



COUNTY & CITY EMPLOYEE

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Summer 2003

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regional conference slated for October

The Northwest Regional Conference will be held October 17 and 18 at the Red Lion Olympia Hotel.

The conference brings together Local leaders from Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho.

Among the topics to be discussed this year include collective bargaining, political action and grievance representation.

For more information and to download registration forms, click on Northwest Regional News on Council 2's Web site, www.council2.com.

The conference agenda will be available on the Web site in early September.

Information changes can soon be made on Web site

New online forms will make it possible for Council 2 members to make changes to their addresses and other information on the Council 2 Web site later this year.

The forms — which also will be available for new members — will be totally secure.

The new service should be available in October. Watch for it at www.council2.com.

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Members of new executive board

Job retention is the major issue

A decade ago, workers were fighting for higher wages to keep pace with inflation. About three years ago, they were more concerned about benefits, and particularly health benefits.

Now the pendulum has swung again and workers are placing a higher priority

on having a say in their working conditions and, above anything else, retaining their jobs.

The new mood, of course, reflects the changing economic climate and particularly budget cuts, which have reduced the rolls of county and city employees.

Workers see Council 2 as a major force in helping them to retain their positions.

Three recent elections in which nearly 160 employees in Western Washington became new members of Council 2 re-

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Dugovich re-elected Council 2 President

Chris Dugovich — who first assumed the position of President/Executive Director of Council 2 in October, 1989 — was re-elected to an additional four-year term at the June Convention in Tacoma.

He begins his fourth term in the position. Dugovich began his career with Council 2 as a Staff Representative in April, 1982.

During his speech to the convention delegates on Saturday morning, he outlined the many successes the Union has enjoyed, not only in the two years since the last convention, but since he became President.

Council 2 has grown from a 6,500-member union with its headquarters in

Brannam retires, Fredin elected Vice-President — Page 4

what is now a pizza parlor to a 16,000-member organization with eight offices across Washington State. Organizing new members has always been a priority and it continues with the recent victory at the King County Library that brings on board an additional 550 members, he said..

Politically, the Union is stronger and more active than ever. "Due to our efforts in the political arena and the growing clout that has resulted, we are real players in the policymaking areas that are the most important to our members," Dugovich said. These areas are wages, benefits and working conditions.

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Gerald McEntee leaned forward and gestured toward those attending Council 2's convention.

"You are the real American heroes," the head of AFSCME told them. "You are the ones who make the cities, states and counties work."

"You are the people who build and protect them, day in and day out. If it were not for you, Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma would not work."

The future may look a little bleak and a little hard for many workers, McEntee added. But he urged them to keep fighting, to keep building their union, which was their main line of defense, and to keep organizing more workers.

The audience — attending the 46th biennial convention at the Tacoma Convention Center — cheered and applauded. Among them were 232 delegates, representing 80 Locals around Washington State, and 35 guests.

McEntee's words echoed a theme the delegates heard repeatedly during the convention. County and city employees make America work, speakers said, yet they are being attacked as never before.

"People have made a public career out of fighting government," Tom Keefe, columnist for the Teamsters Northwest newspaper, said at the PEOPLE breakfast held Saturday

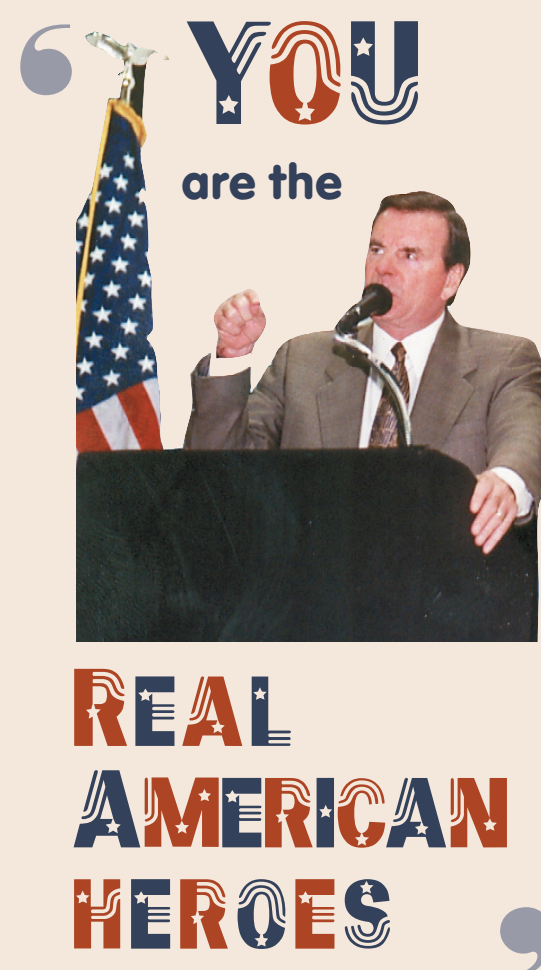
morning. "They slam the government and they try to destroy the bargaining rights of government employees."

"This is an era of unfounded anger toward government. It needs to be brought into check."

Keefe pointed out that the population of Washington State will double in 50 years. Yet the decisions made in the next 10 years will

be pivotal to the kind of lives our children and grandchildren will experience in the state. Their quality

See **HEROES**, Page 3



Members urged to oppose I-841

Members of labor organizations in Washington State, including Council 2, are being urged to oppose Initiative 841, which seeks to repeal the state's ergonomics rules.

The initiative, backed by the Building Industry Association of Washington, will be on the fall ballot.

The ergonomics rules, established in 2000 by the Department of Labor and Industries, require busi-



nesses to take preventive measures to reduce work-related injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, low back strain and tendonitis. About 50,000 such injuries occur in Washington annually and account for 46 percent of the costs of all state workers' compensation claims.

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Eyman’s legacy may be expanded gambling

Chris Dugovich

Look at the impacts of two significant initiatives from Tim Eyman: According to the state Office of Financial Management, the loss to Washington’s general fund as a result of Initiative 695 in the 2003 biennium is \$1.7 billion. Add to that the estimated \$30 million in property tax revenue lost following passage of Initiative 747 and the state’s \$2.4 billion budget deficit shrinks by more than 80 percent — to a “manageable” \$400 million.

These lost revenues have a real impact on our lives: highway gridlock, dangerous intersections, crowded classrooms, loss of ferry services, shuttered parks, health care cuts and layoffs of the state and local government employees we depend on for essential services.

In the wake of dreary economic forecasts and paranoia about future tax revolts (the same paranoia that led the Legislature to hastily adopt I-695 despite its nullification by the courts), where are state leaders to turn for needed revenue?

Expanded gambling — allowing hundreds of neighborhood card rooms and mini casinos full access to video poker and other machines currently limited to tribal-owned casinos. Supporters optimistically predict up to \$200 million annually for the state’s coffers, or about 10 percent of the current shortfall.

Clearly, every dime is needed to maintain critical services. But just as clear is the realization that gambling is not a cure-all for a budget in desperate need of stable, long-term funding solutions.

Still, who can blame lawmakers intent on saving the Basic Health Plan and funding education for considering a quick fix? Tim Eyman makes a living promoting “free lunch” initiatives that have put a couple hundred bucks a year back into the pockets of most Washington residents. Why shouldn’t these same residents give a little back down at the corner bar?

The problem is that taxes on “sins” such as gambling, alcohol and tobacco tend to be unstable and generate additional costs.

In Oregon, where limited gaming expansion has been allowed, revenues have steadily declined due to lack of disposable income and profits eroded due to the tremendous social costs associated with problem gambling.

Plus, sin taxes are very regressive. Does anyone think Bill Gates, who saved a bundle on his car tabs and even more on his property taxes following I-747, will soon be found at Freddie’s Club hunched over the video poker machines?

Think again. The burden of taxation in the Eyman era falls disproportionately on the guy who saved \$40 this year on his license tabs but will now spend double that every week at the mini-casino — making the club owner rich and sending a few bucks to fill the hole in Olympia.

It’s a terrible way to pay taxes and an unsustainable way to run a state.

But that’s what Eyman wanted, right?

Let’s think about it. We know two things about Eyman: He lives in a big house and he drives a Lexus. So why wouldn’t he want a huge tax cut for his house and his car and make the rest of us pay for it?

He pockets \$200,000 from contributors by running initiative campaigns out of his garage; he doesn’t need good highways or reliable ferry service to get to work like the rest of us. He uses roads, libraries, schools and emergency services, but he believes the rest of us should pay.

Regardless of what happens to the expansion of gambling in the future, it is clearly time to reject initiative gimmicks and look at genuine solutions that maintain critical services, create jobs and move Washington forward.



Letter from the president

RESOLUTIONS APPROVED AT CONVENTION

These resolutions were approved at Council 2’s June convention.

#1
That local unions are encouraged to provide the necessary foundation for a stronger, more vibrant union by participating in steward training programs using Council 2’s steward training program.

#2
That Council 2 opposes all efforts to subcontract or privatize public services currently provided by state and local governments.

#3
That Council 2 opposes all efforts by any party, business or political organization, to further weaken the protection that workers have under State or Federal law; and
That the Washington State Council of County and City Employees work with other Unions to reinstate the regulations on Ergonomics that have been lost and work to improve worker safety in the workplace.

#4
That AFSCME Council 2 shall monitor prison and jail privatization developments throughout the state and apprise all Council 2 affiliates of its findings on an ongoing basis; and
That AFSCME Council 2 and its Locals use such strategies as cost comparisons and feasibility studies, lobbying state and local government officials, publicity campaigns, appropriate legal action and the passage of legislation restricting contracting out in order to stop prison privatization and holding our elected officials, such as John Ladenburg, accountable.

#5
All delegates to this convention inform the membership about the Voter Education Project and encourage their participation; and
That Council 2 continue to push for legislative solutions to this problem.

#6
That all local affiliates of Council 2 inform their memberships of the Initiative’s impacts; and
That Council 2 and AFSCME continue to lead the campaign against I-807.

#7
That AFSCME and Council 2 continue to fight Paycheck Deception wherever it occurs.

#8
That Council 2 informs and educates its members regarding CDL suspensions and work to provide members under the collective bargaining agreement language that can either keep an employee at work in another assignment or at least allow an employee to come back to work after the CDL has been reinstated.

#9
That Council 2 encourages locals to support and seek contract language to address these issues:
1. Catastrophic/illness leave which allows the employee to have time off without risk to his/her job or health insurance above what is required under FMLA;
2. Employer financed long-term disability insurance; and
3. Council 2 supports such programs through training, education and bargaining.

#10
That all Council 2 locals of AFSCME without PEOPLE checkoff rights be urged by this convention to seek administrative agreement, contract clause or legislation where necessary to establish voluntary PEOPLE checkoff for their members; and
That where PEOPLE checkoff has been established that those juris-

dictions re-double their efforts to set goals and programs that will increase their participation; and
That all Council 2 locals that do not have PEOPLE voluntary check-off rights at the present time may implement regular fund-raising programs which may include: Council 2’s credit card, hand collections at council, local and chapter functions; the promotion of the PEOPLE Presidents Club/VIP; the sale of PEOPLE merchandise; and various fund-raising events such as raffles.

#11
That the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, Council 2 support efforts to restore balance to our state budget by continuing to search for more reasonable alternatives to the arbitrary 1 percent limit of I-747 and other irresponsible initiatives that erode governments ability to perform mandated services, and
That the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, Council 2 encourage our state and congressional delegations to provide funding for the mandates they have already passed in the Legislature and Congress and to attach funding to any future mandates that the Legislature or Congress pass.

#12
That the delegates to this convention support the purchase of uniforms bearing the “Union Made in the U.S.A.” label; and
That Council 2 and its affiliates support efforts to require union made uniforms for public employees at all levels; and
That Council 2 and affiliates whose members wear uniforms seek contract language requiring union made uniforms for covered employees.

#13
That Council 2 continue to ask for legislators’ help in finding solutions: The bottom line is that legislators need a true understanding and education on the difficulties being faced by retirees — and we need help in finding solutions and alternatives; and
That Council 2 actively pursue options that provide realistic alternatives for public employee retirees.

#14
That WSCCCE Council 2 support NAMI Washington in their efforts to advocate for the following amendments to any preferred drug list or restrictive formulary: 1) exempting all medications used to treat mental illness and 2) have a provision for “Dispense as Written” that will allow physicians the ability to prescribe the most appropriate medication.

#15
That we as library workers, public employees, union members and concerned citizens affirm our opposition to the USA PATRIOT Act as destructive of libraries; and
That information on this resolution be widely distributed to inspire similar action by our fellow union members and citizens.

#16
That our affiliates and members continue to search for, and contact unorganized public and private sector workers for organizing; and
That the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, along with its affiliates and members continue its commitment of staff resources and funding to continue organizing throughout Washington and Idaho.

#17
That locals of Council 2 start an aggressive campaign of bargaining to curb the excessive use of Temporary/Seasonal employees or to have them recognized as part of the bargaining unit if they work 1/6th of the time of a full-time employee.

#18
That Council 2 will support measures that provide more resources for the criminal justice system; and
That Council 2 will continue to advocate for the safety of the children and of our members; and
That Council 2 will continue to advocate for minimum staffing standards in juvenile detention facilities.

#19
That the 16,000 members of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, Council 2, AFSCME, go on record calling for full collective bargaining rights for all Public Employees in the state of Idaho and that Council 2 supports any and all efforts to secure these rights and gain the dignity and respect they so rightfully deserve.

#20
That WSCCCE and its affiliate locals work together to develop legislation to address the issue of workplace safety for social service workers.

#21
That Council 2 informs and educates its new members regarding Plan III and uses its influence to ensure a balanced and fair education program to be offered to newly hired employees.

#22
That Council 2 and its affiliates continue to support and participate in Workers’ Memorial Day activities each year; and
That Council 2 and its affiliates continue the fight for safe workplaces; and
That this convention observes a moment of silence to honor our brothers and sisters who have lost their lives since we last convened.

#23
That Council 2 works to have employers adopt federal and WISHA programs and to comply with OSHA’s *Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers* and *Recommendations for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments*, and urges that employers who are not in compliance be cited; and
That in order to prevent violent incidents, Council 2 urges employers to take responsibility and live up to their duty to provide a safe work environment, to install safety devices in the workplace, increase staffing levels, develop training programs, institute counseling or debriefing programs for victims; and
That Council 2 works with management to address worker-on-worker violence by developing labor-management programs that reduce workplace stress by referring employees to Employee Assistance Programs.

#24
That the members of Council 2 AFSCME go on record, opposing this illegal action by the management of the King County District Court, and that Council 2 and its affiliates will not endorse or support any person/Judge seeking reelection within the King County District Court system.

#25
That the assembled delegates of the 46th Council 2 Convention, go on record to thank and express their appreciation to the host locals of District 3 and their respective committee members.

DUGOVICH, from Page 1

Of special note was the recent passage of the landmark PERS pension reform bill in the State Legislature. This bill for the first time will give Council 2 members a real voice in their pensions.

“In the legal arena we continue to do our utmost to enforce better than 170 contracts in Local jurisdictions across the state,” Dugovich said. “In addition, when necessary we have not hesitated to take employers to court to enforce your rights.”

Dugovich said he couldn’t be more pleased by the recent settlement in Spokane County that nets our members an aggregate total of more than \$240,000 in the Standard Insurance demutualization lawsuit.

“The most important thing we do is the basics,” Dugovich said. “In other words, we represent members in contract negotiations and make sure during the term of all these agreements that employers live up to their part of the bargain. While the economic times have been extremely tough we continue in all but a small number of jurisdictions to hammer out cost-of-living increases.”

The credit for all these successes rests with the members, the state executive board and the staff of the union, Dugovich said.

“On behalf of the officers, Secretary-Treasurer Judy Johnson and our new Vice-President Ron Fredin, I’d like to thank the members for all the support we have received,” he added.

“From time to time we may make mistakes, but you have our commitment that we work extremely hard to continue our successes and strengthen this Union.”

ERGONOMICS, from Page 1

The BIAW reportedly spent \$350,000 to place the initiative on the ballot.

“The rules were a compromise that was worked out with the Governor’s office on protecting workers’ safety,” says Pat Thompson, Council 2’s Director of Legislation/Political Action. He urged Council 2 members to vote against the initiative.

The Voter Education Project said it uncovered evidence that I-841’s paid petitioners lied about the initiative and about the state’s ergonomics safety rule to convince people to sign.

State officials inspected about 5 percent of the 258,411 signatures submitted by the builders’ lobbying group and concluded that more than one in every five signatures were duplicates, people who didn’t exist or were not registered to vote in the state. They estimated 206,608 signatures were valid, just 8,874 more than are necessary to qualify.

NEGOTIATIONS, from Page 1

flect the changing trend.

Details:

Angelines Women’s Shelter

Job preservation was important when 35 crisis intervention specialists at the Angelines Women’s Shelter, run by the Seattle-King County-Snohomish County YWCA, voted to join Council 2.

They were deeply concerned about their futures at the non-profit organization’s day shelter for homeless women.

One of the reasons for their fears was that shortly after the workers began discussing organizing, their supervisor, who was well liked by the employees and had held the position for eight years, was told she was being laid off and was given 10 minutes’ notice to vacate her office.

The YWCA executives cited budgetary reasons for the dismissal, but few employees

November ballot to be Eyman-free

Council 2 leaders welcomed the news that no initiatives sponsored by watch salesman Tim Eyman will appear on the November ballot.

But they cautioned that more trouble might lie ahead next year.

Eyman’s initiatives have all sought to cut the State’s budget drastically, with ripple effects on City and County governments and potentially harming Council 2 members.

HEROES, from Page One

of life will be determined by county and state governments and the work that they do. But their work is being strangled, he said.

“I am one of the people who truly appreciate the work of government employees,” Keefe added.

McEntee — a featured speaker at the convention — said he tells politicians teachers may be fine people, but the first people to see students in the morning are the bus drivers and the school crossing guards.

“At school, they get some breakfast and who do they see? It is the food service worker. At the end of the day, if the kid cannot go home immediately, someone else helps them out.

“The schools in America would not work without the support personnel as well in all of those schools.”

But there is little money for those who run the libraries, the social workers, firefighters and people who are on the front lines.

“Every time we go to the negotiating table what are they talking about? Zeros,” McEntee said.

“I admire you. I think you are doing a great job. You are out there, building your union, organizing.

“Workers see the union as the only thin line between them and politicians who want to take advantage of them. You have that kind of union here.

“We have the people and the programs to oust Bush. You can do it.”

Also speaking on Saturday, US Senator Maria Cantwell, a Democrat who represents Washington State, said instead of tax cuts for wealthier Americans “we



Tom Keefe

should have been making an investment in our work force.”

Our future is about investing in people, Cantwell said. She pledged that she will continue fighting that battle.

On Sunday, AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer William Lucy returned to the theme set by the previous speakers.

“If we stop fighting for the people who deliver quality service at the state, county and city level, I hesitate to think what will happen to the quality of life in our country,” he said.

“If we were to turn over to the private sector such things as inspection of water and food and responsibility for our streets, we would be in desperate shape.”

Lucy said the Bush Administration is the most anti-union, anti-worker administration in the history of our nation.

The programs and policies are directed against what makes this nation so great, he added.

“The test of a great nation is not whether you are creating laws and policies to make the rich wealthier, but what is happening to our nation,” Lucy continued. “Workers in states, counties and cities, through the basic services they provide impact health, safety, education, transportation, water, sewer and the environment and are important issues as they relate to the quality of society.”

Lucy added, “We have to bring into office people who have an appreciation of the work we do and undertake a spirited defense of the public sector.

“We want people who value the work you do. You are responsible and we cannot do it alone.

“We need you more than ever.

“Now.”



William Lucy

“It’s refreshing to see the voters wake up to Eyman’s profit-making scams,” says Pat Thompson, Council 2 Director of Legislation/Political Action. “But Eyman has threatened to return next year with extreme tax-cutting measures.

“We need to stay ever-vigilant for Eyman and others who seek to gut local government funding.”

Thompson appointed to pension board position

Pat Thompson, Council 2’s Director of Legislation/Political Action, has been appointed by Gov. Gary Locke to serve on the new Select Committee on Pension Policy.

The committee was established in terms of the pension reform legislation approved by the State Legislature earlier this year, for which Council 2 lobbied for years. Thompson was a leader in efforts to have the legislation adopted.

He will represent active PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) members on the board.

The bill’s prime sponsor, State Rep. Charles Fromhold, recommended that Thompson be appointed to the pensions board.

“It is an honor to have been chosen by Governor Locke,” Thompson says. “I am excited by this opportunity to serve our members’ interests.

“This committee certainly has its work cut out for it in terms of creating a better retirement system for our members, but I’m confident it will succeed.”



Pat Thompson, left, at signing of pensions bill by Gov. Locke, front.

YWCA and what they are really all about,” Keenan adds.

Council 2 hired Mary Robinson, a former YWCA employee who was laid off in January, to assist in the organizing of this group. She should be given full credit for the success of the organizing committee, Keenan says. “She is now working to organize the rest of the YWCA’s 200 employees.”

City of Lynnwood

On May 13 clerical, technical and professional employees of the **City of Lynnwood** voted to join the union, adding 100 people to the Council 2 ranks.

“Above all else, their major issues were concern about having input in their working conditions and about their future positions under the City of Lynnwood budget,” says Bill Keenan, Council 2’s Director of Organizing.

“Without being organized, they felt they were at the whim of the city council and the administration for changes that could take place in wages and conditions of employment.”

Keenan commended the organizing committee for working extremely hard and doing “an incredible job.”

Procedural foot-dragging on the part of the City meant that the election process took an extraordinary amount of time.

Council 2 filed a petition for the election in January, but it was not held until May.

The new members of Council 2 are now working with Joe Devlaeminck, Council 2’s new staff representative who has been specially assigned to negotiate first-time contracts. They are putting together a constitution for the election of their officers and contract bargaining has begun.

The organizing committee members are: Linda Alvar, Sue Bolles, John Clay, Judy Franck, Diane Hodgson, Michelle Hope, Tom Leidholdt, Cristy McKeown, John Olsen, Jane Purtee, Debi Stevens, Calvin Thielman, Peter VanGiesen, Sandra Wallenfelsz, Jane Watkins and Debbie Hodgson.

Skagit County

The 24-strong **Skagit County Prosecuting Attorneys’ Support Staff**, based in Mount Vernon, voted to join Council 2 on May 28.

Council 2 filed the petition to hold the election on May 1, 2002. The County challenged their right to be unionized.

The challenge was heard by the Public Employees Relations Commission, which ruled that all the employees had the right to belong to a union.

The new members of Council 2 are now working to put together a contract.

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Brannam retires, Fredin elected Vice-President

After serving for 18 years, Roy Brannam has retired as Vice President of Council 2. Ron Fredin was elected at the Council 2 convention in June in his place.

Brannam, who was a member of Local 307-CO, also has retired from his position in the Maintenance and Operations Division of the Clark County Department of Public Works.

He became Vice President in 1985 when he was appointed in to fill a vacancy. Two years later he was elected to the position. He served continuously until this year.

In announcing his retirement at the convention, Brannam said he will still spend some of his time working for Council 2 on a limited basis.

“His countless hours of effort and common sense helped us make it through many battles,” says Dugovich. “Over the years, we not only worked well together,

but we became good friends.

“I want to thank him for all the valuable advice and counsel he gave me.”

Brannam, who was the chair of the Council 2 Legislative Committee, believes it is important for union members to be politically active.

Indeed, he believes he has done the most good for workers on the political scene.

Brannam also retired after 15 years as President of the Central Labor Council of Clark, Skamania & West Kittitat Counties. He believes that Public Employees should work closely with the other Unions of the AFL-CIO to attain the strongest

organization possible.

He says, too, that he likes to think that he helped improve people’s working conditions and monetary well being through the negotiations he has had with Clark County.



Retiring Vice-President Roy Brannam, left, with new Vice-President Ron Fredin, center, and Council 2 President Chris Dugovich.

Fredin is ardent union supporter

Ron Fredin, Council 2’s new Vice President, is a lead maintenance worker in the Road Maintenance Department for the City of Vancouver.

He started working for the city in 1981 and a year later was chosen to serve on the executive board of Local 307-VC. He began serving as a Council 2 Executive Board member in June 1995.

Fredin, who began his career as a senior maintenance worker, has been a lead worker for nine years. He says he enjoys his job, adding, “I do not want to do anything else.” He describes himself as a “straight shooter, outgoing and friendly.”

An ardent union supporter, Fredin says he wants to fight for all workers and all unions everywhere.



Outgoing Vice-President Roy Brannam swears in board members at close of June convention.

COUNCIL 2 EXECUTIVE BOARD		
OFFICERS Chris Dugovich , President/Executive Director Ron Fredin , Vice-President Judy Johnson , Secretary/Treasurer		
DISTRICT ONE Roger Moller , Local 109 (Snohomish County) Lee Lehman , Local 1849 (San Juan County) Jay Crockett , Local 1811-CA (Snohomish County) Darrell Stuart , Local 113 (City of Everett)	DISTRICT TWO Doug Peterson , Local 21 (City of Seattle) Diane Barden Prenguber , Local 2084-SC (King County Superior Court), Kathleen Senecaut , Local 2617 (City of Kent)	DISTRICT THREE Patti Cox , Local 3787 (Pierce County Library) Conni Uhinck , Local 1308 (Kitsap County) John Ohlson , Local 120 (City of Tacoma)
DISTRICT FOUR Kevin James , Local 275 (Grays Harbor County) Sandy Griffin , Local 618 (Thurston County)	DISTRICT FIVE Tracy Arney , Local 2699 (Columbia River Mental Health) Bill McEntire , Local 307-CO (Clark County)	DISTRICT SIX Carol Travis , Local 874-HC (Prosser Memorial Hospital/Benton County) Yvette Lewis , Local 1122 (City of Yakima)
DISTRICT SEVEN Chris Wood , Local 1476-AC (Asotin County) Pam Fitzgerald , Local 1191-W (City of Walla Walla)	DISTRICT EIGHT Ken Thomas , Local 492 (Spokane County) Dave Hanshaw , Local 270 (City of Spokane) Amie Swenson , Local 1553 (Spokane County)	DISTRICT NINE Paula Laws , Local 433 (City of Coeur d'Alene)

Nancy Baker receives Mary Hersey award

Nancy Baker, member at large of the executive board of Local 87 in Yakima, has received the Mary Hersey Award for outstanding service to the union.

The award was presented to her at a breakfast hosted by the Women’s Action Committee during Council 2’s biennial convention in June.

At the breakfast, Flora Walker, AFSCME Western Regional Director, said women are “tried and true five-star generals by nature.”

“We are needed now more than ever before,” she said. “We are the cornerstone of everything that is going on in this country.”

“Get ready for the biggest get-out-the-vote effort that this union has ever led.”

Baker was cited for exemplifying the importance of being a union member and for always being available for the tasks that needed to be undertaken.

In response, Baker said Mary Hersey, after whom the award is named, said if you want the union to work, you have to work.

“It is only as strong as the effort you put into it,” she added.

Mary Hersey became President of the guild at the Yakima Herald Republic newspaper. After being fired for union activism, she successfully sued her employer. She was reinstated but quit her job the same day. Hired by Council 2 as a staff member in 1972, she became the Women’s Committee Advisor in 1980. She retired in 1992 and was presented with the first “Mary Hersey Award” shortly before she died in 1997.

Among the criteria taken into account in presenting the award are:

- ✓ Advancement in leadership roles and/or activism in labor
- ✓ Outstanding service within the labor community
- ✓ Service in a leadership role beneficial to labor
- ✓ Service in a leadership role in coping with critical issues
- ✓ Participation in educational projects through a local union or another labor organization.



Nancy Baker, right, with Lois Clement



Flora Walker



State Senator Aaron Rearden, center, at convention with Snohomish County employees. Rearden is the union’s endorsed candidate for Snohomish County Executive.



Winners of the convention golf tournament are, from left, Morris "Moose" Delisle, Pete Michael, Sam Filetti and Blane O'Brien.