

Talking Points - Woodman's & UFCW Local 1473
(see sample union letters on pages 2-3)

*Woodman's hired Fred Grubb from Grubb Quist, and Associates LLC, a Vermont law firm that specializes in union avoidance techniques e.g. Union Busting

* Fred Grubb represented Lawrence Brothers, a retail grocery employer found guilty of committing numerous unfair labor practices in a union decertification election with UFCW Local 1564 in 2005 including the following illegal acts:

- *Withdrawal of recognition and refusing to bargain with the union
- *Withholding wage increases from employees
- *Withholding vacation pay
- *Threatening to deprive employees of previously available benefits
- *Threatening employees that any transition to full time would be hindered
- *Threatening employees with wage freeze

*Last year these union busting consultants interviewed department supervisors to determine which supervisors were not supportive of the union. (The only logical reason for this would be to find a group of employees to circulate the petition to decertify the union and to assist in conducting the company's anti-union campaign.)

*On January 9 and 14th with the help of union busting consultants two department supervisors filed petitions with the NLRB to eliminate union representation at five Woodman's Stores in Janesville, Beloit, Madison and Onalaska, WI

*Woodman's has expanded the duties of department supervisors by giving certain ones the authority to discipline, evaluate or assign work. This now requires NLRB clarification as to which positions have become statutory supervisors before an election can proceed.

*Woodman's has delayed the hearing by refusing to identify the supervisory status of several employees and by refusing to provide the subpoenaed records that would easily clarify these issues. This has forced the union to review thousands of employment records that further delays the process.

*Woodman's has conducted anti-union captive audience meetings with all employees to encourage them to decertify their union.

*Woodman's has granted higher than normal wage increases and bonuses in its non-union stores prior to its negotiations with UFCW Local 1473 while posting these changes in all union stores to suggest to workers that they can receive the same without their union. In the past the company would determine the level of wages and benefits for its non-union stores after a contract was negotiated.

*Woodman's has refused to meet or provide any dates for negotiations with Local 1473 over its contract that expires on March 16, 2008.

*Employees in Beloit are being instructed to not discuss their contract with any customers

Willard P. Woodman, President
Woodman's Food Markets, Inc
2919 North Lexington Dr
Janesville, WI 53545

Dear Mr. Woodman,

For more than thirty years UFCW has successfully negotiated contracts with Woodman's providing good wages and decent benefits improving the lives of workers and management in this community.

I am deeply disturbed to find out that Woodman's has hired Grubb, Quist & Associates a Vermont-based union busting law firm in a drive to destroy the union and deny your workers the benefits of union representation. Grubb's firm and companies employing their services have had a history of committing numerous unfair labor practices in union election campaigns.

We strongly encourage you to refrain from employing anti-union consultants like Fred Grubb and from conducting anti-union captive audience meetings with your workers. Such meetings without the presence of their union have no other purpose but to intimidate workers in their rights to freely choose union representation.

Our union which represents _____ working families has enjoyed shopping in your stores and contributing to your company's success. In the last few years our union has also purchased _____ in groceries and other merchandise for various union events.

If your company follows the same anti-union pattern that other companies followed after hiring anti-union consultants like Grubb then our organization will strongly encourage our members and their families to refrain from shopping at your stores.

We deeply hope that you reconsider dividing union working families against one another to simply reduce your labor costs and to eliminate worker rights in our community.

Sincerely,

Local _____

Dear Mr. Woodman

I was profoundly dismayed to learn that you have spearheaded an effort to decertify the union in your Madison, Janesville, Beloit, and Onalaska stores. Worse, I understand you have brought in the notorious union busting firm, Grubb, Quist & Associates. This firm has an ugly history of silencing workers on the job and of breaking the law to end workers' ability to bargain together for better wages and working conditions.

I'm writing to remind you that union jobs are vital to families and communities all over Wisconsin. And, union jobs are vital to the businesses that operate here. There is no doubt the hard work of your union employees has made Woodman's successful. A union workforce is a loyal, productive, and customer-oriented workforce. And, union workers want their companies to be successful. It is not ungrateful or disloyal when workers want a voice in their workplaces in exchange for their contribution to your success.

I also want to remind you that Wisconsin has enjoyed a strong union tradition for more than 100 years. Your employees, your customers, their neighbors, friends and families know that union jobs are the foundation of the middle class and enable workers to live the American Dream.

I urge you to reconsider your course, and to bargain in good faith with your employees and members of UFCW Local 1473 whose contract is up in March. However, if you persist, know that I will inform the x,xxx members of my Local union (many of whom are your loyal shoppers) that Woodman's has lost its commitment to having a union workforce. In addition, through the Wisconsin Central Labor Council, we'll get the word out to every union worker in Wisconsin who lives where Woodmans operates a store.

I look forward to your response.

Signed,

Local Union Leader