

April 2,  
2010

# The Sagebrush Telegraph

United for Good Jobs  
Strong Communities

Healthy Families  
Justice at Rio Tinto

Welcome to the seventh issue of The Sagebrush Telegraph. Our goal is to keep everyone informed and involved in our fight against the lockout by Rio Tinto that is hurting our families and communities in the high desert. We can win this fight if all of us get involved and stay informed.

## **Join us April 16<sup>th</sup>: We're going to Los Angeles!**

Rio Tinto is a huge foreign owned company with headquarters in Britain and Australia. They're holding their company shareholder meeting in London on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Our own Dave Irish is planning to attend and speak out for our families. A few days later, our own Terri Judd will travel to Australia and attend the shareholder meeting there in Melbourne. Back here at home, we'll be sending our own message to Rio Tinto by going to the British Consulate in Los Angeles on April 16 at 11:00AM. Similar rallies will be held in Seattle, San Francisco, Boston, and Canada. We'll be carpooling, caravan style, down to LA where we have free parking arranged. We just need lots of drivers and families to fill-up the cars. Gas cards will be provided to drivers with full cars. Sign up now and bring the entire family, because this will be an amazing event!

## **Family Dinner on March 26<sup>th</sup> was a success!**

Several hundred people joined together at the union hall in Boron on the 26th of March for a great dinner. We said "thanks" to dozens of businesses and community leaders who are helping us and calling on Rio Tinto to end the lockout. Our Food Bank Committee and Auxiliary deserve lots of thanks for providing the hearty meal, excellent service, and monumental cleanup afterward.

## **Our Next Family Dinner is April 30<sup>th</sup>: be there.**

Mark your calendar now for Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> when you can enjoy a great family-style dinner at the union hall. This is a special event for locked out families to help you save money, take a night

away from the cooking and cleaning, and enjoy a great meal. It's also a great way to get the latest news, ask questions and get accurate information.

## **Emergency help is available every Saturday**

If your family is facing a financial emergency, please meet with members of the Emergency Assistance Committee who meet each Saturday in the union hall at 12 noon. Names and numbers of the Committee are listed on the next page.



## **Families and kids "walk the line" on Friday's**

Last week we told you about the successful event featuring kids and families who came out to the plant gates to show their support in a positive way, and set a good example for all of us to follow. This event showed reporters and the public what we're really fighting for, and helps us win valuable public support that's so essential. Kayla Martz, mother of her three "guppies," got this event rolling in March with support from other families. Families whose last name begins with the letters A-L will meet at the Gephart Gate or Back Gate. M-Z will meet at the Main Gate from 3:30 – 5:00 pm. All activities are family friendly and G-Rated. Children can bring posters and signs and parents should bring water and snacks. For more information contact Kayla Martz at 760-769-1170. Let's show our best faces to the public and teach our kids a valuable lesson about standing up for the right thing and doing it the right way.

## **Groceries are still available – get yours today.**

You can get your bag of groceries each week while they last. We only ask that everyone try to help by doing a few hours of "gate duty" or

volunteering to help one of our Committees that are listed on this page. Nobody will be turned away, but everyone pitching-in and working together is the best way for us to win this fight. Groceries are available most days during business hours at the union hall.

### **Easter egg hunt and baskets for our kids**



The East Bunny came to visit our families on March 28<sup>th</sup>. It was a week early, but that didn't stop kids from having a great Easter Egg hunt in Desert Lake Park and seeing the Easter Bunny back at our union hall 400 baskets were waiting for children who were delighted. *The Antelope Valley Press* and *Mojave Desert News* both ran nice stories and photos about our event. A special thanks to the thousands of grocery store workers and their union who donated the candy, eggs, baskets, and time that helped make this event possible: The United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)

### **Negotiation update**

Our elected Negotiating Committee had been meeting with Rio Tinto since September, trying to reach a fair agreement with the company when they suddenly abandoned the talks and poisoned the process by locking us out of work. Since that time, they have lied to the media, pretending that they wanted to talk, but never actually picked up the phone or sent a letter to re-start the negotiations that they poisoned and destroyed with the lockout. We believe Rio Tinto's contract demand ultimatum and lockout were illegal – and the federal government is investigating our complaint right now.

The federal mediator has asked us to talk, which we will do, as soon as the company agrees to rejoin the talks they abandoned and destroyed last

January. We haven't changed our view that the company's illegal lockout has made it impossible for negotiations to meet the legal requirement of fairness and good faith. But we will agree to sit down and talk if the federal mediator can convince the company to cooperate – while not waiving our right to hold the company accountable for destroying the negotiations and illegally locking us out.

Even if the company does agree to talk, that doesn't mean they will be serious about negotiating. Until now, it's been mostly "their way or the highway," and their way involves the destruction of good jobs and replacing them with part-time, temporary, and outsourced positions that pay little or no wages. They also have been insisting on the right to discriminate and play favorites when it comes to training, promotions, shift assignment, and even pay. We'll let you know when the dates are set if the company agrees to talk.

---

### **Please Volunteer - everyone welcome!**

Community Outreach Committee: Thurs@10am  
contact: Kim Evans 760-762-5260

Communications Committee: Thurs@12 noon  
contact: Kevin Martz 760-769-0045

Family Support Committee:  
contact Jeri Lee 760 762-6151

Unemployment trouble?  
Call Eleanor Morton at 415-771-6400.

---

Emergency Assistance committee:  
Chuck Kennedy 661-265-0171  
Darrell Nichols 760-382-0409  
Brett Davies 760-284-2555

Sagebrush telegraph: Please send ideas, suggestions, and photos to:  
[sagebrushtelegraph@yahoo.com](mailto:sagebrushtelegraph@yahoo.com).