

California and the West scorched in record-setting heat wave



By Associated Press

A record-setting heat wave made life miserable in much of the West on Tuesday, with California stretching into its second week of excessive heat that taxed the state's power supply and threatened power shortages that could prompt blackouts while people were desperately trying to stay cool.

The California Independent System Operator, the entity that oversees the state's electrical grid, said there could be "rotating power outages" Tuesday evening when demand for power could reach an all-time high.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom urged residents to conserve, warning in a video message that "the risk for outages is real and it's immediate."

"This heat wave is on track to be both the hottest and the longest on record for the state and many parts of the West for the month of September," Newsom said. "Everyone has to do their part to help step up for just a few more days."

California's state capital of Sacramento tied a record Tuesday with its 41st day of temperatures reaching at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). And there was a chance the city would break its all-time high temperature of 114 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius) set in 1925, according to the National Weather Service.

Sacramento native Debbie Chang was out walking

in Capitol Park on Tuesday morning, pulling a wagon of Pop-Tarts and water to hand out to homeless people. She lives in an old house that relies on wall-mounted units that she says don't work so well. The temperature reached 91 degrees (33 C) in her house Monday night.

"For the past few years, it's really rough," she said. "I really love this state. Growing up I never imagined I'd exactly want to live outside of California, unless maybe internationally. This is very difficult."

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In neighboring Nevada, Reno set a record of 102 degrees (39 C) on Monday while in Utah's Salt Lake City temperatures were about 20 degrees higher than normal, hitting 105 degrees (40.5 C) on Tuesday, the hottest September day recorded going back to 1874.

One Californian once lived in Washington state but moved away because it was too cold. Now, she said, “That sounds like a good problem to have.”

Scientists say climate change has made the West warmer and drier over the last three decades and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive. In the last five years, California has experienced the largest and most destructive fires in state history.

A wildfire that started Friday in the Northern California community of Weed killed two people and one that erupted Monday and spread rapidly in the Hemet area of Southern California also killed two people. Authorities said they were found in the same area and died while trying to flee the flames.

Though the heat wave was likely to peak in most places on Tuesday, extremely high temperatures are expected to continue for several more days.

“It is a dangerous event from a human health perspective,” said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with the University of California, Los Angeles Institute for Environment and Sustainability

Sacramento County officials were using the air-conditioned lobbies of some of their public buildings

as cooling centers for people with nowhere else to go and offering free transportation for people who could not get there. Officials even handed out motel vouchers to some homeless people through a program they normally reserve for the winter, according to county spokeswoman Janna Haynes.

“While a lot of people can stay home, a lot of people do not have a home to stay in,” Haynes said.

In state office buildings, thermostats were being set at 85 degrees (29 C) at 5 p.m. to conserve electricity.

Juliana Hinch, who moved to Sacramento from San Diego 2 1/2 years ago said she has never seen heat like this before. She said some wetlands by her house have mostly dried up, so she leaves water in her front yard “for other random animals,” including cats, squirrels and coyotes.

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Newsom signs big legislative win for California fast-food workers

By Mark Gruenberg

Now here’s a real way to celebrate Labor Day: A big win in your state legislature—in this case, California.

That day, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed AB257, a landmark labor measure establishing a state board, with enforcement powers, to impose minimum wages and working conditions for the state’s 550,000 fast food workers.

Fight For 15, the Service Employees, and other unions lobbied the heavily Democratic, mostly pro-worker legislature to approve the measure, overcoming strong corporate capitalist lobbying. And not all the Democrats were gung-ho about it, forcing several compromises.

The State Assembly approved AB257 47-19, with one Republican joining all 46 voting Democrats for it. One unaffiliated assembly member and 18 Republicans voted “no.” Thirteen Democrats were absent.

The State Senate vote was touch and go: 21-12, the bare minimum the measure needed. Democrats backed it 20-3, while all eight Republicans voted “no,” and the three unaffiliated members split: One “yes,” one “no” and one absent. Both votes were on August 29.

Senate passage also occurred only after fast food

workers walked out from 350 eateries statewide.

By contrast, McDonald’s threatened to pull out of California if AB257 passed. Association of Flight Attendants-CWA President Sara Nelson called their bluff.

“It took the courage and commitment of fast food workers across the state to bring us one step closer to making #AB257 a game-changer that sets the bar for the nation to empower workers,” the California Coalition for Worker Power tweeted.

AB257 establishes a joint labor-management-government 10-member Fast Food Council through Jan. 1, 2029. It can set and enforce “minimum standards on wages, working hours, and other working conditions related to the health, safety, and welfare of, and supplying the necessary cost of proper living to, fast food restaurant workers, as well as effecting interagency coordination and prompt agency responses” against lawbreakers, a bill summary says. The measure applies to local franchises, too.

It defines fast food restaurants in California as businesses with at least 100 eateries nationwide, with a common brand and standardized operations. And any city of at least 200,000 could establish its own fast food council, too.

The first ever bill like it gives the state board power to impose minimum wages and work conditions for 550,000 fast food workers.

Bea Lumpkin, still going strong at 104, leads Chicago Labor Day parade



By Special to People's World

Longtime People's World contributor and supporter Bea Lumpkin served as Grand Marshall for the Chicago Labor Day Parade. She got her start as an activist with the Young Communist League in the 1930s, fighting against rising tuition fees, fascism, and militarism. She organized hunger strikes for unemployment relief during the Great Depression and protested the racist frame-up of the Scottsboro Nine. Her exploits first appeared in the pages of this publication in June 1935, when Hunter College student Beatrice Shapiro was fired from her job after protesting against the visiting ambassador of Nazi Germany. Further details of her life are shared in the statement below, issued by the Chicago Labor Day Parade Committee.

The Chicago Labor Day Parade Committee is proud to announce our 2022 Grand Marshall, Beatrice Lumpkin! At 104 years young, Bea is a union organizer, activist, professor, and writer. We thank and honor Bea's activism every day! Solidarity forever!

She was born on August 3, 1918, in NYC, to Morris Abraham and Dora (Chernin) Shapiro. In 1939, She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hunter College (now of the City University of New York). In 1967, she received a Master of Studies degree from Northeastern Illinois State College (now Northeastern Illinois University), and a Master of Science from Illinois Institute of Technology in 1974.

After many years of blue-collar work in laundries,

machine shops, and assembly lines, Lumpkin became an accredited math teacher, first in the Chicago public schools and then as an associate professor of mathematics at Chicago City College.

When Chicago's Wisconsin Steel closed without paying its workers, She led a 17-year fight for justice. During that time, Beatrice chaired the Wisconsin Steel Workers Women's Committee. She also became a founder of both the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the Alliance for Retired Americans.

Despite her joyful approach, Lumpkin's life has been laced with struggle and pain, especially in the 1950s and '60s, when she and her husband endured blacklists and red-baiting, union busting, unemployment, and the vicious racism they faced in Chicago—a series of battles she chronicles in her biography of Frank, *Always Bring a Crowd* (available from International Publishers).

Lumpkin continues her activism on a daily basis. Current projects include the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans, an organization whose mission is, "to mobilize retired union members and other senior and community activists into a nationwide grassroots movement advocating a progressive political and social agenda."

A part of their work that she particularly enjoys is the building of intergenerational dialogue and projects, working with such groups as the Chicago Young Workers, SEIU Future Fighters, and others.

We thank and honor Bea's activism today and every day! Solidarity forever!

An activist since the 1930s, Bea Lumpkin isn't quitting any time soon.

LOCAL NEWS

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CP and YCL chalk up new members in Manhattan

By Cameron Orr

A new Friday tradition has been developing for members of the CPUSA and YCL in NYC. The last lunch hour of the workweek has lately been devoted to tabling outside the party's building on 23rd Street in Manhattan. Displaying their signs and literature under the cooling shade of a fortuitously planted tree, comrades have been utilizing a new tactic to jostle passersby out of their personal headspace and into the present—sidewalk chalk!

“Look up!” the colorful lettering calls out. “Fight for Liberation! ... A Better World is Possible!” Or, as one approaches from the opposite direction: “The rent is too damn high! ... You look like you need a raise!”

It's working pretty well. On one especially active day, 16 people signed up. Some even paid dues and got their party card right there and then! The conversations and comments from pedestrians have been fruitful and sometimes entertaining. “You're still here?” some say, looking at the building. Others reminisce, talking about Gus Hall's presidential campaigns. Many younger people, though, who are already interested in socialism and communism, are excited to learn about the CPUSA for the first time. Uber drivers and food and retail workers are signing up.

As other CPUSA and YCL tabling events across the city are also gathering names and numbers, a new challenge emerges: how to call all these people!

United Farm Workers marcha al capitolio del estado de California

By David Trujillo

El Sindicato Unido de Trabajadores Agrícolas (UFW, por sus siglas en inglés) y sus simpatizantes se reunieron en Southside Community Park, a dos millas de la capital del estado de California. Miles de simpatizantes vinieron a apoyar el proyecto de ley de protección de la sindicalización de la UFW. Cantaron y marcharon para mostrar su apoyo al Proyecto de Ley 2183 de la Asamblea.

AB2183 enmendaría la Ley de Relaciones Laborales Agrícolas para facilitar que los trabajadores agrícolas voten a favor o en contra de la sindicalización sin intimidación ni amenazas. El gobernador Gavin Newsom no apoya el proyecto de ley en su forma actual. Las negociaciones aún están en curso entre la UFW y la oficina del Gobernador.

Quienes se oponen al proyecto de ley, la Cámara de Comercio, las grandes empresas y las asociaciones de productores agrícolas, así como los ganaderos independientes ricos, todos se oponen al proyecto de ley, alegando que no es más que un intento de la UFW de obligar a los trabajadores agrícolas a sindicalizarse.

Los asistentes a la manifestación del viernes 26 de agosto incluyeron líderes laborales, grupos comunitarios, grupos religiosos y clérigos, estudiantes, personas mayores, activistas, organizaciones latinas y muchos otros. Tenían un mensaje claro para el gobernador: Estamos con los trabajadores agrícolas en apoyo de la sindicalización y este proyecto de ley. ¡Firma el proyecto de ley!

Lorena González, la primera mujer y persona de color en dirigir la Federación Laboral de California, dijo:

“Durante demasiado tiempo, los trabajadores agrícolas han estado al margen. Este proyecto de ley debe ser aprobado y firmado por el Gobernador. Si no, volveremos.

Más fuerte, más grande y más decidida. No pararemos. Firma el proyecto de ley”. Dolores Huerta, el ícono laboral de 92 años que ayudó a fundar la UFW, dijo: “Hoy marchamos en apoyo de este importante proyecto de ley. Le haremos saber al gobernador Newsom nuestro deseo y coraje de defender lo que es correcto para los trabajadores agrícolas y el movimiento laboral. Permítanme decir esto: marchen hoy, pero regresen a sus comunidades y marchen para sacar el voto”.

Charley, un motociclista que viajaba en una Harley Davidson junto con otros motociclistas, rodeó el capitolio del estado con grandes banderas rojas de la UFW ondeando al viento mientras montaban sus bicicletas. Bailarines aztecas marcharon junto a varios miembros de sindicatos (Teamsters, SEIU, UAW, sindicatos de maestros, Sindicato Nacional de Escritores, UNITE, Estibadores, Consejo Laboral de San Francisco, Consejo Laboral para el Avance Latinoamericano) y muchos otros. La multitud, estimada en más de 5000, coreó el eslogan tradicional de los trabajadores agrícolas “Sí se puede”.

La lucha para que se firme el proyecto de ley no ha terminado. La presidenta de la UFW, Teresa Romero, dijo: “No nos vamos a ninguna parte. Estaremos aquí hoy y nos organizaremos para mañana, si es necesario. Estar seguro. Seguiremos adelante. No nos vamos a rendir. No vamos a parar”.

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