

In Their Own Words

Please enjoy this new feature where we invite members to share their own thoughts about opinions.



"As an AFSME Union member, I am grateful to have the support of my local and Council 2 representatives. Union members should not hesitate to contact their representatives when there are issues in the work place that need to be resolved. These representatives are knowledgeable, fair, understand the Union contracts and management communication techniques. Most importantly they have our best interests at heart. If Union members find themselves in a questionable situation at work or have a question about the Union contract, they should contact their local Union representative!"

- Michelle Hale, Local 1619, City of Port Angeles



I feel very fortunate to be part of AFSCME Council 2. I have been with this union for about 19 years. I have been an active officer for 2 years and did not realize how important a union is in the work force. With the help of our Rep. Aaron Cole, we have managed to put our group together as a whole to understand our working rights and to bring us together as a team. For example, management gave our overtime away to a non-union person so we followed protocol and won our rights. We are realizing that you can ask for union support if you feel insecure about a meeting or questioning what management is planning. There are so many circumstances that can affect your working conditions. We went in to our negotiations with a positive attitude, did our homework with other contracts and came out with a fair contract. Thank you so much Council 2!"

- Lauren Forbis, President, Local 1504-H



CONGRATS TO THE 2015 COUNCIL 2 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

The full list of winners is available on our website, www.Council2.com

We will be publishing all of their photos in our next edition.



Council 2 members participating in a video shoot for a testimonial video to be shown at the Council 2 Convention in June. You can view the videos online after the Convention on our website, www.Council2.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: We had a great time shooting member testimonials over three days in Seattle, Everett and Olympia. We asked a variety of questions and the answers ranged from heartfelt to hilarious and everything in-between. We hope you enjoy the videos as much as we had putting them together. But we do have to ask, what happened at the Chicago convention? We asked every member if they had a favorite convention story and almost every single response was a chuckle and then one answer: Chicago. But everyone was mum on why it was their favorite. Maybe it's true what they say, "What happens in Chicago, stays in Chicago."

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After Three-Year Fight, Council 2 Reaches Arbitration Settlement With City of Raymond

In early 2012, the City of Raymond was in the final stages of building a Class III water plant and separate waste treatment center. To ensure that these upgraded plants would be staffed appropriately, the City met with Kathy Brown, former Council 2 staff representative, to present a new salary grid that would add two new classifications of Waste Water Treatment Plant

Operator III and Water Treatment Plant Operator III to the grid. A final contract was signed on May 15, 2012 by Local 367 R and Mayor Jungar.

Almost a year later, it came to the Union's attention that the City had never adopted the new

Arbitration continued on p.3



Employees of Council 2 Spokane County locals supported Spokane teachers by participating in a walk-out on Wednesday, May 27th.

Hundreds of people marched in support of teachers at Spokane's Riverfront Park and listened to speakers, including City Councilmember Ben Stuckart. It was a good opportunity for Council 2 members to show solidarity for the teachers and build bridges with other unions. The march was organized to bring attention to ongoing budget negotiations in Olympia over the state's lack of funding for education.

OLYMPIA WATCH: Legislative Session Update

This year's Legislative Session has seen several proposed bills that posed threats to worker protections during the regular session. These bills were not voted on by the "House of Origin" cutoff and therefore didn't make it out of the Senate. Near misses included:



Senate Bill 5329 - Would have required that all Union negotiations be done in public, undermining the right of Unions to fairly reach an agreement. Currently, all labor contracts are already subject to public debate but this would have taken things one-step further.

Senate Bill 5602 - Would have prohibited release time for public employees who participate in negotiations or act as stewards for their local union. Most of our contracts have clauses that allow for employees to participate in certain union activities at no loss of pay.

Senate Bill 5045 - Would have required a yearly vote on Union Security. This was a barely veiled right-to-work measure that would have allowed open shops and forced the Union to recertify its membership annually.

Olympia Watch continued on p.3

It's time to put Trust Benefits on the Bargaining Table



CHRIS DUGOVICH

Council 2 offers a most cost-effective service to its members, but it seems to be well hidden.

The State Council operates a non-profit insurance trust through the trusteeship of its three elected officers — Vice-President Ron Fredin, Secretary-Treasurer Kathleen Etheredge and I. The trust offers, on a group basis, 14 dental plans, a vision plan, two long-term disability plans and five levels of term life insurance.

Letter from the President

The trust, created in the late 60s, was, and still is, intended to provide the best benefits to members on a bargaining unit basis at the lowest possible cost. Naturally, more participants in the plan will reduce the cost — giving all participants the greatest benefit for their dollars.

Unlike other Insurance Benefits Plans our Trust covers 100% of the cost of preventive care (exams, cleaning, etc.).

DENTAL Our 14 dental plans offer benefit options to match your employer's ability to pay. With the exception of Plan 10, our payments per individual procedure are a set amount with frequent upgrades. Plan 10 pays benefits on a usual, reasonable and customary basis rather than a scheduled payment. In addition to the 100% preventive care this plan pays 80% for basic services, 50% for major services and 50% of orthodontia up to \$2,000. These benefits would be paid no matter the actual cost, up to a \$2,000 calendar-year maximum.

VISION Vision insurance is provided through Vision Services Plan. It covers exams, glasses and an amount toward contacts. The trust offers on plan at \$23.00 per-month. The benefits themselves are provided through an extensive list of optometrists and opticians throughout the state.

DISABILITY Long-term disability insurance is one benefit that really has not yet come to the forefront, although it's extremely important. Generally, this coverage kicks in for an illness or injury that keeps you from the ability to work. It's salary insurance!

Although the State's Labor and Industries Insurance offers you coverage for an on-the-job injury, the trust's disability insurance augments this coverage and will pay in many instances when the state plan will not. It also would cover you for either an illness or injury off the job. The trust offers two plans. Plan I requires a 90-day and Plan II a 180-day waiting period after injury or illness.

The programs are extremely competitively priced at \$32 per member per month (90-day) and \$25 per member per month (180-day).

LIFE/AD&D INSURANCE The Trust's newest program is group term life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. In reviewing our collective bargaining agreements across the state, we noticed many employers offer little in life insurance. We offer five levels of coverage from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The premiums range from \$4.20 to \$42 per member per month.

HOW DOES MY LOCAL PARTICIPATE? Two ways! The first is to make your choice of the coverages as a proposal during your next set of contract negotiations and gain the agreement of the employer to pay the premium. Additionally, by a simple majority vote of your local membership you can participate in the plan. Keep in mind that all members of your local must participate whether or not they voted for the plan, and you will need to gain your employer's agreement to deduct the premium from your pay. If your local is interested in pursuing these coverages or you need additional information, ask your Staff Representative or call Council 2.

Council 2 Negotiates Skagit Transit Settlement

After nearly two years of bargaining and mediation sessions, Local 176-T ratified a new contract with Skagit Transit on April 11, 2015. Local leadership worked with Council 2 Attorney Audrey Eide and Staff Representative Dean Tharp to gather facts and prepare for interest arbitration.

The union of 70 fixed route and dial-a-ride drivers had rejected an earlier management offer and petitioned PERC for binding arbitration, seeking improved benefits for part-time drivers and narrowing the gap in the market rates-of-pay between other transit agencies.

After a long negotiation process, the union and employer voluntarily reached a settlement that served to strengthen the bargaining relationship and chart a positive, future labor-management relationship. Union President Soren Jensen observed, "It was gratifying to finally close bargaining and see that both parties got a good contract."

The final settlement included a varying pay increase depending on your actual position along with a better health insurance contribution. Also, there were a number of positive language improvement to the contract.



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- Rebekah Johnson, Local 1553 (Spokane County)

DISTRICT NINE

- Keith Clemans, Local 433 (City of Coeur d'Alene)

Arbitration continued from front page..

salary grid and the designated employees were not being compensated correctly. A grievance was filed at that time and, in response, the Public Works Director claimed that the agreed upon salary grid was for the following negotiations session slated for the fall of 2013. At the subsequent grievance hearing, the Mayor asserted that he had made a mistake in signing the Salary Grid MOU and that it would not be enforceable.

After moving the grievance to arbitration, Union leadership attempted to settle with the City on multiple occasions. After many refusals, Audrey Eide, General Counsel with Council 2, took the case. She worked diligently with 367-R leadership and on January 22, 2014, an arbitrator heard the case. Due to Ms. Eide's hard work, the Union won the Arbitration award on March 31st, 2014. Or so we thought.

While the Arbitrator agreed with the Union, the City still refused to issue the back pay and place the employees on the appropriate wage scale. The Union invoked the Arbitrators jurisdiction and a settlement hearing took place. Finally on October 29, 2014 the Arbitrator ruled in our favor and awarded the aggrieved employees reclassification and back pay due from May 2012, resulting in six employee reclassifications and a total of over \$70,000 in back wages paid by the City of Raymond.

"It was a very long process, but it was nice to have it settled and receive the back pay and the reclassification," stated Brad Page, former Vice President of Council 2. "I think that Hannah Franks and Audrey Eide—well, everybody involved from Council 2 starting with Kathy Brown, did great work."

Olympia Watch continued from front page.

Senate Bill 5982 - Would have increased the normal retirement age to 67 years for new employees. Our Union has long advocated that 30 years should equal a career and this measure would force the normal retirement age beyond the reach for many of our members.

Senate Bill 6005 - Would have capped the pension calculation at the State's average annual wage, currently \$52,635, for all new hires. This number is completely arbitrary.

While it is certainly a victory that these laws appear to be dead for the year, the Legislative Session isn't over yet! No budget deal was reached by the scheduled end date on April 26th so a "Special" 30-day session was called on April 29th and would end on May 29th. Anything can happen in these extra innings. "In fact, Senator Brown (R - Centralia) rolled several of these bills into SB 6126 for the special session."

Our union's focus in the budget talks is support of House Bill 2156, an omnibus package that combines most of Local Governments budget priorities. Sponsored by Representative Chris Reykdal (D - Olympia), Reuven Carlyle (D - Seattle), and Steve Tharinger (D - Port Angeles), the bill would implement a number of new revenue opportunities for the city and county. We will continue to keep you updated on any changes as the Legislative Session progresses.

Travis Lenz, AFSCME Local 109 Executive Board (Right) presenting the check to Leonard Kelley, Secretary/Treasurer Snohomish County Labor Council




14TH ANNUAL COUNCIL 2 SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, July 10, 2015
Newcastle Golf Course | Starts at 1:30pm

Come and enjoy an afternoon of golf, barbecue and prizes! All proceeds will go towards the Council 2 scholarship program. It is a first sign-up basis for 144 golfers, so sign up today! To sign up and for more details, visit www.Council2.com



307 VC Rally at City Council

Peanut Butter Drive

With summer approaching and kids about to be released for the year, parents across the state have one more meal to plan. For many families with students who receive free or reduced price lunches at school, this can add an extra burden to their schedules — and pocketbooks.

In an effort to help those families, the Snohomish County Labor Council — along with many others across Washington — held a peanut butter drive to help stock up the local food banks with nutritional, protein-rich peanut butter for hungry, growing kids.

Jars of peanut butter were collected at different points throughout the county, as well as donations from the locals to purchase additional peanut butter.

Local unions, Snohomish County Labor Council and the United Way of Snohomish

County ended up collecting 5,792 pounds of peanut butter — doubling their overall contribution from last year.

AFSCME Local 109 collected 157 jars of peanut butter and donated \$1,250 to purchase more.

Council 2 added an additional \$500 donation to purchase peanut butter for children.

"As a leader in our local, I am proud that our members come together and give something back to the community," said Local 109 President Michael Rainey.

Participating labor partners included: AFSCME 109, IBEW 191, IAM Everett Lodge 130, IAM District 160, IAM District 751, PTE Local 17, IBT 38, Snohomish County Labor Council, the Labor Advisory Committee at United Way of Snohomish County and United Way Staff.

