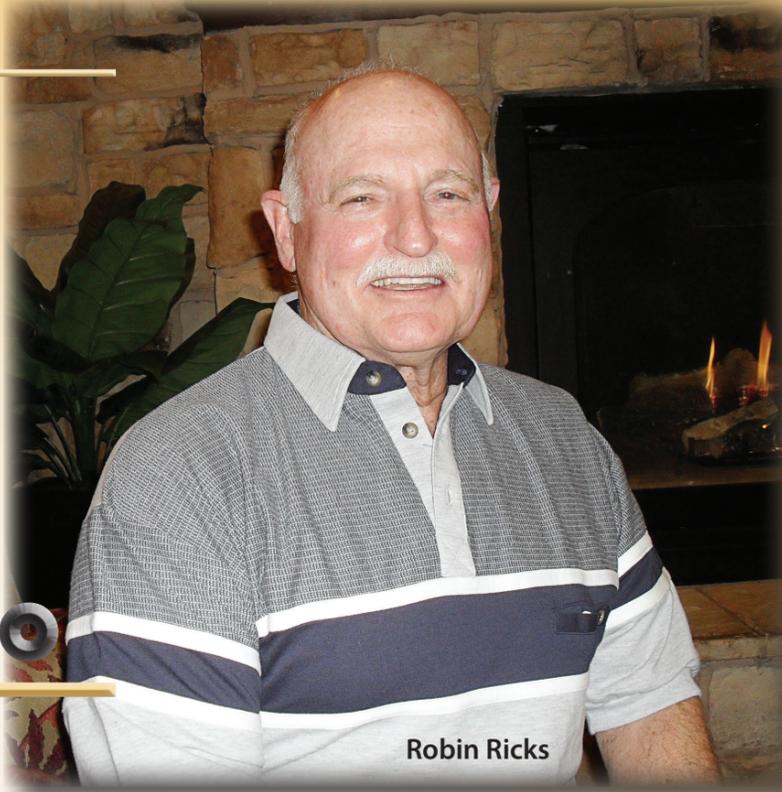


County and City Employee

WASHINGTON STATE COUNCIL OF COUNTY AND CITY EMPLOYEES — AFSCME AFL-CIO

Shining the LIGHT in Idaho



Robin Ricks

You could say that more than a quarter century ago Robin Ricks shone a beacon of light in the Idaho labor darkness, a light that continues to shine brightly today.

Ricks was instrumental in launching the first labor union for the City of Coeur d'Alene in 1981. That achievement, even today, is unmatched in Idaho. The City of Coeur d'Alene remains the only unionized city in the state that has a collective bargaining ordinance.

Indeed, Local 433, the Lake City Employees Association, also has the distinction of being the only local union in Council 2 that is located outside Washington State.

It all began when Ricks joined the water department in Coeur

This is another in a series of articles highlighting Council 2 members and the services they perform.

d'Alene in 1980.

"We saw an opportunity to help our fellow working men and women and we decided to obtain union representation to assist us," Ricks recalls. "Bill Keenan (who is today organizing director for Council 2), Bill Head, and other leading members came together and we formulated what we wanted to do in Coeur d'Alene."

In 1981, they came up with a plan aimed at putting a collective bargaining ordinance in place.

The highly unusual plan was developed by a coalition of four



groups: The City employees, the Coeur d'Alene Fire Fighters Union, the Kootenai Environmental Alliance and a Coeur d'Alene senior citizens group.

It was an all-or-nothing plan,

See RICKS, Page 3

These three can change Spokane

Council 2 is working hard to change the majority on the Spokane City Council in the November 5 elections.

The reason:

The present majority of council members are anti-labor.

"They have taken positions against civil service, pension benefits and other items that affect our members' wages and benefits," explains Council 2 Deputy Director Pat Thompson.

Of the five members of the City Council, three positions are up for election this year.

The three candidates who are endorsed by Council 2 for the three positions are: Candace Mumm, Jon Snyder and Amber Waldref.

"There is a chance in this election to change the majority to people who reflect and support the values of working families," Thompson says.

"The employees should know that these candidates sought out our support in these races and we have been involved in all three races since their inception," says Local 270 President Joe Cavanaugh. "They all show respect for all public employees."



Candace Mumm



Jon Snyder



Amber Waldref

Council 2 endorses Murray for Seattle mayor

Council 2 believes that Ed Murray is the best candidate for the next mayor of Seattle in the November 5 elections.

"Our endorsement is based on his leadership ability and his ability to work with diverse coalitions to get things done," says Council 2 President and Executive Director Chris Dugovich. "He has a track record of bringing diverse groups together."

Labor leaders add that Murray has a lengthy track record of creating coalitions and supporting legislation that has helped union workers.



Ed Murray

• **IN MILL CREEK**, Council 2 has endorsed four candidates for the city council.

They are:

Lynn Sordel, Donna Michelson, Kathy Nielsen and Bart (Tim) Masterson.

"Our Local has seen how having a voice in making sure the best candidate is elected to help run our City impacts us," says Local 1811-M President Michele Miller.

"We decided to get involved because maintaining a good contract and workplace takes more than just what occurs at the bargaining table."

Insurance trust offers great benefits

CHRIS DUGOVICH



Council 2 offers a cost-effective service to its members, but it seems to be 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, 10 dental plans, two vision plans, two long-term disability plans and five levels of term life insurance.

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 benefit plans, our trust covers all the cost of preventive care (exams, cleaning, and so on).

Dental

Our 10 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 per cent preventive care, this plan pays 80 per cent for basic services, 50 per cent for major services and 50 per cent of orthodontia up to \$2,000. These benefits are paid no matter the actual cost, up to a \$2,000 calendar-year maximum.

Vision

Vision insurance is provided through the Northwest Benefit Network. It covers exams, glasses and an amount toward contacts. The trust offers two plans at \$15.90 and \$18.75 a month. The benefits themselves are provided through an extensive list of optometrists and opticians throughout the state.

Disability

Long-term disability insurance is a 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 covers 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 competitively priced at \$32 a member a month (90-day) and \$25 a member a 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 a 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.

Letter from the President

PERC dismisses unfair labor practice lodged against Council 2

The Public Employment Relations Commission has dismissed an unfair labor practice charge filed by Clallam County against Council 2.

The county argued that a mutual mistake had occurred in reopening bargaining on the terms of an agreement.

But the commission rejected that argument, finding in favor of Council 2 and dismissing the unfair labor charge.

Evidence before the commission was that in the fall of 2012, due to a budget crisis, the unions and Clallam County agreed to open the collective bargaining agreement and enter into concession bargaining to avoid layoffs.

The agreement called for the previously bargained increase in the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for 2012 to be retained, but the increase would be paid back to the employer through increased medical premium payments. The re-



sult would be no increase in income for the employees, a concession to avoid layoffs.

During the bargaining process, Clallam County representatives suggested the 2012 medical premium payback should be extended into 2013.

The union rejected that proposal, arguing that the 2012 COLA increase should apply in both years, but the payback should apply only to 2012.

After arguing the position back and forth in e-mail messages, the county eventually accepted the union's position in the agreed-upon memorandum of agreement documents.

But later Clallam County

once more picked up the contention that the payback stipulation applied to 2013 as well as 2012, arguing that the person who had made the agreement that it applied only to 2012 did not have the authority to act on behalf of the county.

The commission dismissed the county's argument.

"Both parties understood the MOAs were for a 2012 COLA payback in 2012 only," the commission found. "The written instruments accurately reflected the parties' intent and were ratified by both the unions and the employer."

In dismissing the unfair labor practice charge, the commission found that the person making the agreement had the authority to do so and that the unions did not breach their good faith bargaining obligation.

Senior Counsel Audrey Eide appeared for Council 2.

Scholarship thank-you letters

I am extremely grateful to receive a \$2,000 scholarship award from Council 2. I pledge to utilize these funds to fulfill my goal of getting a college degree. I have enlisted in the Washington Air National Guard and will attend Eastern Washington University to study health sciences. Once again, thank you for your generous award.

— Mitchell Goldman

I cannot even begin to express my gratitude for your support in my education. I appreciate this opportunity that you have provided me with. Thank you so much!

— Kimberly Stringfellow

Thank you, Council 2, for the generous scholarship! I am very grateful to be able to put the money towards my education at Stanford next year!

— Allison Perry

Thank you so much for selecting me to receive your scholarship. It is an honor to have been chosen and the money will be a huge help in paying for my schooling at the University of Washington.

— Viktoria Ramm

Thank you so much for your generous scholarship! The immense amount of help from your group has ensured that I will have an opportunity to attend college in the fall. Thanks again for all of your support.

— Ashley Stone

FULL LIST OF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS — PAGE 4

COUNCIL 2 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Ron Fredin, Vice-President **Kathleen Etheredge**, Secretary/Treasurer

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Battle over repeal of gain-sharing reaches its final stages

BY Council 2 Deputy Director
J. PAT THOMPSON

The final step in the years-long battle over the repeal of gain-sharing will begin on October 24 when the Supreme Court hears oral arguments.

To recap, gain-sharing was a provision (gimmick) in Plan 3 that called for all returns “gains” over 10 percent in a four-year period to be split between Plan 3 members and the employer.

Example: If the State Investment Board average rate of return for a 4-year period was 12 percent, Plan 3 employees would receive a 1 percent one-time payment and so would their employer.

Once the state hired a real actuary, it was determined that not only is this a bad idea, it will also cost the entire system billions of dollars because it would have to be pre-funded. In other words, the state would have to siphon money off the top even in bad times to pay out money in good times.

Your union lobbied hard to create a more stable benefit and retirement system that didn’t include gain-sharing but did include dramatically lowering the penalty for retiring with 30 years of service.

Although we were very pleased with the change that benefited our members, Council 28 (State Employees) and the Washington Education Association (Teachers) sued the State to reinstate gain-sharing.

The lower Superior Court has ruled that:

1. The State must restore gain-sharing.
2. The State can repeal the ERF improvements.

Both lower court decisions were appealed. So, now the Supreme Court will (may) have the final say.

The ERFs have been in place since 2008 so anyone who has retired or will retire before the court’s decision will not be affected.

It’s anyone’s guess what the court may rule or how long it will take them to make a decision. This puts people who plan on retiring with 30 years in the next several months in a dilemma — wait and risk a bad decision or get out now while the getting’s good. The Department of Retirement Systems can help calculate what’s at risk but only individuals can decide what’s best for them.

THE BACKGROUND

Since the beginning of the PERS, TRS and SERS 3 plans, our union’s position has been consistent and clear. We opposed the 3 plans as an erosion of good pension policy and the abandonment of the concept of a “defined benefit program” for a “defined contribution program” that essentially leaves the worker at the whims of the investment market.

We successfully maintained an option of joining either Plan 2 or 3 for new PERS hires. We also opposed the concept of gain-sharing — wherein the legislature could choose to give some of the benefits of a good invest-

ment year back to the plan participants — as not being a real guaranteed benefit.

When the high cost of gain-sharing became apparent, the legislature attempted to walk away from it, but we felt that the state should maintain gain-sharing and live with the mess they created regardless of the cost.

We also worked toward a package of public employment pension benefit enhancements that could be put in place of gain-sharing at a lesser cost, but still to our members’ benefit.

RICKS, from Page 1

that called on the voters to either support the endorsed three council member candidates and the endorsed mayoral candidate as a group or vote for their opponents. By voting in the three candidates and the mayor they would ensure a majority on the council, which consisted of six members and the mayor.

The plan also called on the four elected officials to sign a pledge that they would take four actions once they were elected:

- Reinstate the fire fighters, who had been fired for going on strike. (The city had defied a court order that they should be reinstated.)
- Pass a shoreline protection ordinance prohibiting the construction of high-rise buildings along the shores of Lake Coeur d’Alene.
- Develop a new senior center, which the council had refused to do for years.
- Grant city employees collective bargaining rights through a city ordinance.

The group called themselves the CCC, for Concerned Citizens Committee.

During the campaign, yard signs bore four names. Vote for them all, the coalition urged, or none at all.

The result was the largest voter turnout in the history of Coeur d’Alene at that time. The package deal formula proved to be a great success.

“After winning the election, the mayor, assisted by the three labor-friendly council members,

kept their part of the agreement and helped us gain a collective bargaining ordinance for the City,” Ricks recalls.

“The ordinance provided us with a backdrop of rules and regulations by which we all could live and work. It was an excellent contract which we negotiated with management.

“But our goal, which we achieved, was the unionization, not just of a few departments, but of all the city’s employees. The reason was that we felt we would have more power if all the

‘We have been the lions at the gate’

employees could negotiate for a fair living wage, benefits, and working conditions.”

Today the 100 people who work for the City, whether in the sewer, water, library, parks or street departments, are all represented by Local 433.

In June 1996, the Lake City Employees Association joined AFSCME and Council 2.

But the battle was not over.

In November 1997, the City elected a new mayor, Steve Judy, who, with the council, repealed the collective bargaining ordinance.

“The City employees and Council 2, represented by Deputy Director Pat Thompson, decided to run an initiative campaign and put the collective bargaining ordinance to a vote of the citizens of Coeur d’Alene,” Ricks says.

“They received enough signatures to get it on the ballot in 1998. In a landslide election, in February 1999, the collective bargaining ordinance was not only reinstated, but the new version was vastly improved.”

Over the years, Ricks has continued to work for the Water Department and he now has 33 years of service behind him.

He has been president of the local five times, vice-president five times and an executive board member when he was not occupying one of those positions. He is also on the Council 2 executive board.

Throughout that time the contracts have stood the test of time, Ricks adds. “We have been the lions at the gate.

“Needs change, mayors and councils come and go, employees retire, but the contract stands and collective bargaining stands,” he says. “They are there as guides. They hold us all to a higher standard.”

Ricks adds that others who should be recognized for Local 433’s success are Past President Paula Laws, Keenan, and Council 2 President and Executive Director Chris Dugovich.”

COUNTY AND CITY EMPLOYEE

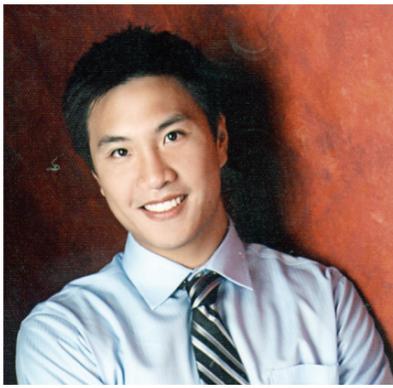
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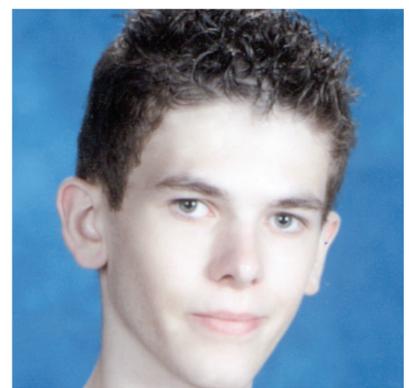
Colin Ip



Lindsey Wilson



Paige Desmonie



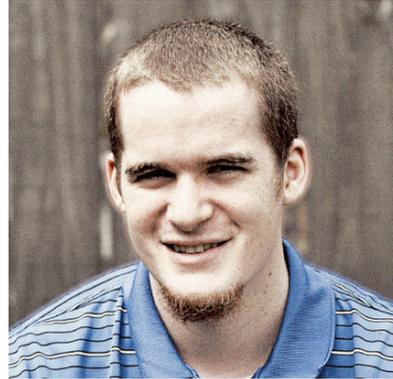
Jonathen Scimone



Alexandra Bergeson



Allison Perry



Jonathan Scattaregia



Ashley Stone



Katie Stringfellow



Luke Bridges



Lauren Desmonie



Kimberly Stringfellow



Kristen Nicole Carson

2013 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

(Thank-you letters — Page 2)

Dependant Awards

In Honor of Lois Clement, Member of City of Bellingham, Local 114, Retired; In Honor of Randy Osborn, Member of City of Bellingham, Local 114, Retired

4 Year Scholarship Award (\$5,000 per year for 4 years)

In Memory of Harvey Berwick, past member of City of Bellingham, Local 114, deceased:

Recipient's Name	Member Name	Member's Local
Paige Desmonie	Alex Desmonie	618 LOTT Alliance

\$2,000 Award

Recipient's Name	Member Name	Member's Local
Melodie Eaton	Dan Eaton	270 City of Spokane
Mitchell Goldman	Jody Goldman	270 City of Spokane
Viktoria Ramm	Wade Ramm	270 City of Spokane
Kristen Carson	Kimberly Carson	275 Grays Harbor County
Lauren Desmonie	Alex Desmonie	618 LOTT Alliance
Ashley Stone	Robin Stone	874-HC Benton County

\$5,000 Award

Recipient's Name	Member Name	Member's Local
Lily Feldman	Steven Feldman	21-HD Seattle/King Co. Health Dept.
Chelsa Ayers	Larry Ayers	270 City of Spokane
Luke Bridges	Leslie Bridges	270-C City of Cheney
Robert Miller III	Suzanne Hanby	618 Thurston County
Katie Stringfellow	W. Scott Stringfellow	618 Thurston County
Kimberly Stringfellow	W. Scott Stringfellow	618 Thurston County

\$2,150 Golf Award

Recipient's Name	Member Name	Member's Local
Allison Perry	Richard Perry	113 City of Everett
Jonathen Scimone	Eric Ortiz	120 City of Tacoma
Dylan Emswiler	Sonya O'Brien	270 City of Spokane
Alex Bergeson	Judd Bergeson	275 City of Hoquiam
Zachary Swanger	Steven Swanger	1135 Spokane Co. Road Dept.
Jorden Hartley	Tonya Hartley	1341 Lewis County Road Dept.
Brittany Carlson	Robin Blair	1811-CA Snohomish County
Anna Dombal	Carolee Dombal	1811-CA Snohomish County
Jonathan Scattaregia	Pat Scattaregia	1811-CA Snohomish County
Colin Ip	Judy Ip	3787 Pierce County Library

Continuing Education Award

In Honor of Greg Ahles, Member of City of Everett, Local 113, Retired; In Honor of Susan Veltfort, Member of King County Library System, Local 1857:

Recipient's Name	Recipient's Local
Philip Messick	270 City of Spokane
Tracy Ferrell	1135-CH Stevens County Courthouse
Karen Kinder-Cara	1811 Snohomish Health District
Margaret Sheehan	1811-CA Snohomish County Auditors
Lindsey Wilson	1811-CA Snohomish County Auditors



Robert Miller III



Lily Feldman



Mitchell Goldman



Viktoria Ramm



Zachary Swanger