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NEWS IN BRIEF

Fun events to accompany 34th International Convention

Among the highlights during the June International Convention (see detailed report on this page) will be a Privatization UnFair, to be held June 28 and 29 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.



The organizers promise that those who attend will have some fun learning how to fight privatization.

Among the events:

- Do you want to be a millionaire?
- Visit the amazing, but true, Gallery of Privatization Horrors
- Play Dunk the Privateer
- Spin the Wheel of Misfortune.

\$2,000 prize to be won

A delegate to the convention will win a \$2,000 prize in a raffle to be drawn during the sessions on June 27, June 28 and June 29.

The sellers of the winning tickets also will receive a cash prize.

33,000 union workers

The host city for the convention, Philadelphia, also is where thousands of AFSCME members work.

Local DC33 represents 13,000 blue-collar and white-collar employees.

DC 47 represents 6,000 white-collar employees. The National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees/AFSCME Local 1199C represents more than 11,000 private-sector health care workers in the city. And Council 13 represents about 3,000 state employees in Philadelphia.

INSIDE

2 Arbitrator rules against Spokane County

3 Details of new pension plans

4 Jerry Gillming retires

Two notable wins mark session

Victory was achieved — at last — on two levels during the 2000 state legislative session. One was the passage of a new retirement and pension policy for government employees, including members of Council 2.

The second victory was the passage of the Deputy Prosecutor's Bill. The measure was a major win for collective bargaining.

The two measures are outlined in reports starting on this page.



New pension plan details—Page 3

Years of lobbying pay off

Finally, all the lobbying, the serving on committees and the sheer determination paid off.

Passage of a new pension policy during the session was a fitting reward for Council 2's constant involvement and persistent pressure on the Joint Committee on Pension Policy.

The new policy is embodied in Senate Bill 6530, which was approved unanimously in both houses during the 2000 session and later was signed by Gov. Gary Locke.

"It is a very significant change and it does establish the idea that 30 years is a career in public service as opposed to having to work until you are 65," explains

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Bill is collective bargaining gain

The passage of Senate Bill 5152 regarding deputy prosecutors during the 2000 session of the State Legislature was a major victory for collective bargaining.

The battle began six years ago when the Supreme Court stripped deputy prosecutors of their collective bargaining rights in a 5-4 decision.

"We were concerned about the decision, not only for the deputy prosecutors we represent, but also because it left the door open for other elected officials to follow suit," explains Thompson.

"If the prosecutors got away with it, it would make others think, why can't I

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Event promises to be big — and influential

It's just about the biggest event on the American labor movement's calendar. And this year, coming on the eve of the presidential election, it promises not only to be big, but influential, too.

More than 4,000 delegates representing some 1.3 million union members will attend the 34th AFSCME International Convention in Philadelphia from June 26 through 30. Of those, 100 will be from Council 2.



The first convention of the new millennium will help to shape opinion in several ways.

- It will set out the agenda for the labor movement for the next two years.
- The convention is likely to receive media attention, particularly if, as

planned, President Clinton and Al Gore, the apparent Democratic nominee for the 2000 presidential election, address the delegates.

• The AFSCME members who are represented at the convention will help determine the outcome of presidential, congressional, state and local elections throughout the country this year.

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Legislative Weekend attendees gathered in Seattle this year instead of as usual in Olympia.

Legislative Weekend moves to Seattle

It was a Legislative Weekend with a difference.

Instead of being held in the state capital, Olympia, where it had been held for many years, the traditional weekend was held in Seattle this year.

The reason was the dismantling of Olympia's Tyee Hotel, where members who attended the weekend always stayed. As a result, other hotels became fully booked and there was nowhere in Olympia to stay. So the organizers scouted around for somewhere else to hold the event.

They settled on Seattle, where the 120 people who attended stayed at the Westin Hotel.

In the end, it turned out to be a pleasant change from all the years in Olympia. The new venue enabled a different set of politicians to attend the weekend and gave the event more of a local government flavor.

On Friday a number of Seattle area politicians attended the recep-



Maria Cantwell, who is endorsed by Council 2 in her bid for the U.S. Senate, attended the weekend event.

tion. In the past they had not been able to do so.

Seattle Mayor Paul Schell addressed attendees on the Saturday.

More pictures: Page 4

Perhaps it's time for you to get involved

Chris Dugovich

Keeping your Union strong and vital is hard, sometimes tedious work that involves your everyday participation. Certainly the majority of our membership have never held a Union office, many have not attended a meeting, some may not have even opened this newspaper.



Letter from the president

However, whatever the activity or cause your Local, State Council or International Union embarks on, it happens only due to many individuals' hard work and most importantly, their time.

The Union is the members, it's not the Staff or even the elected executive board or officers. It's an organization built on pitching in and participating, and in reality if you allow others to make the decisions, they just might make them in a manner that you strongly disagree with.

Traveling around the states of Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana and Idaho, and visiting

Every Local always welcomes newcomers to the group

Local Union meetings, it's always safe to say that there's a core group of individuals who take it upon themselves to make sure the work gets done. Whether it's serving on a bargaining team, helping a fellow member handle a grievance, or organizing the Christmas party — they do it all. If you are one of these individuals give yourself a pat on the back! If you're not — understand that it's a very non-exclusive group in every Local Union that always welcomes newcomers to the group. If you've sometimes thought about maybe taking a more active role, don't be bashful. Take the leap and pitch in! Your role and the time spent can be as large or as small as you choose. It can simply be attending next month's meeting and taking part in the decisions made.

It's interesting to me to see examples of individuals across the region who have started by simply attending an organizing meeting and over time were elected to be the Local Union President and serve on the state executive board. We even change minds! I know of one individual who worked against the Union in a representation election, only later to be very pro-union and serve on the state executive board.

For all of the members who take an active role, while at times it certainly presents its frustrations it also presents challenges that make it all worthwhile and at times a lot of fun.

The Union is you and your fellow members, and if you've got some time, and an interest, your Union certainly needs you!

Spokane County used wrong procedure, arbitrator rules

An arbitrator has ruled Spokane County adopted the wrong procedure when it transferred employees between road crew districts.

James A. Lundberg said that the procedure should have been consistent with the collective bargaining history between the parties and an interpretation of the contract when read in its entirety.

He directed the county to return three employees who had been transferred between crew districts in October 1998 to their original districts and to follow the established procedure in moving them.

The problem arose when Ray Moss was moved from one road crew district to another. A 15-year employee with the county, Moss is considered to be highly skilled in the operation of a six-wheel drive road grader.

He was moved because a greater demand for snow plowing was experienced in another district and his talents were required there.

But after he was moved his relative seniority in the new district was lower than it had been in the previous district.

Other members of the crew also lost seniority as a result of



Arbitration Hearing

similar moves. In addition, it eliminated promotion opportunities that would have been made available by posting an open position instead of ordering a transfer.

At the time Moss was transferred he was in the process of buying a home in the district. He was forced to cancel his pur-

chase as a result of the transfer.

Council 2 argued the transfer of Moss and two other employees undermined the seniority system in the collective bargaining agreement. Almost 100 of the approximate 130 members of the unit signed the grievance, the arbitrator was told.

The union suggested that the county could have eliminated a position in one district and opened a position in the other. The normal bidding procedure would then have been followed and the seniority system would have been retained.

The county argued that Council 2 had failed to demonstrate that Moss's transfer had violated the collective bargaining agreement.

Lundberg found in favor of Council 2 and upheld the grievance.

He ruled that the county should create vacant positions in the road crew districts where it sees a need for more staff. It should then fill those positions following the contractually agreed-upon bidding procedure. The county should then eliminate positions in districts where it determines a need for fewer employees.

Audrey Eide represented Council 2 in the hearing.

CALENDAR

May 20:

WSCCCE/AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Workshop
Wenatchee Convention Center, Wenatchee

June 25 (Sunday):

WSCCCE - Executive Board Meeting
Warwick Hotel, Philadelphia

June 26-30:

AFSCME International Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
(AFSCME Welcome Reception **June 25**)

July 1:

AFSCME Jerry Clark Memorial Scholarship deadline

August 21-24:

Washington State Labor Council Convention, Tacoma

September 19:

Primary Election Day
Remember to vote!

September 29-30:

WSCCCE Northwest Regional Conference, Best Western Hood River Inn, Hood River, Oregon

October 27-28:

WSCCCE Executive Board Meeting, WestCoast Cavanaugh's, Yakima

STEWARDS TRAINING SCHEDULE

May 18: Basic Steward

- Everett

Sept. 21: Beyond Basics

- Vancouver

PROSECUTORS FromPage 1

do it, too."

Council 2 worked on a bipartisan effort to correct the situation.

"We were up against a legisla-

ture that didn't like the words, collective bargaining," Thompson says.

He complimented the legisla-

tors on their near unanimous support of the measure as only three votes were lodged against it in the entire process.

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Bills passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor

Local Government Financial Assistance — \$101.8 million General Fund-State, \$33.2 million Health Services Account

Funds are provided to local jurisdictions to help maintain public safety, criminal justice, and public health programs affected by the passage of Initiative 695.

- Assistance to Counties — \$35.5 million General Fund-State: This budget provides \$35.5 million in ongoing funding to counties for public safety assistance, court operations, and other services. For the 1990-91 fiscal biennium, funding is restored at 53 percent of total Motor Vehicle Excise Tax losses.

- Assistance to Cities — \$66.3 million General Fund-State: Ongoing funding is provided for criminal justice, and fire and police protection and other services to offset Motor Vehicle Excise Tax losses at the city level. For the fiscal 1999-01 biennium, funding is restored through the end of the biennium at 37 percent. Additional funds are provided to ensure that no city will suffer

a budgetary loss in excess of 7.5 percent.

- Public health — \$33.2 million from the Health Services Account: Ongoing funding is provided to restore 90 percent of funding losses to public health districts and county public health programs.

Retirement — SSB 6530

The legislation creates a hybrid defined benefit/defined contribution retirement plan in PERS which would be similar to the plan currently in place for teachers and the plan which will go into effect for classified school employees in September 2000.

Features of the bill include:

- The Early Retirement Reduction Factors for PERS 2, PERS 3, SERS 2, SERS 3, members aged 55 with 30 years of service are lowered to 3% per year from age 65.

- Current PERS 2 members will have an option to move to PERS 3. The window for other PERS employees will be nine months beginning in September 2002.

- PERS 2 members who transfer to PERS 3 will receive a 110% transfer pay-

ment and gain-sharing in June 2003.

- PERS 3 members get to choose how much they contribute from six options (ranging from 5 to 15%) and can self-direct their investments or let their account be managed by the State Investment Board.

SERS Transfer Payment Increase — SSB 6531

The Washington School Employees' Retirement System (SERS) will go into effect in September 2000. Members of SERS Plan 2 who transfer to SERS Plan 3 will receive a transfer payment in March 2001 based on their account balance as of January 1, 2000. The legislation increases the transfer payment from 65% to 130% of the member's account balance.

Increased Eligibility for School Employees to Cash Out Sick Leave — SB 6534

Employees of school districts may currently cash out a portion of their accumulated sick leave when they retire or die. The legislation allows school employees who are at least age 55 and have at least

10 years of service to cash out this leave when they separate from service. Effective June 8, 2000.

Flexible Survivor Benefits — SHB 2604

The legislation authorizes DRS to provide retirees with two options for changing their survivor benefit designation after retirement:

- Post-Retirement Marriage: A member who did not choose a survivor benefit when they retired would be given an opportunity to name their spouse as beneficiary if the retiree marries after retirement.

- Non-Spouse Beneficiary: A retiree who provides a survivor benefit to someone other than their spouse at the time of retirement would have the option to cancel that benefit. The survivor benefit reduction to the retiree's pension would also be canceled.

DRS will provide these options for all retirees by July 1, 2001. Retirees aged 90 or more will be able to choose these options by July 1, 2000.

PENSION, from Page 1

Pat Thompson, Director of Legislation/Political Action for Council 2. Thompson served as chair of the Public Employees Pension Coalition.

He says the law lowers the actuarial penalty that was imposed by the previous system.

"Under the old system if you retired before age 65 you would receive a reduction of 8 percent in your benefit for each year prior to retirement age. If you got out at 60, that was a 40 percent reduction."

The new law lowers the penalty from 8 percent to 3 percent if you have 30 years of service. That means the penalty is reduced to 15 percent for retiring at age 60.

"The new approach is more realistic," Thompson says. "Now you are taking only a 15 percent reduction and that is worth thinking about."

With the 40 percent penalty, you would not even consider it."

The law stipulates that in order to retire earlier than age 65 the employee must have worked in public service for at least 30 years.

"Like most pension improvements, we won't see the benefit of this immediately," Thompson adds. "But many who are now in their 30s and 40s will recognize this as a major benefit when they are



60."

Probably the biggest success will be seen in the Plan 3 option, says Thomp-

son. "It is a progressive change in the system that will take effect beginning September 2002." People will have the option of going into Plan 3, which offers a defined contribution plan.

Long-term and career employees are most likely better off in Plan 2, which is a guaranteed defined benefit plan. Plan 3 is geared toward short-term employees and is more portable.

"However, it also has stock-market

risks associated with it," he adds. "We have been fighting Plan 3 for eight years because the legislature wanted to make it mandatory for new hires and optional for current employees."

"Our bottom line was that Plan 2 had to have improvements and Plan III had to be voluntary."

"We achieved that and so those were big victories."

Thompson says that Council 2 refused to yield throughout the years of negotiation. "We hung tough," he says. "Other employee organizations caved, but we and the other AFL-CIO unions did not."

"The result was that we won in the end. It proves that perseverance and being true to your principles pays off."

Comparison of PERS Plan Features			
	PLAN 2	PLAN 3	
	Defined Benefit	Defined Benefit	Defined Contribution
Membership	Local government employees first hired between 9/30/77 and 9/1/02; and those hired after 8/31/02 who choose Plan 2 membership	Transfers from Plan 2*; Local government employees first hired after 8/31/02 who choose Plan 3 membership. * New hires who choose Plan 2 membership do not have the option of later transferring to Plan 3.	
Vesting	5 years	If vested in Plan 2, immediate vesting in Plan 3. New hires vest with 10 YOS; or 5 years if age 55 or older.	Immediate.
Normal Retirement	Age 65 with 5 YOS.	Age 65 with 10 years YOS; or Age 65 with 5 YOS, if 12 months earned after age 54; or Age 65 with 5 YOS earned in Plan 2 prior to transfer.	Not applicable.
Early Retirement	Age 55/20 YOS with actuarial reduction from age 65; or Age 55/30 YOS with 3% reduction from age 65.	Age 55/10 YOS with actuarial reduction from age 65; or Age 55/30 YOS with 3% reduction from age 64.	Not applicable.
Employee Contributions	Half the cost of benefit funding.	None.	A range of contribution options including level and increasing rates.
Retirement Benefit	2% x YOS x AFC.	1% x YOS x AFC.	Money in member account as lump sum or annuity. Available at any age.
Termination Benefit/Pay-outs	Employee contributions plus interest at 5.5%.	With 10 YOS, defined benefit at age 65; or With 20 YOS, 3% annual benefit increase to age 65.	Money in member account as lump sum or annuity. Available at any age. Withdrawal doesn't destroy right to defined benefit at age 65.
Investment Program	Managed exclusively by State Investment Board.	Managed exclusively by State Investment Board.	Defaults to SIB fund unless member self-directs funds, pays investment costs.
Return to Work After Termination	Repay withdrawn contributions plus interest at 7% within 5 yers of return to service.	If non-vested, work 12 months to regain prior service credit earned.	No repayment required.

Union counters contracting-out bid

When the City of Kent sought to continue contracting out janitorial services, members of Local 2617 wasted no time in demonstrating that the work could be done more efficiently and more cost-effectively in-house.

As a result the City withdrew the contracting-out proposal. The work will be done by union members from May 16.

The situation arose when the City of Kent bought a building next door to City Hall that they had previously been leasing.

In doing so, they also bought the janitorial services, explains Rob Sprague, Staff Representative for Council 2. The previous owner had a contract with the janitorial company.

"They renewed it without even considering any alternatives," Sprague says.

The Union questioned the action at the time but, after discussion, agreed to raise it again when the contract came up for renewal.

The contract came up for renewal in December 1999 but Council 2 and the Local began talking with the City in the summer and early fall.

"We asked the City to add positions so we could do the work," Sprague says.

To prove that the Union members could do the job as cost efficiently as anyone, members calculated how much it would cost to use in-house employees. They concluded that it would take the equivalent of 2.5 full-time employees.

"The estimate was based on the bid parameters," Sprague explains. With the assistance of Rex Tippery, custodial su-

It was not apples to apples, it was more like apples to bananas.

pervisor for all the City of Kent buildings, Rosalie Givens, who serves on the executive board of Local 2617, and Debra LeRoy, who works in the Police Department, he put together a cost analysis and presented it to the City.

When a couple of prospective contractors underbid the Local estimate, Local members examined the bids and found problems with them. Tippery, who keeps extensive records on the custodial services provided by the City, found the bids were not comparable to the work that the Union members would provide.

"It was not apples to apples; it was more like apples to bananas," says Givens. Also, she added, the City had received many complaints from people who rented space in the building about the quality of the contracted-out janitorial services.

"None of the bidders really complied with the specifications on the requests for proposals," explains LeRoy. "They had left out costs and that's why we did the analysis — to show a fairer representation of all of the bidders.

"Also, we noticed that some of the required specifications were requesting a set amount for work that our employees already do; they were not singled out as separate costs."

They raised the issue once more with City Hall who decided to add the 2.5 FTEs.

Staff Rep. Jerry Gillming retires

After 20 years with Council 2, Staff Representative Jerry Gillming retired on Jan. 31, 2000.

Gillming's first position with the union was in 1980 when he served as a local president for Mead School District Local 1135-M where he worked in the maintenance department.

On Nov. 1, 1984, he was hired as a Staff Representative. He worked in the area from Spokane south to Walla Walla representing



Jerry Gillming

members in that part of the state.

Later he transferred to the Tacoma office and represented our membership in Pierce County and some King County locals.

Subsequent to that, he moved to the Olympia office and represented locals in the southwestern Washington area, both in Grays Harbor and as far south as Vancouver.

During his years with Council 2 Gillming represented 45 of more than 130

locals in Council 2 at one stage or another.

"Jerry spent years with Council 2 doing an excellent job for the members in many locations across the state," says Chris Dugovich, president and executive director of Council 2. "We appreciated his many years of service and wish him the best in a much-deserved retirement."

Gillming says he appreciated his time with Council 2 and the camaraderie and friendship that he enjoyed there.

"I will look back on this with fond memories," he says, adding that he hopes to keep in touch with everyone as much as possible, either face-to-face or via e-mail.

Legislative Weekend Picture Album



Above, left: Mike Kreidler, Council 2's endorsed candidate for Insurance Commissioner, addresses delegates.

Above: Kathy Carpenter, Island County Local 1845 who recently stood down from Council 2's Executive Board, right, and Judy Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer of Council 2.

Left: Seattle Mayor Paul Schell and Council 2 President/Executive Director Chris Dugovich



CONVENTION, from Page 1

In addition to discussing issues important to the union, delegates will have the opportunity to attend a series of workshops on every subject that affects membership, such as collective bargaining, contracting out, health insurance, organizing and recruitment.

Any member of Council 2 in good standing is eligible to be elected as a delegate to the convention.

The process of electing delegates is taking place now, but in most cases there is still time to participate. Council 2 contributes toward the cost of air travel for all elected delegates.

"It is an extremely worthwhile event to attend," says Chris Dugovich, Council 2 president and executive director.

"Every one of our members who have attended in the past has come away with a realization of what a big labor movement they are part of."

Full details of the International Con-



Flashback to the previous International convention, held two years ago. Here, AFSCME President Gerald McEntee, addresses delegates.

vention are available on the AFSCME web site: <http://www.afscme.org/whatsnew/>

34index.htm. You will find a link to it on our site: www.council2.com.