	2009 TOTAL
Back pay and benefits restored to members	\$3,595.00	\$97,574.49
Members reinstated	9	236
Grievances settled	25	1,009

Family man

CEO Jack Brown credits workers for Stater Bros.' success

Jack Brown is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Stater Bros. Markets, Southern California's only locally-owned supermarket chain.

When Brown joined Stater Bros. in 1981, the company had 3,300 employees at 68 stores, mostly in California's Inland Empire. The company now has 15,000 workers at 166 stores in six counties. During this period, the company's annual sales increased from \$475 million to \$4 billion.

Industry observers say that Stater Bros.' enlightened and compassionate approach to its labor force and its respectful and cooperative relationship with the UFCW have had significant roles in the chain's steady success.

The company has not had a strike during Jack Brown's tenure at Stater Bros. Brown gained widespread admiration among UFCW members throughout Southern California when he refused to lock-out his employees during the 2003-2004 labor dispute.

In a recent interview with *Desert Edge*, Jack Brown talked about his traumatic childhood and how it shapes his approach as a businessman and as an employer.

Q : Why do you refer to your employees as "family" members?

A : We *are* family. We spend more awake hours together than we do with our families at home. Think about it: You get home from work, have a root beer, have dinner, watch TV and go to bed. But you spend eight or nine hours every day with your co-workers.

Q : What about *your* family at home? Where do they fit into your life?

A : I have three married daughters. None of them work in the company; they're all on their own. We didn't always agree, but we always sat down for dinner together and talked about the things that concerned us. We respected each other and worked it out. It's the same thing with the UFCW. We have to respect each other. We're working for the same goals, which is improving the lives of UFCW members. We're all part of the Stater Bros. family.

Q : What was your childhood like, and how did it affect your philosophy at Stater Bros.?

A : My mother was an orphan. When I was born she had tuberculosis and she was confined to a sanitarium in Loma Linda for the first year of my life. She wasn't allowed to hold me. My father was a captain in the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, in the Victorville substation. He would drive me up to the sanitarium and show me to her through the window. After my mother came home she was in bed for another six months.

'It comes out of respect. Respect is earned by the company for the employees and by the union for its membership. I respect unions because it's important for workers to have a voice.'

Seven years later, my father died. He had no benefits. My mother had to raise money to bury my father. Then my mother went to work in a retail dress shop. I remember watching her struggle, six days a week, 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. All of my grandparents were gone. It was just my mother and me.

My mother still lives near me. She's 89 years old, and she still calls and gives me hell when something is in an ad that shouldn't be.

I'm telling you this because it is the background of who I am. This is how I got my work ethic. This is why I strongly believe that a pension is the best investment you can make. My father got nothing after all of his years with the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department. I want our retiring family members to do better than that. I want them to think of themselves as "graduates" who are ready for another phase of their lives.

Q : What was your first job?



Clockwise from above center: The original Stater Bros. Market in Yucaipa; the three Stater brothers; a Stater Bros. store as it appeared in 1980.



Markets in San Bernardino. Working with me there was Bill Sauriol, who was a receiving clerk. Then I went to the Midwest (as Corporate Vice President for Marsh's Supermarkets in Indianapolis, Ind.), and when I returned to join Stater Bros., I worked side-by-side with Bill when he became President of UFCW Local 1167. We're still the largest employer at Local 1167 and I have a good relationship with the current President, Bill Lathrop.

Q : You are considered a hero among union members because you signed a "me-too" agreement with the UFCW in 2003 and refused to join the other chains in locking-out the union members. What was your thinking at the time?

A : Think of your own family. You are responsible to them first. When I saw what was being proposed by the other employers in give-backs, I thought it was too much. I told my people: If you will come to work and stay busy, I won't lock you out. We shook hands and they went to work.

It comes out of respect. Respect is earned by the company for the employees and by the union for its membership. I respect unions because it's important for workers to have a voice.

In my 29 years with Stater Bros., we never had a strike, because we were able to sit down together with respect and shake hands on an agreement. I believe a handshake is as binding as a signature — in fact, it's more so.

We all have a job to do. My job is to protect their jobs. Their job is to serve the customers.

Q : How is the current state of the economy affecting Stater Bros. and its employees?

A : We've not had a layoff in the current economic downturn. There has been some reductions in hours, but none to the point where people are losing their benefits. That's because we're family and we respect each other.

This economy right now is a major threat, as are the non-union stores that sell foods, whether they are big-box stores, Hispanic stores or convenience stores. All of them take away jobs from union stores, because they have to cut hours. All we ask for is a level playing field. What we have now is not a level playing field.

Nevertheless, on Sept. 28, 2008, we set a record for sales in the 73-year history of the company. In January I told management to hold expenses and prices down. The customers need help. Profit margins are down, but we're gaining 70,000 new customers a week.

Those people come for the prices and the come back for the service. I rely on the union employees — our family members at Stater Bros. — to provide that service.

A : When I was 12, I worked as a grape picker at Dale Gentry Vineyards. I would squat with the other workers at 5 a.m. on weekends, waiting to get picked up to go to the fields. We had to take along our own toilet paper and water. They gave us nothing. I'd pick a box full of grapes and walk all the way to the truck, where they'd give me tokens that I clipped to my belt. At the end of the day I'd exchange the tokens for my pay.

My next job was as a box boy for Berk's Market Spot in San Bernardino. I was 13. Mr. Berk became a father figure to me. I worked there for several years. It was nice little store. Nobody told me to work, but I felt I had to work for my mom. That was when box boys really were box boys. We'd cut up boxes and use them to carry groceries to the cars.

I didn't have dreams of becoming the CEO of a big supermarket company. I always wanted to have a job. And I always wanted to be prepared for my next job. Sometimes you don't always get the job you want, but if you're prepared they'll be more likely to choose you.

Later, after the Navy, I was a management trainee at Sage's Complete

My box cutter and me

This poem was recited by Jack H. Brown as he was being installed as President of the Western Association of Food Chains at its convention in Dallas in 1988.

Oh box cutter so worn, so sharp, and so slick
Don't ever forget that it was I who made you so quick.

We would move together once in the groove
We hit all four corners of the case with just one move.

I would misplace or put you out on loan
But somehow when I really needed you, you found your way home.

To you I would talk, while working alone on the night stocking shift
You always helped me get back on course when I would start to drift.

With you in my pocket my lunch money was safe when going to school
No one would mess with me and you unless they were a fool.

We were put to many a test that certainly challenged our ability and our zest

But none could ever say we didn't give it our best.

The years have gone by like the blink of an eye
By working together we reached for the sky.

Much luck and success like honey and cream
As we both reached for the American Dream.

Much time still remains for us to continue to share our success
So those who follow will be equally blessed.

So I pledge before you and all the Stater Bros. "Family"
I will never forget that it all started with... "my box cutter and me"

— Box Boy Brown



Windsor Foods members convene in Bloomington

Members from Windsor Foods gathered at Local 1167's headquarters on Dec. 8 to attend a special meeting about health care.



Health care costs continue their relentless climb

Health care costs rose 5 percent in 2009, more than the general inflation rate of 0.7 percent during the same period, according to an annual survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Since the survey was begun in 1999, premiums have gone up a total of 131 percent, far more than workers' wages (up 38 percent since 1999) or inflation (up 28 percent).

The survey reveals that a growing number of workers who are covered by their employer are facing high deductibles in addition to paying premiums for their coverage.

In 2009, 22 percent of covered workers had to pay at least \$1,000 out of pocket annually for single coverage before their plan paid a share of their health care bills, up

Among those firms offering benefits, 21 percent reported they reduced the scope of health benefits or increased cost sharing due to the economic downturn...

from 18 percent in 2008 and 10 percent in 2006.

The average annual premium for employer-sponsored health insurance was \$4,824 for single coverage and \$13,375 for family coverage. In 1999, the insurance premium for a family was \$5,791.

The survey found that only 60 percent of

firms offered health benefits to any of their workers in 2009. As in the past, the smaller the firm, the less likely it was to offer health benefits — with fewer than half (46 percent) of the smallest employers (three to nine workers) offering health benefits.

Among those firms offering benefits, 21 percent reported they reduced the scope of health benefits or increased cost sharing due to the economic downturn, and 15 percent reported they increased the worker's share of the premium.

When asked about their plans for next year, 21 percent of offering firms said they were "very likely" to raise workers' premium contribution, and 16 percent said they were "very likely" to raise deductibles.

Members of UFCW Local 99 vote to ratify Arizona supermarket contract

Union grocery workers across Arizona voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new contract with the Fry's, Safeway and Smith's supermarket chains.

The members of UFCW Local 99 voted by mail to approve a three-year agreement that does not include employee-paid premiums for health insurance. The new contract also includes wage increases and sufficient funding to maintain the workers' pension fund.

"More than 50 percent of those eligible participated in the vote — an unusually high percentage that reflects our members' intense interest in the negotiations that produced this agreement," UFCW Local 99 President Jim McLaughlin said.

The agreement between the union and the supermarket companies was reached in the late hours of Nov. 12, hours before a strike deadline set by Local 99.

"This new contract is a significant improvement over the employers' previous offer, which was rejected by the members," McLaughlin said.

Staff members from UFCW Local 1167 were in Arizona to help Local 99 inform its members about developments in the negotiations.

Local 1167 President Bill Lathrop credited Local 99's members for their "unshakeable strength and solidarity" during the 13-month negotiating process.

"Their unity made this good contract possible," he said.

Colorado members vote against strike

Members of UFCW Local 7 in Colorado voted not to authorize a strike against Safeway and Kroger's King Soopers and City Market chains.

The decision was based on the "last, best and final" contract offers from the three chains.

The members voted to accept the offer from Kroger and to reject the offer from Safeway. However, the vote to reject Safeway's offer did not reach the percentage threshold that would authorize a strike.

This was the fourth vote taken by

the members on contract proposals since the previous contracts expired on May 9, 2009.

UFCW Local 7 represents 17,000 members at Safeway and Kroger-owned stores in Colorado.

Negotiations are continuing on behalf of union members at Safeway and Albertsons stores in the state.

The previous Colorado negotiations in 2004 required intervention by a federal mediator. Eight years earlier, in 1996, Colorado grocery workers struck for a month and a half before agreeing to a new contract.

Indemnity PPO Medical Plan Participants:

Kick the new year off right ...
take a step toward a healthier you!

Here's one resolution you can keep! Spend 15 minutes to take a step toward a healthier (and wealthier) you in 2010.

Last year, nearly half of the UFCW & Employers Indemnity PPO Medical Plan participants filled out a simple 15-minute confidential **Health Risk Questionnaire (HRQ)**, received information about their health and got an extra contribution of up to \$250 to their Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs). The good news for anyone who missed out last year is that you have another chance to get those extra contributions in 2009! And, those of you who completed the HRQ in 2009 will receive up to \$250 to your HRA for completing the HRQ once again in 2010.

"What's the catch?" None. During these times of rising medical costs, the Trustees want you to have the opportunity to learn how to take better care of yourself and make wiser health decisions. The HRQ is the first step in that direction.

The HRQ is confidential and is administered by an independent firm that will not give your individual HRQ results to your union, your employer or the Benefit Fund.

Here's how the HRQ works:

- (1) The Fund invites all Indemnity PPO Medical Plan participants and their covered spouses/domestic partners to fill out an HRQ form;
- (2) You spend approximately 15 minutes doing the HRQ - online or on paper;
- (3) You receive personalized, confidential feedback about your health - including any current health risks and suggestions on better health and lifestyle choices;
- (4) An extra contribution - up to \$250 - automatically goes into your HRA so it can be applied to your deductibles and other eligible medical costs, including prescription drug copays;
- (5) Any HRA amounts you don't use in 2010 carry over to 2011, as long as you are still enrolled in the New Indemnity Medical Plan.

Watch for more information in your mailbox from the Fund.

Happy New You!

IN MEMORIAM

Charles Gould, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Prebles, Shop Rite and Model Grocery, died May 23, 1999, at the age of 90. He had been a member since May 1950.

Juencio Mercado, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Wilsons Co. and Vons Meat Service Center, died Nov. 14, 2009, at the age of 88. He had been a continuous member since January 1970.

David Noriega, a food clerk formerly employed by Ralphs, died Dec. 7, 2009, at the age of 39. He had been a continuous member since June 1994.

Yvonne Pastella, an associate member employed by Vons, died Dec. 5, 2009, at the age of 52. She had been a member since January 1982.

Dorothy Royal, a retired meat wrapper formerly employed by Albertsons, died Nov. 12, 2009, at the age of 61. She had been a continuous member since December 1998.

Mary Weiland, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Mayfair Markets, died Nov. 12, 2009, at the age of 89. She had been a continuous member since August 1965.

Our condolences to the families of these deceased members.

Apply for the UFCW and Food Employers Benefit Fund Scholarship!

The Scholarship Award Program jointly sponsored by the Employer and Union Trustees of the UFCW and Food Employers Benefit Fund is one of the best offered to union members anywhere. The Scholarship Award Program can help you or your child earn a degree, certification or license and find new opportunities for prosperity and success.

Members are eligible to apply for an award if they have completed a year of services as of October 2009 and are still actively employed in the Southern California Retail Food Industry when the Awards are determined. Dependent children are eligible to apply if the member has at least three years of service and is unmarried, less than 24 years of age, and met other Fund qualifications, including the requirement that the member be employed in the Industry when the awards are determined. **The deadline for Scholarship Award Applications is Feb. 28, 2010.** Applications must be postmarked by this date. All members should receive an application in the mail. If you did not receive one, please call your union or the Trust Fund office at (714) 220-2297 or (562) 408-2715.

Deadline: Feb. 28

STEWARD FEATURE

Sandra Tellez: Proud to be a union steward

When Union Representative Bill Collard approached Sandra Tellez and asked her to become a steward at her Rite Aid store in Victorville, she considered it a “sign from above.”

“My husband [Carlos] had been after me to become a steward for some time,” Tellez recalled. “We had been having some problems at our store and when I told my husband about them, he said ‘your store needs a steward and it should be you.’ So, when Bill asked me, I felt it was meant to be.”

Tellez said the problems were minor and were resolved quickly once she became steward.

“But we needed someone to take the lead and I felt honored to be of service to my union,” she said.

Tellez thanks her husband for her



Sandra Tellez

union job.

“He worked as a non-union contractor for 15 years,” Tellez said.

“He had no benefits and had to work double and triple time just to earn some vacation. So when I was looking for a job, he told me to apply at Rite Aid, because he knew those positions were covered by a union contract and had great benefits. He was right.”

Tellez has worked at her store for eight years.

“It’s a great place to work,” she said. “We all get along and if any issues come up we work them out with our manager.”

Tellez and her husband have five children between them ranging in age from 15 to 22.

“With such a large family, our health benefits really come in handy,” Tellez said. “Carlos has chronic bronchitis from all of the years he worked at a cement plant. Before I had my union job, he had to pay for all of his

medical bills out of pocket.”

Tellez said she had to use her medical benefits herself a few years ago when she had surgery.

“It was a good feeling to know I didn’t have to worry about how I was going to pay for it,” she said. “Our health benefits covered it all.”

Tellez also values the job security she has working under a union contract.

“Bill Collard visits us quite often,” she said. “He looks out for us. It’s another advantage of working at a union job.”

In her spare time, Tellez enjoys reading and camping and fishing trips to Utah with her family.

“My husband has some family in St. George,” Tellez said. “We drive about two hours north to a remote lake. It gives us a chance to spend quality time with each other.”



Rite Aid members at work

