

Desert Edge

UFCW LOCAL 1167

a VOICE for working America

Fall 2023

Official Publication of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1167

SPECIAL EDITION

**Stewards pledge
commitment
to union
at conference**

**President's report:
State of the Union**



Union offices closed

November 23 and 24 - Thanksgiving
December 25 - Christmas
January 1 - New Year's Day
January 15 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Membership Meetings 2023

September 27

December 13

Regular membership meetings reconvene in Bloomington.

Meetings start at 7 p.m.

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Bloomington, CA 92316

DESERT EDGE

Joe Duffie
Editor

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**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 your Union Rep or a visit to our website, ufcw1167.org, where you can complete an address change form. It could avoid a big problem with a hospital, medical claim or pension inquiry.



If you have problems with alcohol, drugs, children & adolescents, family, emotional issues, gambling, marriage and/or financial/legal issues, eligible active or retired members can call the toll-free MAP number at the Health Management Center any time, day or night, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

All calls are confidential.

Food Division
call (800) 461-9179

Drug Division
call (866) 268-2510

Notice to all members: 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: YOUR DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. IF YOUR DUES ARE NOT PAID ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUSPEND YOURSELF.

Members can now go to our website: www.ufcw1167.org, and fill out a membership application to have dues deducted from their paycheck!

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.

Nonpayment 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!



Watch your mailbox!

for important information from your health benefits Trust Fund.

Got questions? Contact the Trust Fund (ext. 424):

(714) 220-2297 • (562) 408-2715 • (877) 284-2320 • www.scufcwffunds.com

YOU are the union

Help keep us strong as we confront changes in our industries

On pages six through 11 of this issue of the *Desert Edge*, you'll find coverage of UFCW Local 1167's Stewards Conference, our first since 2016. Its purpose was to educate and inspire the members who volunteer to be the union's eyes, ears, voice, heart and soul in the workplace.

I can't overstate the importance of our stewards' role in keeping co-workers informed about their union-negotiated contract and calling attention to management's failures to follow its terms. The stewards are also key to helping the members appreciate the value of their wages, benefits and rights on the job.

All this is especially important as our union begins preparing for the next rounds of contract negotiations with the retail drug (in 2024) and food (in 2025) employers.

In my "state of the union" remarks to the stewards, I began by praising the hard work and dedication of UFCW Local 1167's team of 11 union representatives and five union organizers. I also thanked the office staff and insurance staff who attended for their hard work. Most of them were present at the seminar, wearing their gold T-shirts with the union's logo.

"I don't care what your politics might be," I said. "These people in the gold shirts are advocating for you and your fellow members every single day."

The workloads carried by these individuals are formidable. Each union representative is responsible for close to 2,000 members who deserve, and receive, the best representation any labor organization can possibly provide.

In total, our team serves close to 20,000 members across a vast jurisdiction that covers all of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties — the two largest counties in the United States — as well as portions of Los Angeles and Imperial Counties.



JOE DUFFLE
President

**The key to our success
is you, because
you are the union.**

The scope of this task would be almost impossible if not for our union's model of efficient, world-class service. Through careful planning and management of time and resources, we have been able to settle more than 5,000 workplace grievances since the stewards last assembled in 2016.

Through these grievances, we succeeded in restoring more than \$2 million in back pay and benefits that had been denied to our members by management. Also during this time, we restored the jobs of more than 1,389 members who were unfairly fired.

Local 1167 is second to none, and we are justifiably proud of what we do for the members of this fine union.

Fighting the merger

Most of my remarks to the stewards addressed current developments in the retail food and drug industries, including the proposed merger of Albertsons and Kroger. We are strongly opposed to this merger, as we are opposed to anything that will put your families in danger.

Some of us remember when Safeway acquired Vons in the 1990s. Many of our brothers and sisters were reduced or laid off as a result of that merger. Also around that time, Alpha Beta was absorbed by Ralphs and Lucky was merged into Albertsons. With each takeover, good union jobs were lost.

Don't buy into company propaganda. This new merger would only benefit the senior management and shareholders of Kroger and Albertsons, which are already the two largest grocery retailers in the United States. Few others will benefit from it — not the customers, who will pay the cost in higher food prices, and certainly not the employees, who will pay the price in lost jobs and diminished bargaining power.

These companies don't make our members a priority. If it was up to their
Please see page 5

It PAYS to be UNION!



Back pay and benefits January - August 2023
restored to members: \$138,358.56
Members reinstated: 303
Grievances settled: 859

What's Happening



Just Retired

The month of July, August and September brought us several new Retirees. . . .

Andrew Anthony Benavidez worked for Ralphs for 49 years ... **Frank Baca** worked for Safeway/Vons for 44 years ... **Jose Correa** worked for Big Bear Markets, Albertsons and Local 1167 for 44 years ... **Robert Garcia** worked for Vons for 43 years ... **Thomas Montague** worked for Stater Bros. for 43 years ... **Laura McInain** worked for Stater Bros. for 41 years ... **Laurel Brill** worked for Market Bros. and Vons for 41 years ... **Janet Helgeson** worked for Alpha Beta and Ralphs for 40 years ... **Alexis Flores** worked for Albertsons for 38 years ... **Michelle Crise** worked for Albertsons for 38 years ... **David Rolland** worked for Stater Bros. for 36 years ... **Millin Roxana Selby** worked for Stater Bros. for 36 years ... **Annie Haywood** worked for Stater Bros. for 35 years ... **Deborah Rogers** worked for Alpha Beta and Ralphs for 35 years ... **Linda Groendyke** worked for Stater Bros. and Vons for 35 years ... **Joseph Venegas** worked for Stater Bros. for 34 years ... **Michael Anton Grabner** worked for Stater Bros. for 34 years ... **Federico Varela** worked for Albertsons and Food4Less for 30 years ... **Stephanie Willis** worked for Stater Bros. for 26 years ... **Luz Maria Alvarez** worked for Food4Less for 25 years ... **Karla Gardner** worked for Albertsons for 24 years ... **Manuel Rodriguez** worked for Albertsons and Safeway for 20 years ... **Maria Bernal** worked for Vons for 20 years ... **Roxanne Louk** worked for Stater Bros. for 19 years ... **Timothy Cajka** worked for Vons, Ralphs and FedMart for 16 years.

Congratulations to all of our new retirees! We wish you many healthy, happy years ahead to enjoy your well-earned retirements.



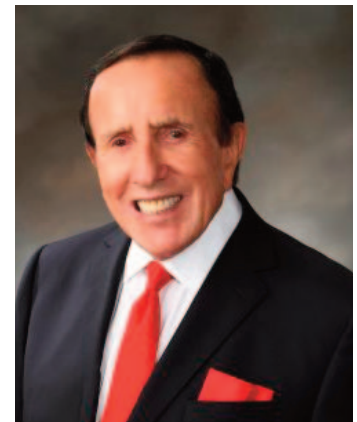
Just Born

Ana Gaeta, UFCW Local 1167, had a new boy, Emiliano Adrian Gaeta, born April 7, 2023, weighing 7 lbs. 8 oz. and measuring 20 inches long. Baby is nicknamed "Emi."

Michael Goodell, Stater Bros., had a new boy, Austin James Goodell, born June 27, 2023, weighing 8 lbs. 6 oz. and measuring 21 inches long.

Daisy Muñoz, Stater Bros., had a new boy, Benjamin Gabriel Moreno, born July 31, 2023, weighing 8 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 19 inches long.

Congratulations to all the new mommies and daddies!



IN MEMORIAM

Rick Icaza

*Former President,
UFCW Local 770*

The UFCW mourns the passing of former UFCW Local 770 President Ricardo Icaza on July 3, 2023.

President Icaza was a member of Local 770 for 64 years. He started as a rank-and-file box clerk and eventually rose to become president for 36 years.

His vision as a leader helped put the UFCW at the forefront of the Labor Movement in California and beyond.

News From Other Places

Kroger converts store entirely to self-checkout



A Kroger store in Tennessee around 20 minutes from downtown Nashville began converting to an entirely self-checkout store in July.

The self-checkout areas look a lot like a standard checkout lane but without a person working as the cashier, according to Kroger.

Kroger representatives said the self-checkout lanes will also have new wider belts that can accommodate large-volume purchases.

For those not comfortable scanning their own groceries, the location will have staff to assist customers.

“They say they’ll have staff to help customers check out, but how many staff will they sacrifice?” President Joe Duffle said. “Many members will lose their jobs. Many will lose everything. You can bet they’ll try this in California.”

According to Kroger representatives, another store in Tennessee — in Hillsboro Village — will also be converting to self-checkout later this year.

President’s Report / Continued

YOU are the union

Continued from page 3

own devices, they would take everything they possibly can from you and your colleagues.

So, we have work to do, and that work requires all of us to step forward and take action. The companies need to know that if they swing at us, we will swing back.

This is not a spectator sport. The key to our success is you. It’s you, because you are the union.

Please get involved by contacting your representatives in Congress and letting them know you oppose the merger. Also, do what you can to strengthen our union’s market share, and therefore our effectiveness, by providing information about potential new members to our Organizing Department. If we’re having a rally in front of a Cardenas store or a non-union CVS store, please come out and add your voice.

Finally, as we prepare for the next round of negotiations, it is especially crucial for every member to fully support our efforts to strengthen our contracts, and help these workers find their voices.

These are critical times in the history of the various industries our union represents. With your help, we can resist and reverse the companies’ attempts to take away all that we have worked hard for and won over the years.

It’s up to you. It’s up to all of us.

Please sign the petition urging the FTC to stop the Albertsons-Kroger merger. Scan this QR Code:



UFCW Discount College Program

Whether you’re looking for affordable degree options for your family members or want to continue your own education, the UFCW Discount College Program gives you an affordable and flexible path to earning your degree. All classes are online and you can attend part-time or full-time based on your availability.



The new program replaces the previously existing “Free College Benefit.” It expands UFCW members’ access to a broader selection of participating colleges as well as degree programs spanning from certificates to associate’s and bachelor’s degrees. Master’s degrees will also be introduced as a new addition to the program, providing even more opportunities for participants.

For details, visit ufcw.org/ufcw-discount-college-program/



Stewards emerge recharged at first post-COVID Stewards Conference

Hundreds of stewards from UFCW Local 1167 gathered on June 15 for the first time in six years for a Stewards Conference to re-educate and re-energize themselves.

They relearned valuable skills, discovered ways to protect themselves, learned to be more aware of their surroundings and came to understand the value of growing the union.

Amongst all the comradery, stewards also heard from guest speakers and leaders of the UFCW.

Worker strength through politics

Ademola Oyefesa, UFCW International Legislative Director, reflected on and praised the work of Local 1167 stewards in the political arena.

“You’re doing great work here,” he said. “The work you do here helps in the middle of the country and everywhere. In the 2020 election, UFCW turned out voters all over the place and we got 51 percent of the seats in the senate. We



President Joe Duffie

have friends in the senate now!”

He stressed the need to get the UFCW agenda prioritized in Washington since it helps all workers, even those who aren’t in a union.

“We got a stimulus package during the pandemic, and we got the child tax credit,” he said. “In 2022 we got the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act so that employers can’t fire you just because you’re pregnant!”

“But there is so much more that needs to be done,” he continued. “We need to regulate line speeds in the manufacturing plants. There is a dire need of protection of pensions and secure retirements.”

The key to success, Oyefesa said, is supporting and electing union-friendly candidates.

“It’s simple, politicians who do what we need are our friends,” he said. “If you do stuff for us, you are our friends.”

“In Michigan we overturned right to work cause of a union-friendly governor!” he continued. “These allies are essential. They affect the FTC and more — especially with this pending merger. They make the decisions that will affect what happens to workers in the merger if it goes through.

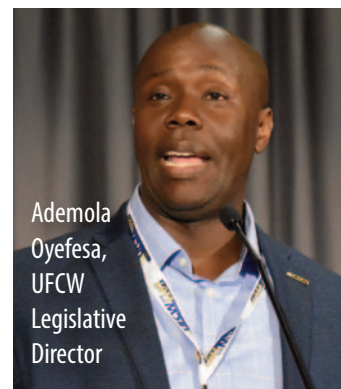
“Tell your politicians what you need, be specific and hold them accountable.”

Local 1167 praised for setting the standard

UFCW Region 8 Director Bryan Wynn addressed the stewards about the power of union members working together.

“The pandemic changed things in the stores,” he said. “You couldn’t stay home. In the early days of the mask mandate you didn’t know if you were going to risk everything by coming into work. You didn’t know who was sick and who wasn’t and who was fine but carrying the virus. They were very scary times of unknowing.”

While members were risking their safety on the front lines, Local 1167 leadership was working hard with UFCW International and the employers to secure protective equipment for all workers, establish safety committees and ensure the “essential worker” classification.



Ademola Oyefesa, UFCW Legislative Director



Bryan Wynn, UFCW Region 8 Director

“Everyone knows your value now,” he said. “You are essential, stronger members now more than ever before. That is power.”

“Local 1167 is a force to be reckoned with and garners respect throughout the UFCW.”

Wynn detailed how the strong new grocery agreement in Southern California was influential across the country, prompting many employers who weren’t bargaining in good faith to change their tune.

“You set the standard for other contracts across the



Rob Bonta, Atty. General

Stewards Conference

country,” he said. “You have the power and that was proven at the table in terms of wages, health and welfare contributions and pension contributions.”

“But the battle isn’t over,” he continued. “Bargaining for the next contract starts in a year. Prepare and be strong, show up to meetings, show up to rallies and be engaged.”

Making preparations

In the afternoon, stewards broke into workshops which addressed topics such as the role of a steward, dealing with workplace violence, organizing and more. (See photos on page 10)

Keynote speaker Rob Bonta, the attorney general of California, talked to stewards about the need for social justice for working people.

“As attorney general I go after companies that commit wage theft or misclassify workers,” he said. “Working

together with unions is essential. You let us know what you need. We have shared values and we continue to have each other’s back.”

Bonta said his office tried to stop Albertsons’ massive payout of dividends to its shareholders in advance of the company’s proposed merger with Kroger, “and we will continue to pursue anti-trust claims to stop the merger.”

He praised the role of the Labor Movement in lifting workers out of poverty and its ability to transform society.

“More people should get themselves a union,” he said. “This is something I believe strongly. Union is in my blood.”

“California is the fourth largest economy in the world, and that’s because of our workers,” he continued. “All workers in California need the dignity and respect they deserve.”

President Duffe’s state of the union

Local 1167 President Joe Duffe closed the conference with a state of the union address. (Please see President’s Report on page 3.)

He stressed the need for member participation in the union, especially in the challenging current environment of hard negotiations and high-



stakes mergers.

“Being union is not a spectator sport,” he said. “We must protect our market share. If companies take a swing at us, we swing back.”

“We need the information that stewards give us from the workplaces. Those members — those are your people.”

“I’ve been through the Safeway/Vons and the Albertsons/Lucky mergers,” he continued, “and what is certain is the companies don’t care about the membership. This impending merger could form the largest private company in the country, and I want to make it clear, we are 100% against any merger between Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons.”

The union needs to be able to adapt to the times, Duffe said, whether that means using its power to stand up for workers in the gig economy or

branching out into new industries as it has to organize 11 cannabis facilities.

“The younger generation wants to be part of this movement,” he said. “They’re not thinking of a pension or health and welfare benefits right now, but as we age we know and realize how important these things are.”

“We now have more than 21,000 members. We are more efficient in our offices than

Please see page 11



Scenes from the Stewards Conference





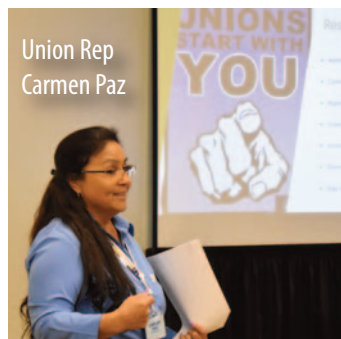
Stewards engage in workshops

Stewards participated in three in-depth workshops during the conference.

A session on workplace violence led by John Zulli, Ph.D. emphasized situational awareness.

“Preventing violence before it happens is the area where you have the greatest control,” Zulli said. “If you see something say something. Notify your supervisor about any concerns you have or violations you observe.”

Zulli advised attendees to park in areas that offer good lighting and are well-lit after dark. “Avoid



Union Rep
Carmen Paz

parking near dumpsters, shrubs and trees,” he said. “Be suspicious of vehicles parked close to yours, and if you need to, have security escort you to your vehicle.”

Union Representatives David Simmering, Joe Parham and Carmen Paz led a workshop covering the many roles of a steward.

“As a steward, your most important role is one of communication,” Paz said. “It is the cornerstone of having a strong union. With it the union thrives and is able to promote the many benefits it has to offer.”

“Let your coworkers know they belong to a union,” she continued. “Listen to fellow union members and report to your union representative. It’s



Director of Organizing
Yesenia Gonzalez and
Jassy Grewal,
UFCW Western
States Council

all about communication.”

Simmering described the difference between a gripe and a grievance. A gripe is a complaint that is not a violation of the contract, while a grievance is a claim of a breach of a collective bargaining agreement.

“Even though a violation of the contract may not have occurred, a gripe may need to be addressed,” he said. “Sexual harassment, gender discrimination or similar occurrences may fall in this category and require immediate attention.”

In a discussion on political engagement, Parham urged stewards to participate in the Active Ballot Club and participate in all elections.

“When it comes to politics, we concern ourselves with issues that are important to us collectively: wages, job security and working conditions. These are the core values that we promote for our membership.”

Organizing Director and Assistant to the President Yesenia Gonzalez joined UFCW Western States Council Legislative Director Jassy Grewal in leading a workshop on organizing and legislative issues.

Gonzalez gave an overview of UFCW organizing victories at JBS meat packing plants, CVS pharmacies and cannabis

shops.

“CVS was organized in 2017 and there is now a statewide neutrality agreement between UFCW and CVS,” Gonzalez said. “We had one meeting per store and only 21 days to organize each store. We worked with 20 stores per month and organized 54 locations in four months.”

The Cannabis Division has seen vast improvements in affected workplaces, Gonzalez said.

“Through their collective bargaining agreements, our cannabis members have set wage increases, premiums for certain positions, protection of earned tips, guarantees of hours and paid time off, access to a trust fund (retirement plan), and a grievance procedure to address workplace issues,” she said.



Union Rep
Joe Parham

Grewal explained how the UFCW is advocating legislation affecting all workers.

“Senate Bill 553 covers workplace violence prevention,” Grewal said. “SB 616 focuses on increasing paid sick days for COVID-19, Assembly Bill 2530 provides health care for striking workers, AB 2068 updates Cal OSHA workplace postings, and SB 951 increases state disability



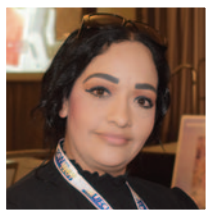
Union Rep
David Simmering

insurance and paid family leave wage replacement. We’ve also been at work to reinstitute tax credits for union dues.”

Grewal also spoke about SB 725, the Grocery Worker Safety Net, which would require a grocery company that conducts layoffs as a result of a merger or acquisition to provide its workers with one week of severance pay for every year of service. The bill is approved by the California Assembly’s Labor and Employment Committee.

If it becomes law, SB 725 would benefit workers greatly should the Federal Trade Commission let the Kroger/Albertsons merger go through, Grewal said.

Stewards Conference



Sonia Maldonado

JBS
Quality Control
5 years union

“This was a good overall conference. I learned a lot and there was a lot of good information I can take back to my fellow members. The workshop on workplace violence was especially useful. I became a steward because members come to me with questions. I want to educate myself more so I have the answers, or at least know where to direct members who have questions I cannot answer.”



Allie Romo

Rite Aid 5583, Corona
Key Supervisor
29 years union

“This was truly eye-opening. I understand now why we all need to be involved in politics. The people we elect to office have tremendous impact on our lives. What we do now is important cause it paves the way for those who come after us in this union.”



Terecita Jimenez

Rite Aid 5583, Corona
PAC
25 years union

“It was great to hear what we heard here. The politics aspect was particularly interesting because I learned how we need to protect what we have and get more through legislation. I like to help others and look out for each other. We need to work together for a better future for everybody.”

Blanca Figueroa

Vons 2706, El Centro
Cashier
35 years union

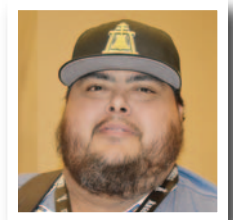
“This conference made it clear that we, the members, ARE the union. It’s up to us to protect our market share and get involved. The workshop on violence in the workplace was especially helpful because it taught me to be aware of things I was not aware of before. I learned to know our surroundings to help protect ourselves.”



Michael Ledesma

Stater Bros., 1, Riverside
Clerk
17 years union

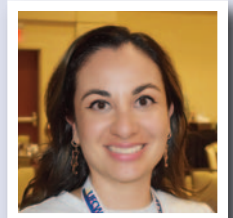
“There’s lots of info here. I have a better understanding and a clearer idea of my duties as a steward. I want to be a part of something larger that helps people. That’s what the union is all about: members helping each other.”



Ana Celaya

Rite Aid 6515, Calexico
Pharmacy Tech
18 years union

“This conference was educational and motivational. Lots of good information here to bring back to the membership.”



Stewards Conference recharges attendees

Continued from page 7

ever, improving workers’ lives and better serving the membership. You work night shifts and weekends, and so do we.”

He praised the staff and stewards of Local 1167 for their hard work.

“I worked in the stores, and it’s always been true that we are only as strong as our weakest member,” he said. “There is great strength in this room. We can capitalize on that strength.

“No one out there is more efficient and dedicated than us,” he continued. “We’ve gotten members more than \$2 million in back pay and we have not lost one arbitration since our last conference.

“We have more than 5,000 grievances settled and we’ve seen the best raises in this union’s history in the most recent round of collective bargaining.”

Duffle urged stewards to build on this string of successes.

“Anyone who says the labor movement is

dying is a liar,” he said. “We are bigger and better and stronger than ever with your help. Organizing numbers are up, we are respectful and we demand respect for what we do.

“Our members want to make a living for their families, and we must fight for it!” he continued. “Show up to rallies and union meetings. The union is not just me at the bargaining table, the union is YOU and you need to be strong.

“Local 1167 is prepared and ready to take on anything!”

New union representative Ruben Arias looks forward to helping members

Ruben Arias, UFCW Local 1167's newest union representative, has been a member for 19 years, most of them while working for Ralphs as a produce clerk in Palm Springs.

His first job in the industry, however, was at Ralphs 195 in La Quinta.

"I was in high school and looking for a summer job," he recalled. "It was a good choice to get better pay and benefits."

Arias' godmother worked at Rite Aid and he had other family members who were part of a union, but he was determined to learn about his new union for himself.

"I went to the contract meetings and did my part to vote on contracts when it came time," he said.

"I knew the union meant discounts for amusement parks and discounts for movies, but it is so much more," he continued. "Belonging to a union

'Solidarity is essential for whatever challenges lie ahead'

means we have rights as workers. It's good to have a union job and the solidarity that comes with it.

"A union gives you a voice on the job. Members need to speak up or speak out for themselves. Together, as one voice, the union makes it possible."

Arias is a fan of the Lakers and Dodgers, but he roots for Dallas on the gridiron.

"I am a Cowboys fan. I am used to the underachieving," he said with a chuckle.

But he doesn't intend to be anything but a winner for the members.



"I look forward to serving our members," he said. "We have a great team here and I intend to learn all I can and grow with my union."

He added: "I encourage members to talk positively about the union and to stand strong with their fellow members. Solidarity is essential for whatever challenges lie ahead.

"The company is all about the money and to make profits. The union is all about the workers."

President Duffle visits Rite Aid members

Rite Aid announced in August it is preparing to file for bankruptcy. In addition to mounting debts, the company faced lawsuits over its alleged role in the opioid epidemic.

Local 1167 President Joe Duffle immediately traveled to several Rite Aid locations to visit with members and inform them of their rights under their union contract. "Our Rite Aid members should know not to sign or agree to anything until they consult their union representative regarding their layoff and reduction rights," he said.



Retired Union Rep Jose Correa urges members: 'Fight the merger!'

Recently retired Union Representative Jose Correa began his career as a part-time courtesy clerk at Jonathan's of La Jolla in 1980. It was a self-proclaimed "Finest Market in Town," owned by Big Bear Markets and selling gourmet foods and fine wine.

"They had red rugs down every aisle," Correa recalled. "Famous people would park underground and take a private elevator up to the store."

He met Barbra Streisand and Michael Jordan, among other celebrities who shopped there.

"I asked Michael for his autograph and said he'd come back, but he was busy," Correa said. "He was buying diapers for his kids."

When the store hired Correa, it had three or four courtesy clerks. He wound up working full-time and was promoted to checker within weeks. He then went to work at Big Bear Market near the Del Mar racetrack and bought a house in Temecula.

"It was a couple of hours driving every night, but the traffic wasn't that bad back then," he said. "Then, when Albertsons purchased most of the high-end Big Bear stores, I transferred to Albertsons in Temecula and got to work closer to home."

He worked at the Albertsons store for a couple of years, and then came the strike and lockouts of 2003-2004.

"I wasn't into the union much before then," he said. "But when the strike began, I saw the company's unfavorable attitude toward its employees firsthand. Workers were nothing more than numbers to the company."

Invigoration from the strike

"I felt invigorated. The strike and lockout gave me an insight into unions and how important they are to working people."

"At the time we killed business at the store," Correa continued. "Seventy-five percent of its business died. We were militant on our picket line."

In 2009, Union Representative Keith Wright commented about Correa's passion during the strike and asked him if he'd be interested in becoming a union rep.

"I was about ready to retire back then,"

Correa said. "I had 28 years in the stores and was waiting to hit my 'Golden 85' so I could receive a pension, but Keith and Carmen (Paz) talked me into taking the job. I'm glad they did."

"It hasn't been easy, but getting what was right for our members kept me there for 14 years," he said.

Correa said it was a good learning experience to be working for the local and helping people.

"I won an arbitration for a member where we got her back pay for an entire year, and then realized the company owed pension and insurance coverage for that year as well," he said.

"It was a second icing on the cake. I felt so justified being able to help our member in such a tremendous way. There's great satisfaction to get what's right and to set things right."

Challenges ahead

Correa said many challenges are confronting the members. Number one, he said, is the fight to stop the merger between Kroger and Albertsons.

"This merger is not going to be beneficial for anybody," he said.

"Kroger (Ralphs) is famous for saying something and doing the opposite. They may not lay off everyone at once, but once they implement their systems, there's gonna be fewer people working. They've already implemented a self-check-only store in Tennessee, and you know it'll be coming here to California."



"Anything that we know of Albertsons and Vons will cease to be and they'll continue everything they're doing at Kroger's," he continued.

"This merger is not going to save money for the shoppers. They sell that same bull all the time, but prices won't be dropping. They'll pocket the profits, just as they've done over and over again after previous mergers."

He urged the members to "concentrate on what they can do to stop the merger."

"The members must get active," he said. "Whatever happens in the stores will affect health care and pension benefits."

Retired as of Aug. 1, Correa said he has no long-term plans at the moment.

He and his wife Irene were married in 1980. They have three grown children: Monica, Amanda and Jonathan. He enjoys keeping busy with his four grandchildren: Cadence, 13; Charlie, 5; Liam, 2; and James, who was born this past Christmas Eve.

They'll be all traveling to the Caribbean this year to celebrate his mother's 100th birthday. Born in 1923 and living in Puerto Rico, she's been through a couple of pandemics and her share of other challenges.

Correa said he will miss working with the members and his colleagues at UFCW Local 1167.

"I'm so thankful for the crew I got to work with for the past 14 years," he said. "Everyone is so dedicated to the membership. It's amazing I've been able to be part of this great movement for the workers of this union."



In Memoriam

Donna Bourne, a certified nurse's aide formerly employed by Haven Post Acute, died on June 6, 2023, at the age of 64. She had been a continuous member since March 2015.

David Brooks, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros., died on July 10, 2023, at the age of 77. He had been a member since January 1963.

Reinaldo Cabrera, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Paul's Market, Smith Food King, Food Giant, Safeway and Stater Bros., died on June 10, 2023, at the age of 85. He had been a member since May 1954.

Judy Coronado, a retired drug clerk formerly employed by Rite Aid, died on May 4, 2023, at the age of 78. She had been a continuous member since October 1998.

Dorothy Hubbs, a retired drug clerk formerly employed by Riverside Union Pharmacy, died on June 10, 2023, at the age of 95. She had been a continuous member since January 1977.

James Manley, a retired meat clerk formerly employed by Lucky's and Albertsons, died on June 21, 2023, at the age of 81. He had been a member since February 1971.

Jason Miller, a clerk's helper formerly employed by Stater Bros., died on July 15, 2023, at the age of 47. He had been a member since March 1997.

Barbara Puckett, a retired bakery clerk formerly employed by Albertson's, died on July 10, 2023, at the age of 91. She had been a member since November 1969.

Guadalupe Ramirez, a retired general merchandise clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros., died on June 25, 2023, at the age of 54. She had been a member since November 1988.

Joyce Skavaril, a retired membership clerk formerly employed by UFCW Local 439, UFCW Local 1167, died on July 17, 2023, at the age of 82. She had been a member since July 1971.

Josephine Wood, a retired general merchandise clerk formerly employed by Safeway, died on July 8, 2023, at the age of 96. She had been a member since May 1971.

IN MEMORIAM

Jerry Espinoza

*UFCW 1167 Union Rep
2001-2021*



Jerry Espinoza, a union representative who served the members of Local 1167 for more than 20 years, died on Aug. 24. He was 51.

“We are sad to learn of the loss of our union brother,” Local 1167 President Joe Duffle said. “Our hearts go out to his family in this difficult time.”

Espinoza began his union career as a deli manager at Max Foods in El Centro. He was encouraged by his coworkers and union leadership to become more involved, so he took the opportunity to act as a Special Project Union Representative (SPUR) in the early 2000s.

Although the campaign, which sought to prevent the opening of a Walmart Supercenter in Calexico, was unsuccessful, he was proud of the effort to help the community and protect good union jobs. His activism led him to his new role as a union representative for Local 1167, where he served for nearly 20 years.

Espinoza reached out to members in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys and helped them make the most out of their union membership.

“Many single adults don’t understand or appreciate the value of a union, and that’s why we can never stop educating the membership,” he said in an interview published in the *Desert Edge*. “Once you start doing things like getting married and having kids, you realize you can’t function without the benefits of being union.”



For JBS steward, the union is ‘everything’

For JBS steward Sonia Maldonado, the union is everything.

Maldonado has been with JBS for about seven years, working in quality assurance and control. She checks temperatures, affixes labels and performs other tasks to ensure the product is ready for consumers.

UFCW Local 1167 is a big part of her workplace, she said.

“The union is our voice on the job,” Maldonado said. “It is our voice, our protection, our stability and our solidarity.”

“If we have a problem with company or with a supervisor, we go to the union first,” she continued. “The union gives me a voice at work.”

“The health insurance we have is also a big help. We can visit the doctor and we have

dental care. Not everyone has dental benefits, and to have them helps a great deal.”

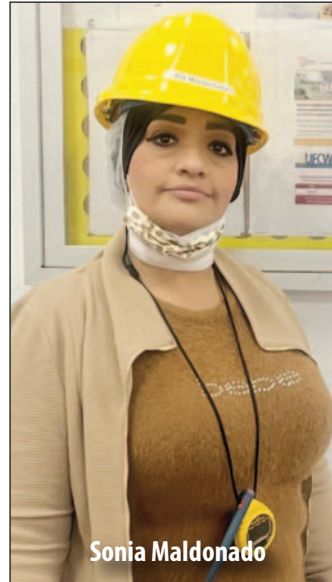
Maldonado became a steward almost four years ago.

“I was walking to lunch and a lady told me she was having an issue with her supervisor,” she recalled. “So, I said, ‘let me see what I can do for you’ and called the union.”

“The next day, my union rep asked if I’d be interested in being a steward. I said I didn’t know what a steward does, but he told me that it was exactly what I just did for my fellow member.”

Maldonado loves to help people and listen to their needs, so her co-workers feel comfortable talking with her and receiving advice.

“An important thing for



Sonia Maldonado

members to do is to have written statements of what happened and when,” she said. “That helps our union reps a lot.”

She added: “I help them with

navigating through the union and help them with writing statements. Also, if people have an issue with their supervisor, they can come straight to me.”

Maldonado has two children, Nick, 14, and Mia, 9. Her son plays basketball and other sports. Her daughter likes to go shopping.

“I’m thankful they both love school,” she said. “They are so smart.”

“I’m thankful and proud we know what the union is at JBS,” she said. “I have never heard, ‘What is the union?’ from a fellow member. If anything, they want more info about the union, about the contract and how to help secure better wages, benefits and language in the contract.”

(Spanish translation below.)

Para la delegada de JBS, la unión lo es ‘todo’

Para Sonia Maldonado, delegada de JBS, la unión lo es todo.

Maldonado ha estado en JBS durante aproximadamente siete años, trabajando en aseguramiento y control de calidad. Ella verifica las temperaturas, coloca etiquetas y realiza otras tareas para garantizar que el producto esté listo para los consumidores.

UFCW Local 1167 es una gran parte de su lugar de trabajo, dijo.

“La unión es nuestra voz en el trabajo”, dijo Maldonado. “Es nuestra voz, nuestra protección, nuestra estabilidad y nuestra solidaridad”.

“Si tenemos un problema

con la empresa o con un supervisor, primero acudimos la unión”, continuó. “La unión me da voz en el trabajo”.

“El seguro médico que tenemos también es de gran ayuda. Podemos visitar al médico y tenemos atención dental. No todo el mundo tiene beneficios dentales y tenerlos ayuda mucho”.

Maldonado se convirtió en delegada hace casi cuatro años.

“Iba caminando hacia el almuerzo y una señora me dijo que estaba teniendo un problema con su supervisor”, recordó. “Entonces dije: ‘déjenme ver qué puedo hacer por ustedes’ y llamé la unión.”

“Al día siguiente, mi repre-

sentante sindical me preguntó si estaría interesada en ser delegada. Le dije que no sabía lo que hace un delegado, pero él me dijo que era exactamente lo que acabo de hacer por mi colega”.

A Maldonado le encanta ayudar a las personas y escuchar sus necesidades, por eso sus compañeros de trabajo se sienten cómodos hablando con ella y recibiendo consejos.

“Una cosa importante que deben hacer los miembros es tener declaraciones escritas de lo que sucedió y cuándo”, dijo. “Eso ayuda mucho a nuestros representantes sindicales”.

Y añadió: “Los ayudo a navegar por la unión y a redactar declaraciones. Además, si las

personas tienen algún problema con su supervisor, pueden acudir a mí directamente”.

Maldonado tiene dos hijos, Nick, de 14 años, y Mia, de 9. Su hijo juega baloncesto y otros deportes. A su hija le gusta ir de compras.

“Estoy agradecida de que a ambos les guste la escuela,” dijo. “Son muy inteligentes.”

“Estoy agradecida y orgullosa de saber lo que es la unión en JBS”, dijo. “Nunca escuché a ningún compañero decir: ‘¿Qué es la unión?’. En todo caso, quieren más información sobre la unión, sobre el contrato y cómo ayudar en asegurar mejores salarios, beneficios y lenguaje en el contrato”.

Annual Inland Empire Charity Event raises more than \$165,000

More than \$165,000 was raised by more than 200 participants, sponsors and volunteers at this year's Inland Empire Charity Golf Tournament on June 27.

Melissa Ayala, community school coordinator at Pomona Unified School District, thanked the participants at a banquet after the round of golf.

"Raising money for our crucial services is so greatly appreciated by our organization and by the families who depend on our services," she said.

"We want to thank the generous sponsors of this event for helping us be able help many members and their children further their education, provide crucial services that help the community," said President Joe Duffle.



CONTACT YOUR UNION

Find your union rep, stay informed of the things that matter to you most at work. All from your phone on the UFCW 1167 Mobile App.



MEMBER RESOURCES

Check your membership resources right from your mobile phone. Download a form, apply for a scholarship, view "How To" Videos from other UFCW members around the US.



POLITICAL ACTION

Hold candidates accountable with the find my elected official tool. When members stand together, members win.



MEMBERS DISCOUNT

Carry your digital discount guide with you at all times. Take advantage of the many discounts available to members of UFCW Local 1167 right on your app.



WORK SCHEDULE

Keep your hours logged as a backup by adding your weekly schedule on your mobile app. Receive reminders that its time to get to work. Make notes on your schedule and access those notes anytime for reference.

STAY INFORMED WITH THE UFCW LOCAL 1167 MOBILE APP

The UFCW 1167 Mobile App is a great way for our members to stay connected on the go.



1167 Scholarship Winners

First-place scholarship winner **Talia Nguyen** is a 2023 graduate of University High School in Irvine.

In addition to graduating with a 4.37 GPA, she has received recognition for her volunteer service, her skill playing the piano and her proficiency in Spanish.

As a multi-instrument musician, she also performed as a violist in the Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles (PSYE) for the past six years, an experience that she says has made her into the person she is today.

“From performing side-by-side with locals in Costa Rica and experiencing their culture to performing in a string quartet at the local museum and arts center, PSYE has improved my time management and resilience,” she said. “It has expanded my cultural perspective and, most importantly, grown my love of music.”

Nguyen praises her older sister for taking care of her and is inspired by her sibling’s resilience through tough times.

“She gives me advice when I am struggling and shares incredible stories for me to learn from,” she said.

Among Nguyen’s many extracurricular and volunteer activities, she donates her time organizing digital documents for the Library of Congress to make their transcriptions more accessible to researchers and to those with visual or cognitive dis-



abilities. She also ties blankets and looms beanie hats for the You Are Not Alone charity organization, which sends comfort packages to cancer patients.

Her mother, Trinie Che, works as a part-time pharmacist at Rite Aid.

In college, Nguyen plans to study biology and astrophysics on the path to a potential career as a doctor or researcher.

“I hope someday to travel to different countries, taking trips to diverse cultures and helping those in need with organizations like Doctors Without Borders,” she said. “I would like to continue volunteering, writing and playing music for fun and fulfillment.”

“Most importantly,” she continued, “I hope that I’m still curious and intrigued by the prospects of the natural world, always learning and going out to explore.”

Scholarship recipient **Zana Willis** works at STIIZY in Palm Desert. Her demanding schedule sees her juggle the responsibilities of her job, her classwork and being a mother to her 4-year-old son.

“Being a mother is something you choose to do,” she said. “I could be a lazy, neglectful parent who always chooses to do the bare minimum. But instead, I choose to keep going for my son. I choose to be the example he deserves.”

She enjoys traveling with her son to



help him experience the world and prides herself on making good choices for her family.

“I’ve been taking the time to decide what it is I need to do to provide a better life and childhood for my son than I had,” she said.

Willis hopes to continue studying with a focus on nursing/medical aesthetics, business and kinesiology. She wants to pursue a doctorate degree in the hopes of one day opening her own dermatology practice.



Enrique Lee works as a food clerk for Stater Bros. He’s an 1167 Scholarship recipient and attends Riverside Community College, where he has maintained a spot on the Dean’s List for four consecutive semesters.

In high school, his teachers described him as motivated, disciplined and responsible. He credits his U.S. History teacher as having the greatest impact on how he views the world.

Lee played soccer and participated in several clubs, including the Agricultural Club, where he was an officer.

“The club introduced me to the importance of garnering leadership experience through sharing a passion with others,” he said. “We held professional meetings and organized events for our local fairgrounds.”

Lee continues to strengthen his leadership abilities by attending career workshops in college. Outside of classes, he also strives to improve his welding abilities.

His current focus is on business administration and information systems, and he hopes to obtain a bachelor’s degree in business administration on the path to a career in management and marketing.



NLRB strengthens rights of workers to speak strongly

working conditions and continue to assert themselves when a manager tells them they have to calm down, stop talking, lower their voice or stop being disrespectful.

PWFA victory for working women

A recent decision by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) strengthens workers' rights during workplace disputes with management. It strengthens the rights of employees to strongly advocate, protest and question statements and actions by managers, supervisors, human resources and loss prevention.

Specifically, the NLRB ruled that the National Labor Relations Act protected a worker who shouted and argued with a manager about excessive overtime, including angrily accusing the manager of being a liar and not doing their job.

The worker spoke in a confrontational tone with the manager over the course of several days, but used no profanity.

In its ruling, the NLRB returned to a legal principle from prior cases that protects workers who communicate strongly with management. Those cases protected workers who raised their voices or shouted, as well as those who interrupted or challenged a supervisor. The panel decided the law protects workers who stand up and continue to assert themselves, even after a supervisor tells them to quiet down.

In the few cases where workers lost protection, they had threatened or implied violence, or they used racial or misogynistic slurs.

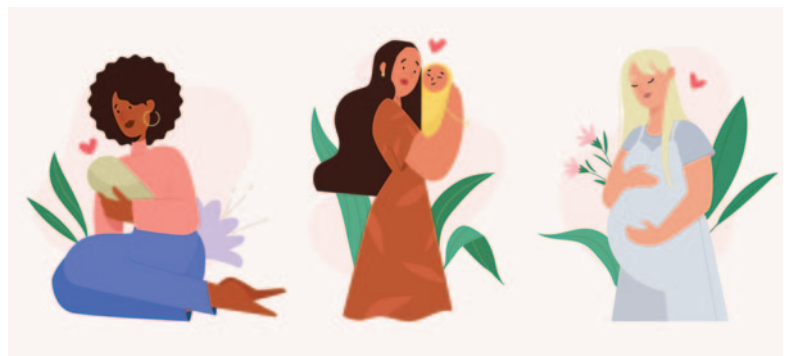
Union representatives can use this case to assure workers they can speak against management about

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which enshrines the right of pregnant and postpartum workers to reasonable accommodations in their workplaces, went into effect on June 27. The UFCW and its Women's Network lobbied to pass this legislation, which was signed into law on Dec. 29, 2022.

The new law makes it easier for members who are pregnant or recovering from childbirth to protect their health and continue working if they want. For example, no employer can punish or fire you for requesting accommodations for pregnancy or pumping at work. The law protects union and non-union workers alike.

This is a huge victory for women. Until now, there were few legal protections for workers who needed workplace accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. As a result, many women were forced out of the work force, putting them and their families in financially difficult positions.

The PWFA does not replace federal, state or local laws that are more protective of workers affected by pregnancy or childbirth. More than 30 states and cities have laws that provide accommodations for pregnant workers.



Don't steal from your employer!

We've received hundreds of reports of wage theft from members describing multiple problems regarding pay, incomplete paychecks, improperly deducted taxes and health care premiums. We are constantly at work to get members what is due.

We won't let your employer steal from you.

At the same time, we need to remind you that stealing time from your employer, by taking extended breaks and lunches, is also considered theft. Don't do it! Work your contractual hours!

Time is one of the most valuable things there is, which is why we find it troubling when it comes to our attention that members have been stealing time from their employers.

Theft is theft, whether it's stealing time or stealing cash from the register.

Theft of any kind is either against company policy or against the law — or both. It may seem like common sense, but sometimes common sense is not so common.

Do not go out to your car for a nap or catch up on the latest "tea" with your coworkers before returning to the store and THEN clocking out for your break.

Work time is not the time for

texting love notes to your boyfriend or girlfriend.

Your scheduled breaks and lunch periods were written into your contract and have specific parameters on time.

You are fortunate to have a good union job. Don't risk losing it.

Save 'sweethearting' for Valentine's Day

On a related topic, everyone likes getting something for free or at a discount, but it is stealing when you're taking it without permission of the owner.

In the world of retail sales, the practice called "sweethearting" can have bitter consequences.

Sweethearting happens when a cashier lets a friend or colleague take an item without paying the proper price. It is theft.

Sometimes a cashier will pass an item through without scanning it. Or, perhaps, she or he will scan one item and then let another go through unscanned. In other situations, a cashier might use a coupon inappropriately or punch in the code for a lower-priced item.

Often, sweethearting is done with the expectation that the other person will reciprocate.

Sweethearting costs billions of dollars annually in lost revenues to retailers across the country, so it's no surprise that employers take it seriously. If you are guilty of this practice,



Nick Romero



Arron Velarde

it's an easy case for management to prove, and there is little, if anything, your union can do to protect you.

Why would you risk your good union job that comes with strong wages, health benefits, a pension and more? It's not worth it.



UFCW Local 1167 President Joe Duffie (at left) congratulated UFCW Local 1167 member **Mark Putman** from Ralph's store 181 in Palm Springs on his retirement. Mark was the produce department manager and he retires with 37 years of union membership.

NEW MEMBER MEETINGS

Are you a new member of UFCW Local 1167? Has one of your co-workers recently joined our union?

Get a one-time \$65 credit toward your initiation fee when you attend a New Member Orientation Meeting within six months of your hire date.

Call (909) 877-5000, ext. 3 for answers to any questions. CDC guidelines will be followed.

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Scenes from the Stewards Conference



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