

DESERT EDGE

UFCW LOCAL 1167

a VOICE for working America

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

January 2008

Tesco might not fly in Riverside

Judge says distribution center on former Air Force base must undergo environmental review

A Riverside County judge ordered Tesco to compile a detailed environmental report for its giant Fresh & Easy distribution center in Riverside County.

The ruling could force Tesco to shut down the 820,400-square foot facility at the former March Air Force Base. The Riverside County Superior Court ruled on Nov. 28 that the March Joint Powers Authority was incorrect in granting Tesco design authority to build the center last year without filing environmental reports as required by the

California Environmental Quality Act.

At press time, a hearing set for Jan. 15 is expected to determine whether the British super-retailer will have to close the distribution center and lay off its 150 non-union workers while it conducts the environmental survey. The center serves 15 of Tesco's Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Markets and has the capacity to serve many more stores as they open in the region.

An appeal of the ruling is expected in the near future.

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President's Report

Poised and ready to face the challenges of 2008



By Bill Lathrop

As we head into a new year, we face some familiar challenges. Two years ago, our number one challenge was Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart has let America down by lowering wages, sending good American jobs overseas and destroying main streets across the nation. Wal-Mart has exploited illegal immigrants, discriminated against women employees, forced workers to work in an unsafe environment and broken child labor laws.

Your union has confronted the Wal-Mart challenge in many ways. We've opposed the construction of Wal-Mart Supercenters in our communities. Through grassroots movements like WakeUpWalMart.com, we have urged our fellow Americans not to shop at Wal-Mart until it changes its ways.

The company and the public have taken notice, and our campaign will continue to push for even greater changes. But now there's a new kid on the block: giant UK retailer Tesco and its Fresh & Easy stores.

Unfortunately, Fresh & Easy is trying to follow in Wal-Mart's footsteps of "low-road" corporations that suppress the rights of working people to have a voice in their own wages, benefits and working conditions. Such companies routinely employ union-busting consultants, spy on their workers, subject them to anti-union propaganda and harass and fire pro-union workers.

(Please see page 3)

Non-union Fresh & Easy opens in downtown La Quinta

British grocery chain Tesco has opened a non-union Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market as the anchor store in the new Plaza shopping center in La Quinta's downtown village.

The market at Calle Tampico and Desert Club Drive is one of five Fresh & Easy stores planned for the Coachella Valley, according to the Fresh & Easy website.

In November, Tesco opened its first 15 stores in the United States in Southern California, Nevada and Arizona.

The mega-retailer, with global net sales greater than \$80 billion, has been compared to Wal-Mart by the Urban and Environmental Policy Institute of Occidental College, which cited Tesco's rapid-expansion philosophy, poor treatment of employees and questionable business tactics.

Copying Wal-Mart, Tesco is opening its American stores non-union, even though its stores in the United Kingdom are union-

(Continued on page 7)

Return in 5 days to:
United Food and Commercial Workers
Union Local 1167
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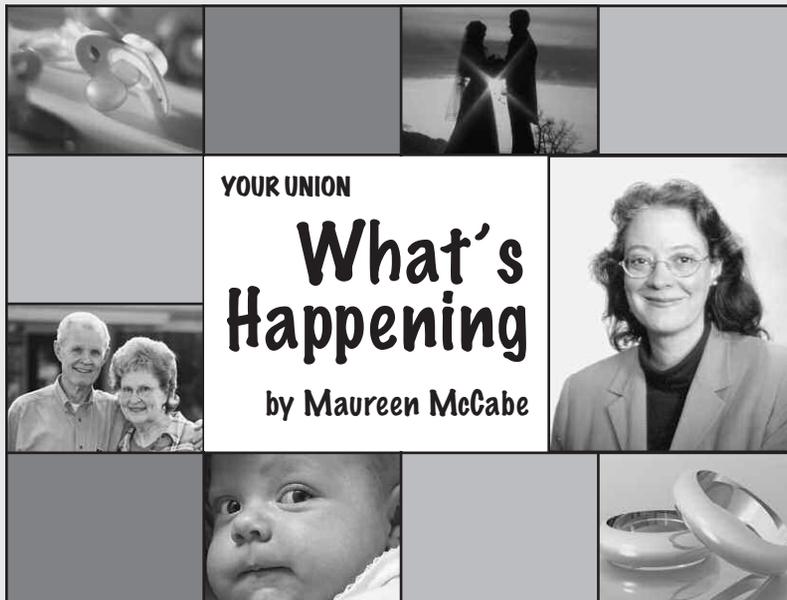
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You Are Interesting!

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**



YOUR UNION

What's Happening

by Maureen McCabe

JUST MARRIED

Paul Berke of Albertsons married Kristine Puckett in Laughlin, Nev., on May 12. The honeymoon was a cruise to Mexico. **Cherie Hurtado** of Vons also got married on May 12. She and Jay Patrick Brummett were married and honeymooned in Las Vegas. **Janet Hensley** of Ralphs married John Parker in San Bernardino on Sept. 21. ... **Angel Cortez** of Stater Bros. also married in San Bernardino. He and Stella Jordan married on Oct. 20. ... **Robert Brown** of Albertsons married Cynthia Zepeda on Nov. 9 in Riverside. Congratulations to the newlyweds!

JUST RETIRED

Five members finalized their pensions in November and three more did so in December.

Joseph Fernandez began with Bazaar Food back in 1972 and worked there until 1974. In 1976 he joined Smiths, where he worked until it was taken over by Lucky Stores in 1984. He worked for Lucky until 2000, when Albertsons took over Lucky, and he worked there since. ... **Mike Sakatani** started with Alpha Beta in 1972 until it was bought out by Ralphs in 1995. He stayed with Ralphs until March 2004, then went to Stater Bros. until the present. ... **Barbara Sharou** also retired, after 17 years. She started with Ralphs in February 1991 and worked there until the present. ... **Sharon Showalter** started with Vons in July 1981 and stayed there until the present. ... **Audrey Thomas** retired from Ralphs, having started there in 1975. ... **Pamela Cranmer** joined Ralphs in July 1978, went to Lucky until it was bought out by Albertsons in 1986, and has been with Albertsons since... **Richard Dzikowski** decided that 33 years with Albertsons was long enough and so he's enjoying the life of the retired. ... Finally, **George Torok**, also known as Marty, decided that 41 years in the industry was enough to allow him to start enjoying the slower pace of retirement. Congratulations, retirees. Enjoy yourselves!

JUST BORN

Shelli Moreno of Stater Bros. reports that September was quite the month for her family. She tells us that **Nathan Rayne Harnit** and **Nicholas Rheade Harnit** were born on Sept. 20. Nathan weighed 4 lbs., 11 oz. and Nicholas weighed 5 lbs., 10 oz. Mom says: "You guys came early and spent time in NICU in San Diego going through so much, but now you're home and we are so happy!" ... **Gonzalo Jimenez** of Food 4 Less has a son, **Joel**, who was born on Oct. 19 and weighed 8 lbs., 12 oz. ... **Tonya Miller** of Albertsons tell us that she and Tommy Gaitan Jr. had an 8 lbs., 11 oz. daughter, **Emilee Marie Gaitan**, on Oct. 21. ... **Francine Cardiel**, also of Albertsons, had a daughter on Oct. 23. **Priscilla Ann Mastrangelo** weighed 8 lbs., 2 oz. and was 19 inches long. "Mommy and Daddy love you," she tells Priscilla. ... **Yvonne Garcia**, Stater Bros., gave birth to **Jaslynn Isabella** on Nov. 9. She weighed 7 lbs., 11 oz. ... **Griselda Doria** of Rite Aid announces that 8 lb., 7 oz. **Julia Grace** was born on Nov. 15. ... **Angela Carrillo** of Stater Bros. announces the birth of 8 lb., 2 oz. **Clarissa Lyly** on Nov. 17. ... And finally, **Veronica Rodriguez**, Sav-on Pharmacy, announces the arrival of **Juan Joaquin Torres**. Juan was born on Dec. 3, weighing 8 lb 6 oz. Congratulations to our new moms, dads and expanding families!



DESERT EDGE

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Bill Lathrop
Editor

Bleiveiss 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, 2008. After that, the next period will be July 25-31, 2008.

Consult your Union Representative concerning limitations.

UFCW Local 1167 Retirees Club Monthly Meeting and Potluck! Wednesday, Jan. 16

BINGO! Everyone's invited!

Play is open to the public! Come have fun
and win money!

Tuesdays, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Thursdays, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Activities held at the Local 1167 Auditorium
855 W. San Bernardino Ave.

President's Report

Your Union: Ready to face challenges ahead

(Continued from front page)

The UFCW's Fresh & Easy campaign is aggressively at work educating the public about this dangerous threat that is trying to undermine the union work force in Southern California. You can help protect your economic future by volunteering. Please call our office to find out more.

Organizing non-union workers

Studies show that 60 million American workers would join a union if they could. That's because the benefits of union membership are clear: Nine out of 10 union workers have medical coverage, while one in three non-union workers has no coverage at all. Five of six union members have a pension plan, while only half of non-union workers have one.

These 60 million men and women know that unions are the best way to improve their lives and secure dignity at work.

Yet organizing non-union workers—not just at Wal-Mart or Fresh & Easy, but in all sectors of the economy — remains a significant challenge. Too often, when workers try to form a union, employers respond with intimidation, harassment and retaliation. Managers pressure employees into voting against union representation, and employees who actively support a union are often fired outright or suffer ongoing harassment.

Your union will meet this challenge on many levels.

Regionally, we will continue to organize workers in cooperation with other UFCW Local Unions and our allies in the Change to Win Labor Federation. At the state and federal levels, we will work to enact legislation that will strengthen the rights of working people to choose union representation.

Contract negotiations

This local union is constantly at work negotiating and enforcing existing contracts in preparation for gaining fair and equitable agreements with your employers.

Contract negotiations with Rite Aid are right around the corner. We expect them to be difficult. Now, more than ever, we must stay strong and united.

Solidarity was essential this past year with our master food contracts. The strength of our solidarity going into the Rite Aid negotiations will determine the degree of our success.

Political activism

In political terms, what happens in 2008 will have a huge impact on generations to come. We must let the presidential candidates know that working people are informed about the issues and that we will cast our votes according to where they stand on those issues. We'll be focusing more on the political arena in future issues of the *Desert Edge* this year so we can all make the most informed choices.

2008 is the year we will meet all challenges head-on and work hard for change. Together, let's build on our successes and make this a historic time for working Americans.

Grinch of the Year



Smithfield CEO Joseph Luter III Gets dubious 'honor' from National Jobs with Justice; American Airline's Gerard Arpey gets second place

With 28 percent of nearly 10,000 votes cast, Smithfield Chairman Joseph Luter III narrowly beat out American Airlines CEO Gerard Arpey to win the seventh annual online Grinch of the Year election sponsored by National Jobs with Justice.

Nominated by the Justice @ Smithfield Campaign, the CEO and his company are criticized for maintaining an environment of fear and intimidation for workers. For more than 10 years, workers at the Tar Heel plant have fought relentlessly for a voice on the job.

Arpey was a close second with 27 percent of the vote. In 2003, workers gave concessions to keep the airline out of bankruptcy. Now that the company is back in the black, upper-level management is reaping the benefits with millions of dollars in bonuses, but the workers get nothing.

Fifteen percent of the votes went to Verizon Business' Bob Toohey for his efforts to suppress worker organizing. Another 13 percent went to United Airlines' CEO Glenn Tilton and the remaining votes were split among Burger King CEO John W. Chidsey, American Motion Picture and Television Producers President J. Nicholas Counter III and a number of write-in candidates.

The Grinch of the Year awards began locally with Jobs with Justice Coalitions around the country highlighting the "greedy grinch" in their hometowns. That tradition continues in many areas.

Jobs with Justice is a national campaign for workers' rights. Around the country, local Jobs with Justice coalitions unite labor, community, faith-based and student organizations to build power for working people.

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.

Some mail has been returned to us by the United States Post Office because of an incorrect address. Please fill out this card and return it to us with your correct address. This matter must be taken care of immediately or we will not be held responsible for any future mail returned to this office.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
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 SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____
 STORE _____ # _____
 HOME PHONE _____ AREA CODE _____

Thank you, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1167

MAP: MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

After holidays, many cope with financial difficulties

Now that the holidays are over, many of us are feeling the effects of holiday spending. The cost of gifts, travel and entertaining can take its toll on even the most budget-conscious.

Financial problems aren't necessarily the result of poor money management. Sometimes, situations beyond our control, such as divorce, death of a spouse, health problems or a change in household income, can lead to financial hardship.

Regardless of the cause, financial worries can affect both your work and family life.

Many of us believe that a higher

income ensures financial stability. Unfortunately, poor spending habits carry over regardless of salary. Financial security takes planning and sometimes significant changes in your spending habits. If you're finding it harder to make ends meet, here are some tips that may help:

- **Set financial goals.** Set (and stick to) long, short, and mid-range savings goals and timelines for paying off bills. Put away at least five to 10 percent of your net income each month. You should also save at least three to six month's salary in case of an emergency.

- **Keep a budget.** Be realistic when setting your goals, then try to follow your budget as closely as possible. Maintain a daily diary so you are aware of exactly what you spend.

- **Economize when possible.** Cut back on home energy consumption. Bring your lunch to work more often. Take advantage of free or low cost activities in your community.

- **Use credit with caution.** Don't allow credit payments to exceed 20 percent of your net income and don't borrow from one creditor to pay off

another. Don't charge more than you're paying your creditors each month.

- **Seek the help of experts.** Contact a local consumer credit agency. These experts can help you develop a plan to help hold off creditors, while teaching you practical budgeting skills.

If you feel your financial situation is more than you can handle, or if you need help for any personal problem, call the MAP. Someone is always there to take your call.

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, 2008. 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 N.W. 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 con 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, 2008. Para mayores informes, y para ver si usted cumple con los requisitos, visite:

www.ufcw.org/scholarship



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.

How to get MAP help:

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

1-800-688-8329

For more information or friendly advice from your union,

call during union office hours and ask for:

Brent Denkers (909) 877-5000

Maureen McCabe (909) 877-1110

Bill Runyon (909) 877-1110

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

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 2007 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. 29, 2008.** 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. 29

Members garner Years of Service honors at membership meeting



Above, new UFCW t-shirts were won by retiree Steve Jones, Georgia Ayers from Vons 2659, Roy Kilcher from Vons 2381, retiree Carol Biocca, Lorene Munoz from Stater Bros. 168, and Retiree Norris Kirk. Disneyland tickets were won by Roy Kilcher, and Georgia Ayers.

At the Dec. 19, 2007 membership meeting in Bloomington, Janice Cannon, (left) a head meat cutter employed by Ralphs 700 in Rancho Cucamonga, was awarded her 30 year pin and certificate.

Ready for a change? Write your congressperson!

The beauty of America's democracy is that the government represents the people. If you feel that Congress needs to act a certain way on a certain issue, you have the freedom to call your representatives and let them know (and if they don't vote accordingly, you have the power to boot them out of office in the next election). As a union member, let your representatives know that it is their responsibility to vote for pro-labor issues on your behalf.

**U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer
(Sacramento)**

501 I St., Suite 7-600
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 448-2787
(916) 448-2563 (fax)
www.boxer.senate.gov

**U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein
(Los Angeles)**

11111 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 914-7300
(310) 914-7318 (fax)
www.feinstein.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Jerry Lewis

1150 Brookside Ave., Suite J-5
Redlands, CA 92373
(909) 862-6030
(800) 233-1700 (toll-free within Calif.)
www.house.gov/jerrylewis

U.S. Rep. Bob Filner

2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-8045
(202) 225-9073 (fax)
www.house.gov/filner

U.S. Rep. Mary Bono

104 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5330
(202) 225-2961 (fax)
www.bono.house.gov

U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter

2265 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5672
(202) 225-0235 (fax)
www.house.gov/hunter

U.S. Rep. Joe Baca

1527 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0542
(202) 225-6161
(202) 225-8671 (fax)
www.house.gov/baca



Retail Food and Meat Division Members



Joe Sweeney explains Total Health Management to stewards.

Total Health Management

Benefits expert Joe Sweeney explains new, improved PPO plan

Among the major victories from Retail Food and Meat Negotiations 2007 are significant improvements in health benefits, including the elimination of drug deductibles for all plans, reduced co-pays for certain classes of drugs and increased coverage for dental, vision, orthopedic and chiropractic services.

These changes are important, but the most significant modification involves Total Health Management, a process that encourages efficient use of health benefits and encourages union members to improve their health habits.

Joe Sweeney, senior vice president of the Segal Company, a firm that consults for employee benefit plans, explained the recent changes at the UFCW Local 1167 Steward Conference on Oct. 25.

“Covering more than \$500 million each year in medical expenses, your health benefits trust fund might not seem that personal,” he said. “Your union makes it personal.”

“Your employers don’t want to pay your benefits because health care costs rise 12 percent every year, but the contract you just negotiated ensures that you have all of those benefits and more.”

Sweeney noted that “Even though the deductibles on the new indemnity medical plan are higher (\$1,000 per person or \$2,000 per family), the new structure of the plan actually costs you less than in the previous contract.”

“There are several ways the trust fund does this,” he continued. “The first is by adding a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) to the PPO plan. An HRA is like a mini bank account that the company pays into that helps pay your deductible, coinsurance and prescription co-payments.

“A single person will initially get \$550 in this account plus an additional \$200 after filling out the completely confidential Health Risk Questionnaire (HRQ) in the enrollment package. A family will get \$1,000 plus another \$250 after filling out the HRQ. As in a bank account, the amount of money that is not used rolls over to the next year.

“Things an HRA cannot be used to pay for include premium payments for COBRA or retiree coverage,” Sweeney said. “New retirees on the

PPO plan get to use their accumulated HRA monies for health services, but the company will stop paying into the account upon retirement.

“An HRA also can’t be used for expenses that are excluded from the medical/prescription plans, such as mental health from a non-contract provider; non-medical items, such as dental and vision expenses; and medical benefits after a member is no longer a participant in the PPO plan,” he said.

“The new indemnity plan saves participants money by doing away with the prescription drug deductible and covering preventive care 100 percent — including immunizations, well-baby care, routine physicals, PAP smear/pelvic exams, mammograms and prostate exams,” Sweeney said.

For a person who is a low-level user of health care services and is in relatively good health, the new PPO plan with HRA buildup will cost less money than under the previous PPO plan and the previous and current HMO plans, Sweeney said.

In Memoriam

William Babcock Jr., a general merchandise clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died Nov. 20, 2007, at the age of 35. He had been a member since December 1996.

Carmen Davis, a food clerk employed by Ralphs, died Nov. 4, 2007, at the age of 35. She had been a member since May 1997.

Elron Gramly, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Albertsons, died Nov. 26, 2007, at the age of 75. He had been a member since November 1978.

Ann Heddens, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Safeway and Vons, died Oct. 28, 2007, at the age of 74. She had been a member since April 1971.

Ruben Hernandez Jr., a food clerk employed by Vons, died Dec. 17, 2007, at the age of 55. He had been a member since December 1970.

Tim Hover, an affiliated member formerly employed by Alpha Beta and Stater Bros. Markets, died Dec. 7, 2007, at the age of 45. He had been a member since January 1979.

Michael Owens, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Safeway and Vons, died Nov. 26, 2007, at the age of 47. He had been a continuous member since August 1988.

Jason Thevenot, a food clerk employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died Dec. 6, 2007, at the age of 23. He had been a member since October 2002.

Jacob Wolter, a general merchandise clerk employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died Nov. 26, 2007, at the age of 22. He had been a member since October 2004.

Marion Whitman, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Safeway, died Dec. 4, 2007, at the age of 87. He had been a continuous member since October 1950.

Our condolences to the families of these deceased members.

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, 2008, 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!**

In Memoriam: Retired Union Rep Richard Garcia

UFCW Local 1167 mourns the loss of retired union representative Richard Garcia on October 27, 2007. He was 63 years old.

Garcia entered the union in 1965 as a courtesy clerk for Mayfair Markets. He climbed the ladder as a front-end manager, liquor manager, and finally as a union assistant store manager. He worked for Mayfair for 11 years until the company closed and he applied for a job at Market Basket.

During his five years at Market Basket, Garcia became more involved with Local 1167 under the leadership of former president Bill Brooks, volunteering for union activities and creating the clerks bowling league.

He became the first Latino union rep-



representative at UFCW Local 1167 in 1982. During his seventeen years as a rep, he served as a delegate to the CLC, served as vice-president on the executive board of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), was a member of the Anti-Drug-Anti-Gang Council

of the Coachella Valley, was a member of FAIR and also was vice president of the United Latinos of the UFCW.

In a 1999 interview, Garcia said, "To all the good union members who keep on fighting for a better life, not only for themselves but for others, it's been my pleasure to represent you. The only way we can all live better is to work union."

Garcia is survived by his wife Linda and daughters Tammy and Tiffany.

Tesco opens a Fresh & Easy store in La Quinta

(Continued from front page)

ized. Efforts to discuss American union representation with Tesco by the UFCW and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have been unsuccessful.

"Tesco claims that its stores are great places to work," said UFCW 1167 President Bill Lathrop, "yet it chooses to require non-union employees to work in low-paying positions with no union benefits. That doesn't sound like a great place to work to me."

Tesco won't fly

(Continued from front page)

This court's decision is the latest of several recent setbacks for Tesco. Earlier in 2007, British newspapers reported that Tesco had sold "organic" produce and baby food with traces of deadly pesticides. Also, an investigation found that some meat and perishable items were offered for sale past their expiration dates.

In 2006, Tesco was accused of purchasing non-food merchandise from Chinese suppliers that violated of Asian child labor laws.

"It's a shame that profit-driven companies like Tesco and Wal-Mart are so openly willing to sidestep laws in their ruthless drive for global expansion," said UFCW Local 1167 president Bill Lathrop.

Safety hearings urged on Chinese toys at Wal-Mart

Parents across the country were making their lists and checking the labels twice before buying from Wal-Mart, the number one importer of Chinese-made products

In the wake of a recent wave of toy recalls, WakeUpWalMart.com, in conjunction with leading consumer and environmental groups and Wal-Mart Watch, sent a letter to U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), asking him, as chair of the Subcommittee on Interstate Commerce, Trade & Tourism, to call for hearings on Wal-Mart's pressure on Chinese suppliers.

More than 70 percent of goods on Wal-Mart's shelves come from China, making it the number one importer of Chinese products. If it were a country, the retail giant would be China's sixth-largest trading partner, ahead of Germany and England.

The world's largest retailer also controls roughly one-third of

America's toy market, making it the number one seller of toys in the United States.

Wal-Mart is also the number one customer for each of the four companies that have issued major toy recalls in 2007. These four companies — Mattel, Hasbro, RC2 Corp. and Graco — have recalled 13 million toys in the past 10 months.

"Wal-Mart has long had the economic power and a unique responsibility to demand stricter safety standards of its Chinese suppliers," said Meghan Scott, spokesperson for WakeUpWalMart.com, which has more than 405,000 members across the country.

"Instead, Wal-Mart has continually put its bottom line ahead of our

children's safety. When huge retailers like Wal-Mart force suppliers to cut costs, they cut corners. This holiday season, American families are paying the price."

Leading parent, consumer and environmental groups have signed on to the letter, asking Sen. Dorgan to take a careful look at how Wal-Mart's narrow focus on the bottom line may be contributing to the recent explosion of unsafe products that threaten children's safety.

"Wal-Mart should no longer be allowed to use its political power to shift blame to suppliers and avoid taking responsibility for its role in the massive toy recalls," said David Nassar, Wal-Mart Watch's executive director.

"Our nation's current toy safety issues are a direct result of Wal-Mart's relentless demands on suppliers to cut costs at any price, putting our children at risk."

"The National Consumers League believes that intense pressure from toy retailers like Wal-Mart to continually shave costs on the manufacturing side may have contributed to the diminished quality and safety of the toys that American consumers buy," said Sally Greenberg, head of the National Consumers League. "We urge Congress to take a closer look at this issue and consider what can be done to protect consumers, especially children, from the consequences of this relentless pressure on toy manufacturers."

All in the Family:

Donna Steele shares union pride with daughter

Donna Steele is unique in her years of service and dedication to the union, and she shares that distinction with her daughter, Jennifer, who is also a UFCW 1167 shop steward.

"A steward has a lot of responsibility in the stores," Steele said. "One of those responsibilities is to be a good role model."

Both at the store and at home, Steele's loyalty to the union lifestyle continues to shine through. "The union taught me to how to help others," she said. "It taught me to support not just my fellow members in the UFCW, but all working people everywhere."

Now working at Stater Bros. #69, Steele remembers the changes both the union and the grocery industry went through since she began her career in 1973-74.

"Everything in general has changed, from the managers to the stores to the machinery that is used," Steele said. "Before the scanners and modern conveniences, we had to work like racehorses.

"I gained great appreciation for the union because of the benefits we had in the 70's and 80's — we had the best benefits ever," she continued. "Our prescriptions, copays, medical, dental, everything was free. The union really took care of us and they still do."

Steele said she became a steward because of the knowledge she's gained during her years of union membership. "I try to support our people and educate them about the union," she said. "It's tough, because 50 percent of new members don't stay in the industry. I tell them, 'don't give up, try hard, and you'll do well.'"

Protecting new hires is one of the things Steele emphasizes, "Because of the union, we're lucky to work in a profession where you don't have to put up with injustice."

One of the best ways to get new hires excited about the union is to discuss the recently negotiated Master Food Agreement, according to Steele. "The contract is definitely better than the last one

we had," she said. "The two-tier wage system is gone and the benefits are better, and we got actual wage increases — not just one-time bonuses like in years past."

When Steele isn't on the job, she enjoys spending time with her partner, Joe, her daughter, Jennifer (an Albertsons steward), and her three grandchildren. Her husband passed away in 1980.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without Joe and Jennifer. They are a big part of my life and my inspiration," she said. She also thanks her union rep Bill Collard for his support. "He's the best rep ever," she said, laughing.

In her spare time, Steele likes to watch movies (especially "scary movies and chick flicks") and looks forward to an upcoming, hard-earned vacation in Costa Rica.



Donna Steele

Bad medicine for America's children

President Bush vetoes children's health care bill for a second time

Washington, D.C. - Once again, President Bush has chosen to turn his back on America's uninsured children by vetoing a new version of a health care bill that would have expanded coverage to 10 million children through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Despite broad public support for this legislation, the president has made it

clear that health and well-being of America's children is not a priority.

While President Bush and his followers bicker with Congress over SCHIP funding and eligibility issues, America's families are struggling to balance the high cost of housing, food, fuel and education with health care plans that include high out-of-pocket premiums, deductibles and co-payments.

These flawed health care plans are proving to be too expensive for millions of Americans to afford, and many families with young children are being forced to join the growing population of Americans who are uninsured.

A majority of voters believe that no American should be denied access to health care. It is our hope that Congress will listen to the voters

who put them in office and override this veto.

We also hope that President Bush and his followers are held accountable for putting big business before the millions of families who are simply trying to survive without coverage. The UFCW will continue to fight for health care reform so that all Americans and their children have access to a healthier future.

2008 Membership Meetings

March 26 June 25
September 24 December 24

Meetings start at 7 p.m., UFCW Auditorium, Bloomington

IT PAYS TO BE UNION!

	<u>December 2007</u>	<u>2007 Total</u>
Back pay and benefits restored to members	\$3,477.46	\$93,052.16
Members reinstated	25	323
Grievances settled	60	984

Interested in Becoming a SPUR? Your Union Needs YOU!

With increased activity in the Fresh & Easy (Tesco) and Wal-Mart campaigns, and upcoming Political Action Committee events, UFCW Local 1167 is searching to hire two Special Project Union Representatives (SPURs) from the membership. SPURs are rank-and-file members, paid by the union, to work on specific campaigns in the arena of organizing and political activism.

If you are eager to make a difference in your workplace and your union, please contact Field Director Rick Bruer at 909-877-5000 immediately.

