

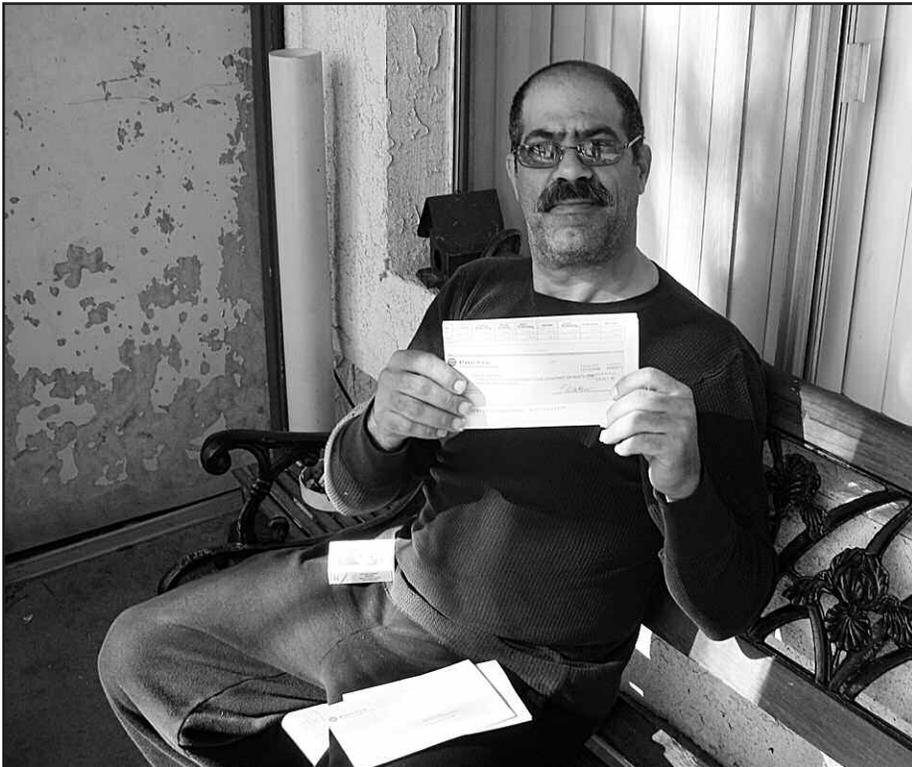
DESERT EDGE

UFCW LOCAL 1167

a VOICE for working America

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

February 2009



Member Sands Sabatino holds his check for back pay from Pactiv.

Union member wins full back pay and benefits in arbitration victory

UFCW 1167 won a major arbitration victory recently when an arbitrator ruled that a fired employee at Pactiv in the City of Industry was unfairly terminated.

The case began when machine operator Sands Sabatino, who worked the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift, sat down near his plastic manufacturing

machine while it was being serviced.

“I closed my eyes for a few minutes,” he said. “My mother had died shortly before and I was having a lot of problems in my life at that time, so I just closed my eyes and started thinking about things.”

A supervisor noticed him and took a photo to use as evidence for a

(Please see page 7)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A cold day in D.C., a bright new beginning

As President Barack Obama took the oath of office on a cold Washington, D.C., morning, I watched the events from the warm and comfortable Local 1167 Executive Board Room in Bloomington.

Several of our union staff members were there with me. Others gathered around a television in the break room.

We were all excited about watching history take place. I was particularly amazed by the mass of humanity that had gathered in front of the Capitol and on the National Mall. Can you imagine two million people at the same place?

They were there to welcome our new president and wish him well in the awesome task that is before him. No doubt some of those people also were there to see his predecessor go away.

Someone in our group remarked that George W. Bush, our outgoing president, didn't look too comfortable. Maybe he was wondering why there weren't such huge crowds at his two inaugurations.

The country is on Obama's side

One thing is for sure: President Barack Obama has most of our country solidly on his side. That's fortunate, because he'll need all the good wishes and all the help we can give him.

Obama is an eloquent young man with a progressive, pro-people philosophy. He has a personal history and background unlike any other president in history. Upon taking the oath of office he launched his administration with words to inspire hope and confidence in ourselves.

Inspiration is important in a time like this, when our country is caught in the grip of the greatest economic crisis in our lifetimes.

It was refreshing to hear America's chief executive tell the truth about what has happened to us, and why:

“Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age. Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet...”

“Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America, they will be met.”

Obama went on to salute the working heroes who made our country great — “the doers, the makers of things — some celebrated, but more

(Please see page 8)



By Bill Lathrop

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P.O. Box 1167
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Your dues now payable!

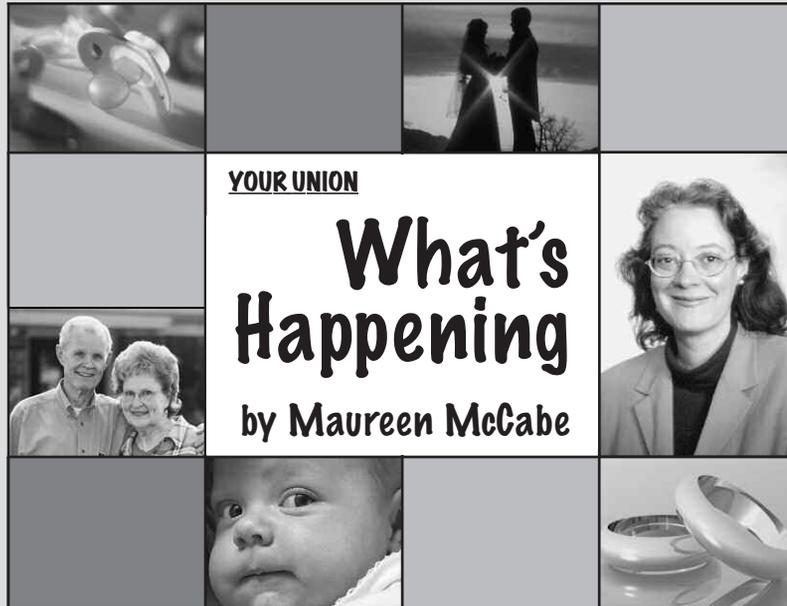
Sign up for dues checkoff!

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, 2009, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUSPEND YOURSELF.

With dues checkoff, all future dues can be deducted automatically from your paycheck. 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!



YOUR UNION

What's Happening

by Maureen McCabe

JUST RETIRED

The end of 2008 brought us several new retirees. But first of all, belated congratulations and an apology to **Patsy Svete**, whose name was listed wrong in a previous issue. Patsy retired in November after 34 years with Stater Bros. We're sorry about the error, Patsy, and hope you've been enjoying your retirement.

In December, **Raul Cisneros, Margaret Falcon, Craig Maudlin, Joseph Villalobos** and **Cheryl Zorawicki** joined the ranks of the retirees. Raul worked 31 years as a meat cutter for Ralphs, Stater Bros. and Gemco. Margaret worked for Stater Bros. for 20 years. Craig worked in the industry for 34 years with Stater Bros., Albertsons and Mayfair. Joseph worked for Vons for 31 years. Cheryl worked for Stater Bros. for 31 years.

Congratulations to all of our

retirees! We wish you many healthy, happy years ahead to enjoy your well-earned retirements.

JUST MARRIED

David Almy, Stater Bros., married **Rosario Gan** on Oct. 23 in Riverside. The newlyweds honeymooned with a trip to Disneyland. ... **Crystal Ann Starr**, Albertsons, married **Dominic Laico** on Nov. 1. The wedding was at St. Frances of Rome church in Wildomar.

Tawny Richmond, Ralphs, exchanged "I dos" with **Brain Kataoka** on Nov. 18.

Congratulations to all of our newlyweds!

JUST BORN

Phillip Griefnow, Stater Bros., welcomed **Ryan** into the world on Oct. 3. Ryan weighed 6 lbs. 11 oz. ... **Danielle Ruiz** and **Alvaro Rosas**, Albertsons, are pleased to announce the birth of **Ezra Hilarion Rosas** on Oct. 29. Ezra weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz and measured 20

inches long. ... **Ronald Lee Beard**, Stater Bros., is proud new daddy to twins. **Kayla Krystal** and **Matthew Richard** were born on Oct. 30. Kayla was born one minute before her brother at 8:44 a.m.; Matthew followed at 8:45. Kayla weighed in at 5 lbs. 8 oz. and Matthew weighed 5 lbs. 6 oz. ... **Rachelle Simpkins**, Rite Aid, has a new son. **Jacob Evan** was born on Nov. 5 and weighed 7 lbs. 8 oz. "Kisses to Grandpa in heaven," the happy mom writes. ... **Gracie Garcia**, Albertsons, gave birth to **Leonardo Daniel Matias** on Nov. 5. Leonardo weighed 10 lbs. ... **Rich Zaharias**, Stater Bros., is pleased to announce the birth of **Addison Adella** on Nov. 5. Addison weighed 6 lbs. 9 oz. ...

LaTanya Godoy, Stater Bros., has a new daughter. **Makayla Alee** was born on Nov. 21 and weighed 7 lbs. 2 oz. ... **Abraham Meza**, Stater Bros., is a proud new dad to **Isaiah Abraham**, who was born on Nov. 26 and weighed 7 lbs. 15 oz., measuring 21 inches long. We're told Isaiah is "cute and cuddly — like father, like son." ... **Christina Casas**, Stater Bros., welcomed **Hannah** into the world on Nov. 30. Hannah weighed 7 lbs. 9 oz. ... **Jose Sanchez**, Stater Bros., has a new son. **Joseph Leighton** was born on Dec. 2 and weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz. ... **Robert Rosenberg**, Stater Bros., is thrilled with the arrival of **Mikaela Rylee** on Dec. 5. Mikaela weighed 7 lbs. 9 oz. "She is beautiful and perfect." ... **Freddie Escobar, Jr.**, Stater Bros., got his "best Christmas gift ever" with the Dec. 17 birth of **Kristina Lorraine**. Kristina weighed 5 lbs. 7 oz.

Congratulations to all of our new moms and dads!



DESERT EDGE

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

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(909) 877-1110

Drug & General Sales Div. Insurance:
(909) 877-2331

Bill Lathrop
Editor

Bleiwiss Communications Incorporated
Publisher



Food Trust Fund 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 2009.

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 2008 will receive up to \$250 to your HRA for completing the HRQ once again in 2009.

"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 administered by StayWell, the UFCW Benefit Fund's independent administrator. The HRQ is confidential. StayWell 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 in February 2009;
- (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 2009 carry over to 2010, as long as you are still enrolled in the New Indemnity Medical Plan.

Watch for more information in your mailbox in early February 2009 from the Fund and StayWell.

Happy New You!

NEWS FROM OTHER PLACES

Workers at JB Swift plant in Utah vote to join UFCW

A decades-long effort to organize the JB Swift & Co.'s beef packing house in Hyrum, Utah, ended in victory last November when workers voted overwhelmingly for representation by UFCW Local 711.

"This is something the workers have wanted for a long time," Local 711 Representative Terry Rachiele said.

Rachiele noted that the Hyrum packing house had been the last non-union JBS Swift & Co. facility in the nation.

"Pending the election's certification by the National Labor Relations Board, we look forward to sitting down with the company to negotiate a fair and equitable contract for the nearly 1,100 employees at JB Swift."

Rachiele said the union's goals include improving working

conditions and "bringing these workers up to the level of their union counterparts in the meat packing industry."

Previous organizing campaigns at the Hyrum facility, in the 1970s and 1980s, ended when anti-union elements prevailed with narrow majorities. The current campaign, which began in August 2008, was conducted with help by representatives of UFCW Local 99 in Arizona and the UFCW International Union.

"We appreciate the assistance of our union sisters and brothers," Local 711 President Roberta West said. "They helped make this big success possible."

"I also want to thank the Swift workers at the Hyrum plant," West said. "They never gave up their hopes for union representation."

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT



By Christina Pugsley

Buy union!

The job you save could be your own

Times are tough and they'll probably get tougher before they get better. Even President Obama said so.

If you've watched the news and read the newspapers, you know that lots of workers are being laid off or terminated and companies are closing down. Your own company may be experiencing job losses.

Now let me tell you a true story...

It was the Friday after Christmas, and I was in one of the stores doing a schedule check. While sitting in the break room, I noticed there were some goodies left over from the store's Christmas buffet.



Among these goodies was a container of cookies with a Fresh & Easy label on it.

As I sat there, three workers asked me if I'd heard any rumors about their company laying off workers.

"No," I said, "but that Fresh & Easy cookie container doesn't help."

I explained that Fresh & Easy is a non-union company that undercuts the market share of good union employers. When a union employer is hurt, union jobs are in danger.

It's common sense that union members need to stick together and shop only at union stores.

If you ever think about walking into a non-union store and spending your union wages, please reconsider. Think about your union brothers and sisters who have been reduced in their job classifications or even laid off.

The money you spend in a union store could save a union job. And the job you save could be your own!

Shop smart! Shop union!

Black History Month to highlight 100th anniversary of NAACP

The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas" will be the theme for the 2009 commemoration of Black History Month this February.

The commemoration also will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

The story of the NAACP is the story of the struggle to create and maintain equal citizenship for all Americans. It was founded in 1909 to promote the economic and social advancement of African Americans, expose the horrors of lynching and resist the Jim Crow-era laws in the South.



The NAACP drew a national following and inspired others to form organizations for racial change. Its work paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement and the growth of the African American middle class.

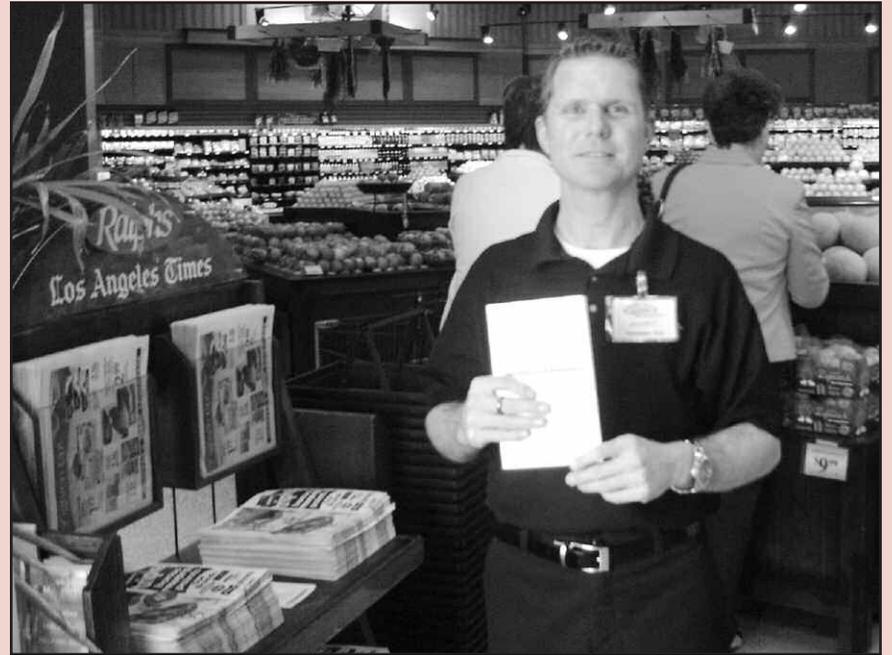
Black History Month began as Black History Week in 1926. It was founded by historian Carter G. Woodson to celebrate the contributions of people of African descent. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the commemoration was expanded to the entire month of February.

IT PAYS TO BE UNION!

	<u>JANUARY 2009</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Back pay and benefits restored to members	\$8,841.64	\$8,841.64
Members reinstated	10	10
Grievances settled	58	58
Unemployment benefits restored to members	—	—

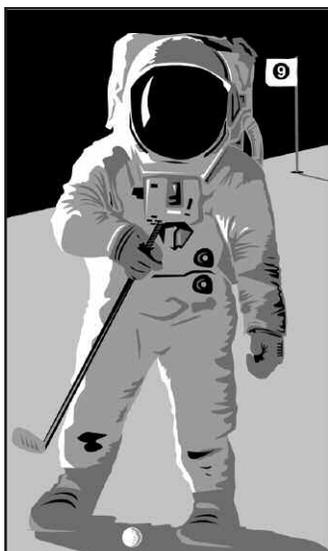
CORRECT ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER A MUST

You lose out if there is no correct address and telephone number on file for you. We know the problem: people move frequently. But it only takes a phone call, a minute with the union rep or a letter to our office. It could avoid a big problem with a hospital, medical claim or pension inquiry.



Members at work

Ralphs 160, Palm Desert



EVERYONE'S BEEN PRACTICING.

The Joe F. Barragan Memorial Golf Tournament

April 27, 2009

Sierra Lakes Golf Club, Fontana

Shotgun start at 8 a.m.

For details and reservations, call (909) 626-3333, Ext 241

Mark your calendar!

UFCW Local 1167

STEWARDS SEMINAR

April 16, 2009

UFCW Local 1167 sends delegation to Food & Drug Council's Annual Convention

Delegates from UFCW Local 1167 joined representatives from 32 labor organizations in the retail food and drug industries at the recent 2008 Convention of the Food & Drug Council. At the event, they coordinated strategies for contract negotiations, union organizing, protecting union market share and influencing public policy.

More than 250 participants included leaders from the Longshore Workers, Operating Engineers, Teamsters and UFCW, many of whom traveled across the country to attend.

Representing UFCW Local 1167 were President Bill Lathrop, Secretary-Treasurer Brent Denkers, Field Director Rick Bruer and Union Representative Jerry Espinosa.

A highlight of the convention was the presentation of a \$100,000 check to the FDC from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The grant, presented by Fred Gegare, United States Vice President and Canadian Director of the IBT's Dairy and Food Processing Divisions, will finance FDC efforts to mobilize public opposition to non-union retailers like Tesco's Fresh & Easy Markets.

The grant funds will also be used to assist the FDC-sponsored boycott of Alta Dena products and the current campaign at Bristol Farms stores.

Founded in the 1940s, the FDC has been re-energized in recent years, enlisting new affiliate unions in California and Arizona. Its members include local unions of the UFCW, as well as locals of the Teamsters, Operating Engineers and Longshore and Warehouse Union. The international unions of the UFCW and the Teamsters are also affiliates.

Unprecedented achievements

FDC Director Ellen Anreder opened the convention by summarizing the group's achievements during the previous year. These achievements included unprecedented growth for the FDC and successful contract negotiations with Farmer Bros., Rite-Aid, CVS and other employers.

Following welcoming remarks by Teamsters Local 14 Secretary-Treasurer Gary Mauger, FDC President Paul Kenny reflected on the legacy of the UFCW's Southern California strike and lockout in 2003-04.

"We were all together then just as we need to be now," said Kenny, who also serves as Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 630 in Los Angeles.

"We've all got negotiations going on," Kenny continued. "We are stronger than ever before because we have each other's backs."

Kenny emphasized the importance of organizations like the FDC, which coordinates activities by several unions engaged in a single industry.

"The Teamsters helped the UFCW in their strike and the UFCW is helping us in the campaign to boycott Alta Dena products," he said.

Art Torres, chairman of the California Democratic Party, discussed strategies to ensure passage of the Employee Free Choice Act through Congress. The bill, which would remove obstacles to workers who wish to join unions, is the Labor



Above and below: Representatives of Local 1167 participate at the FDC's National Convention. **Below right:** FDC President and Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 630 Paul Kenny.



Movement's highest legislative priority.

Torres also talked about his experiences as a colon cancer survivor as he described the urgent need for affordable health care for all Americans.

"We will have a new president who will listen to the heart and soul of America," Torres said. "He knows in his heart the right thing to do."

William E. Adams, Secretary-Treasurer of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, expanded on Torres' thoughts. "Our new president will have pride and humility in the White House," he said. "I see him as a rock of salvation in our crisis in America."

Teamsters Joint Council 7 President and Teamsters Local 70 Secretary-Treasurer Chuck Mack expressed "hope for our members now that we have Barack Obama in the White House.

"There are those in Washington who want to make sure that when the economy comes back, labor unions don't come back with it," he continued. "The Employee Free Choice Act will make sure that these individuals won't succeed."

Unions helping unions

Jacques Loveall, President of UFCW 8-Golden State and a UFCW International Vice President, praised Kenny and Anreder for their accomplishments as leaders of the FDC.

Loveall also emphasized the need to hold elected officials accountable for their promises. He underscored that the needs of working people have not changed over the last few decades.

Mickey Kasparian, President of UFCW Local 135, closed the first day's events by reviewing a successful organizing campaign at National Beef.

"We had an extensive campaign with UFCW and Teamster members alike, all working toward the same goal," Kasparian said.

The second day of the convention began with an address by U.S. Rep. Bob Filner (D-San Diego), a strong supporter of Labor.

"Banks will take care of themselves," he said. "It's the people of America who need our help. We need a stimulus package from the bottom and we need to speak out on that. Move the focus back onto the people of this country who drive the economy. Save the American family first."

William T. McDonough, UFCW International Executive Vice President and Director of Collective Bargaining, was scheduled to address the delegates but

had to attend an emergency meeting. In his place, Paul Blank, founding director of WakeUpWalMart.com, discussed a labor organizing technique called micro-targeting.

Barry Broad, a Sacramento lobbyist for the UFCW, Teamsters and ILWU, said that "politicians really take Labor for granted. We need them to focus on the issues that are important to our members."

Connie M. Leyva, President of both the California Labor Federation and UFCW Local 1428 in the San Gabriel Valley, emphasized the need to "talk the talk and walk the walk" when discussing issues with political officials.

"Our members got firsthand knowledge when we took a group to Sacramento to lobby officials," she recalled. "They witnessed firsthand who our friends are and who couldn't care less about us."

Jeff Ferro, Director of the UFCW's Tesco/Fresh & Easy campaign, gave a presentation on the union's efforts both in the U.S. and abroad.

Afterward, Mike Bergen, FDC Recorder, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 166 and a representative of the IBT's Southern California Dairy Division, thanked the FDC for its help in the Alta Dena organizing campaign.

Ralph Phillips, the FDC's legal counsel, closed the day's events with a report about "what is really going on in labor law reform."

"We need substantive labor law reform and it's up to us to put the pressure on the folks who can make that happen," he said.

UFCW LOCAL 1167 TICKET PRICES

NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES ON ACTIVITY TICKETS

AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC \$14.95 Adult (\$9.00 savings)
 (562) 590-3100 \$9.95 Child ages 3-11 (\$2.00 savings)
 VALID THRU 11/30/2009

DAVEY'S LOCKER FISHING EXCURSIONS
 (949) 673-1434 1/2 DAY ADULT (W Pride) \$27.00
 RESERVATION REQUIRED 1/2 DAY JUNIOR \$20.00
 Please call for 3/4 DAY ADULT (Freelance) \$47.00
 specific trip schedules 3/4 DAY JUNIOR \$38.00
 400 Main St., TWILIGHT ADULT \$27.00
 Balboa (Newport Beach) TWILIGHT JUNIOR \$20.00
 Junior is age 15 or younger. SHARK \$55.00

PRICES INCLUDE BOAT & BAIT
 PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE FUEL SURCHARGE; PAID AT GATE

DISNEYLAND/CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE
 (714) 781-4565 \$64.00 Adult (Save \$5.00)
 VALID THRU 12/17/2009 \$56.00 Child (Save \$3.00) Ages 3-9
 PARKING NOT INCLUDED Under 3 FREE

DISNEYLAND/CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE 2FER
 EXPIRES 30 DAYS FROM FIRST USE \$59 Ages 10 and Over
 FIRST VISIT MUST OCCUR BY 6/3/09 \$51 Ages 3-9

MAGIC MOUNTAIN \$24.99 Over 48" (\$35.00 savings)
 (661) 255-4106 \$15.00 Under 48" (\$14.99 savings)
 VALID THRU 12/31/2009

PIRATE'S DINNER ADVENTURE
 (866) 439-2469 \$47.00 Adult (\$10.23 savings)
 VALID THRU 11/30/09 \$32.50 Child 3-11 (\$6.07 savings)

SAN DIEGO W.A.P. \$28.00 Adults (\$7.00 savings)
 (760) 747-8702 \$19.50 Child (\$6.50 savings) Ages 3-11
 VALID THRU 3/31/09 Ages 2 and under FREE. Parking not included.

SAN DIEGO ZOO \$28.00 Adult (\$7.00 savings)
 (619) 234-3153 (Gen. Info.) \$19.50 Child (\$6.50 savings) Ages 3-11
 DAILY THRU 3/31/09 Ages 2 and under FREE. Parking not included.

SEA WORLD \$46.50 Adult (\$14.50 savings)
 (619) 226-3901 (Gen. Info.) \$41.00 Child (\$10.00 savings) Ages 3-9
 Valid thru 5/31/2009 Age 2 and under FREE. Parking not included.
 2 DAYS OF FUN! 1ST & 2ND VISIT MUST OCCUR BEFORE 5/31/09 ON ADULT TICKETS

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS \$54.00 Adult (\$13.00 savings)
 (818) 622-3801 \$54.00 Child Ages 3-9 (\$3.00 savings)
 Valid Thru 5/31/09 UNDER 3 FREE

UNIVERSAL YEAR PASS \$68.00 Ages 3 and Over (\$21.00 savings)
 MUST VALIDATE BY 6/15/09 \$64.00 Child (\$10.00 savings)
 GOOD FOR 1 YEAR FROM VALIDATION WITH BLACKOUT DATES
 ASK FOR CALENDAR

MOVIE THEATER TICKETS

AMC THEATERS SILVER \$6.00 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 NOT VALID FOR SPECIAL ENGAGEMENTS
 Ontario Mills, Victoria Gardens, Galleria at Tyler

AMC THEATERS GOLD \$7.50 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 VALID FOR SPECIAL ENGAGEMENTS
 Ontario Mills, Victoria Gardens, Galleria at Tyler

CINEMARK THEATERS \$6.00 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 Cathedral City, Chino, El Centro, Huntington Beach, Lancaster, North
 Hollywood, Long Beach, Orange, Palmdale, Ventura, Victorville, Rancho Mirage

HARKINS THEATERS \$6.00 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 22350 Town Circle, Moreno Valley
 3070 Chino Hills, Chino

REGAL/EDWARDS THEATERS \$6.00 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 Includes Edwards, Regal and United Artists Cinema
 Hemet, Indio, Irvine, Mira Loma, Ontario, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage,
 Riverside, Corona, San Jacinto, Temecula, West Covina

KRIKORIAN THEATERS \$6.50 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 Redlands, Chino, La Mirada, Downey, Buena Park, Dos Lagos

MISSION GROVE THEATER \$5.50 NO EXPIRATION DATE
 121 E. Allesandro Blvd., Riverside
 (951) 789-8483

DISCOUNT CARDS AVAILABLE

Medieval Times, Palm Springs Aerial Tram, Alpine Club, Movieland Wax Museum,
 Ripley's Believe It Or Not, Fun Savers, Los Angeles Zoo

GROUP ACTIVITY TICKETS NOT VALID FOR SPECIAL ENGAGEMENTS

SPECIALS AND PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MASTERCARD/VISA DEBIT AND CREDIT CARDS

NOW ACCEPTED IN LOCAL 1167 OFFICE ONLY.

ADDITIONAL SURCHARGES AND TRANSACTION FEES APPLY.

NO CHECKS OVER \$200 WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Union member wins full back pay and benefits in arbitration victory

(Continued from front page)

potential dismissal action. Shortly before the incident, the company had changed its penalty for an employee caught sleeping on the job from suspension to dismissal.

Sabatino, who is married with two children, was subsequently terminated for allegedly sleeping on the job.

"This case smelled from the beginning," said Chris Marentes, the union representative who represented Sabatino. "It wasn't as if there was any safety hazard involved. And there was no impact on production, since the machine was being serviced. He merely took a seat nearby and closed his eyes while waiting for the service technician to tell him when it was OK to resume operating the equipment."

When the company refused to back down, the union took the case to arbitration.

"The arbitrator did not allow the photo in evidence," Marentes said. "She ruled that there was no date or time stamp on it, so it could not be determined when it was taken. Also, the company produced no eyewitnesses. Two managers who supposedly witnessed the incident did not show at the arbitration hearing."

The arbitrator ordered the company to rehire Sabatino with full back pay and benefits.

"I always knew my union would back me," Sabatino said. "Working under a union contract means you have that kind of support when you are treated unfairly."

MAP

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

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (All calls are confidential)

Apply for the UFCW and Food Employers Benefit Fund Scholarship!

A million dollars in scholarships is available through the Scholarship Award Program, jointly sponsored by the Employer and Union Trustees of the UFCW and Food Employers Benefit Fund. 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 2008 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 meets 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, 2009.** 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

IN MEMORIAM

Ines Gehris, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died on Dec. 17, 2008, at the age of 83. She had been a continuous member since August 1965.

William Giles, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Food Palace, Gorian Bros. Markets, Food King, Owens Market and Sages, died on Jan. 1, 2009, at the age of 92. He had been a continuous member since November 1962.

Eugene Haas, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Market Basket, died on Dec. 31, 2008, at the age of 83. He had been a continuous member since August 1946.

Steve Kokinos, a retired clerk formerly employed by Standard Brands Paint, died on Dec. 9, 2008, at the age of 87. He had been a member since April 1965.

Louie Castro Jr., a retired food clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died on Jan. 3, 2009, at the age of 66. He had been a continuous member since April 1969.

Our condolences to the families of these deceased members.

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 - March 15, 2009. For more information, and to find out if you're eligible, please visit:

www.ufcw.org/scholarship

UFCW
Scholarship Program

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 (1-800-551-4010) and we will obtain assistance for you.

UFCW Programa de BECAS

Su unión tiene que ver con más que su sueldo y beneficios.

La UFCW representa una forma en que nosotros trabajadores nos unimos para mejorar nuestras vidas. Tiene que ver con la creación de oportunidades. Por eso, cada año, la UFCW concede varias becas a miembros de la UFCW o a sus dependientes no-casados de hasta \$8,000 cada uno.

La solicitud será disponible en línea entre el 15 enero - 15 marzo, 2009. Para mayores informes, y para ver si usted cumple con los requisitos, visite:

www.ufcw.org/scholarship

UFCW
Programa de becas

Si usted no puede solicitar por internet, usted puede pedir una solicitud. Escriba a UFCW International Union, Attn: Scholarship Program, 1775 K Street N.W. Washington, DC 20006. Si usted necesita saber las reglas o una solicitud en otra lengua, llame al (1-800-551-4010) para asistencia.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A cold day, a bright beginning

(Continued from front page)

often men and women obscure in their labor... For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth."

As a union leader, I am grateful whenever working people are celebrated. Obama's speech makes me more than grateful — it gives me hope that America's laws and policies will address the long-neglected needs of folks who earn their paychecks.

Like a true optimist, President Obama listed the collective assets that will make our country great again. Here again, working people were front and foremost:

"Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week or last month or last year. Our capacity

remains undiminished... Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America."

What will this new America look like, and what will be our government's role in it? Here again, Obama's vision sounds remarkably like that of a union member:

"The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works — whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified..."

"A nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous. The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product, but on the reach of our prosperity; on our ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart not out of charity, but because it is the surest route

to our common good."

With these words, America's new president wrote the obituary for an era that celebrated self-interest, per-

Oabama knows that our nation was founded by a people that is united in purpose: 'Out of many, one.'

sonal wealth and deregulation of the marketplace.

In that era, which began with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan 28 years ago, the idea of uniting for the

common good was ridiculed and dismissed as un-American.

But Barack Obama knows that our nation was founded by a people that is united in purpose: "Out of many, one."

Our new president finished his address by quoting Thomas Paine, America's almost-forgotten founding patriot, who rallied our young nation in its coldest, darkest hour:

"Let it be told to the future world ... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive ... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet it."

The weather was cold in Washington when President Barack Obama reminded America of these words. Now, too, we find ourselves in a winter that tries men's souls.

Fortunately, we also have hope and virtue to warm and brighten our hearts.

STEWARD FEATURE

The union rocks for Veronica Lopez

Veronica Lopez loves her music and her union. Lopez is a steward and a pharmacy technician at Ralphs 160 in Indio. Her musical tastes runs toward hard rock and her favorite groups include Tool, Rage Against the Machine and Nine Inch Nails.

"I've been to more than 400 rock concerts in my life," Lopez said. "I love the music and the energy."

Lopez also goes to as many union meetings as she can.

"The union rocks too," she said. "It gives us the strength to negotiate good contracts so we can have good wages, health benefits, a dignified retirement and job security. Union is the only way to go."

Lopez knows what it is like to work non-union.

"I worked non-union for 14 years," Lopez said. "I remember my brother, who works at Stater Bros., was always talking to me



Veronica Lopez

about how much better his pay and benefits were than mine. It took me a while, but I finally came around and got a union job."

Her first job was at a Vons in Coachella. She then went to Stater Bros. in La Quinta and has been at her current store since 2003.

Lopez has been part of Local 1167's Steward Program since its inception.

"I was a picket captain during the 2003-04 strike/lockout, so it was natural for me to become a steward," she said. "As the eyes and ears of the union in the stores, stewards are crucial to protecting the rights of our members."

Lopez is especially concerned about ensuring that members who work 40 hours for 16 weeks are made full-time and that courtesy clerks who work as general merchandise clerks are paid properly.

"We have a lot of issues at our store, so we need to be vigilant," Lopez said.

Lopez plans to "rock on" with both her music and with her union.

"I plan to remain a steward throughout my career," she said. "I hope everyone will consider becoming more active in the union. The more members who participate, the stronger we become."