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# COUNTY & CITY

# EMPLOYEE

AFSCME AFL-CIO

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Summer 2008

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### AFSCME convention to be held in San Francisco

The 38th AFSCME International Convention will take place in San Francisco from July 28 to August 1, 2008.

Most convention activities will take place at Moscone West, 4th and Howard Streets.

A number of delegates from Council 2 will attend.

## INSIDE

### Our members give of their best for others

If there is a theme to many of the reports in this issue of *County & City Employee*, it is the impressive way in which our members are reaching out into their communities around the state.

In Whatcom County, members helped replenish a food bank (page 4). In Skagit County they helped build a house for Habitat for Humanity (page 1). In Coeur d'Alene they raised funds for a local children's center (page 3).

Then there is the story (page 1) of Thurston County's Patty Smith who won a national award as Jailer of the Year. That extraordinary honor speaks of not just her dedication to her work, but also the way in which she reaches out to help others.

We are proud of these members of our union for the outstanding citizens they are.

They are not alone. We have told the stories of others in past issues of our newspaper.

We know there will be many more to tell in the future.

## State races to bring action

This year already has seen more than the usual share of political campaign activity at the national level. Soon that feverish activity will spread to Washington State where a number of races are likely to be hotly contested.



Among the major races will be the election for the position of governor for the next four years. Incumbent Gov. Chris Gregoire is facing the likelihood of a spirited challenge from Republican

See RACES, Page 4



Members of Local 176-SW join other volunteers in building a house for Habitat for Humanity. In the orange jacket is member Steve Huizinga.

## BUILDING BRIDGES

### Union members reach out into the community

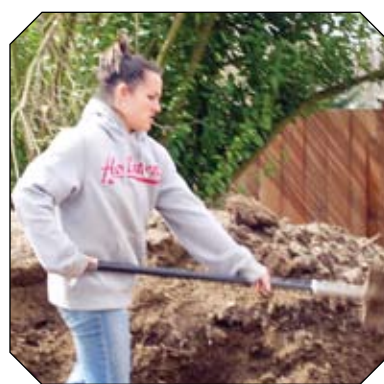
It was a Saturday members of Local 176-SW will remember for a long time to come.

Rather than working in the yard, shopping, taking in a ball game or simply hanging out, they spent the day framing and building walls for a house.

The house was a project for the Skagit chapter of Habitat for Humanity, a worldwide non-profit Christian organization that builds affordable housing with the help of volunteers from all faiths and backgrounds.

"This is showing a sense of pride in our community," says Rob Macready, president of Local 176-SW and wastewater collection specialist at the City of Sedro-Woolley.

He says he was surprised at the strong support the project received



Carrie Crisp of Local 176-SW works on the project.

when it was suggested at a union meeting by Debbie Allen, plant foreman at the Sedro-Woolley wastewater treatment plant.

"She had heard about it at her church and thought we would be interested in volunteering and so giving back to the community," Macready says. "Members did not do it for recognition. They have pride in their community.

"That's what the whole thing was about."



More pictures:  
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Whatcom County local helps replenish food bank – Page 4  
Coeur d'Alene local raises funds for children's center – Page 3

## Council 2 member wins national award

The prisoner was brought into the Thurston County Jail on Christmas Day 15 years ago. Only 18, she was heavily under the influence of drugs.

One of the first people to see her was Deputy Sgt. Patty Smith, a medical liaison supervisor at the jail and member of Local 618-CD.



Patty Smith

"She was really bad on drugs," Smith recalls. "I found out she had started drinking and doing heroin when she was 14. She had turned to stealing to get the money to support her habit. She had no diploma, nothing to show for herself."

Smith monitored her progress as the woman was sent to rehabilitation. "I got to know her grandmother and her mom and dad," Smith says.

"It took two or three months to get her clean and sober. She later earned her GED and today she is happy, employed and doing well."

Every year Smith receives a Christmas card from the woman as a reminder of how she helped her turn her life around.

Smith can recall many such stories over the 37 years she has worked at the jail, 23 of them as medical liaison officer. They are stories of inmates who kicked addictions while in custody and of lives that have been changed.

No wonder then that the American Jail Association recently honored her as Jail Supervisor of the Year at a national award ceremony in Sacramento.

"It is great to see one of our union

See SMITH, Page 3

# Decision on tankers is wrong in every respect

**CHRIS DUGOVICH**



## Letter from the President

Recently, you may have seen the articles in the newspapers that Boeing had lost the bid to build the new refueling tankers for the Air Force to Northrop Grumman/EADS (NG/EADS).

On May 10, Sen. Maria Cantwell met with unions from across our state to discuss why that decision was wrong

for national defense, wrong for Boeing workers, wrong for our economy, wrong for taxpayers and wrong for the environment. Present were representatives from unions such as the Machinists and the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace that are directly impacted by the decision as well as unions not directly affected but who understand that the economic impact of Boeing extends into our local communities.

The process of having bids submitted before tax dollars are spent is meant to ensure that tax dollars are used wisely and that contracts are not awarded based on "who you know" but based on superior product, competitive cost and what is best for our country. Boeing, a company not known to challenge bids, has filed an appeal with the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The GAO is expected to make a decision early next month.

We all know that "contracting out" is often seen as a way to cut costs, but in the end can cost far more than doing the job with the employees you already have. In a real sense we have just made the decision to contract out a key part of our national defense. What happens when NG/EADS decides that they don't support our military mission and they don't want to supply us with spare parts?

The risk that we will have key military assets dependent on a non-U.S. company leaves us vulnerable. This concern has a precedent. In 2003 when we went to war a Swiss company withheld parts of our JDAM weapons system. We can't risk that again.

The awarding of the contract to a non-American company misses a chance to get a double impact from the tax money. Spending it on an American company helps stimulate our economy, employs people working here and spending money here as well as fulfilling the goal of getting a new product for the Air Force. NG/EADS has claimed that they will create jobs in the U.S. and yet the contract they signed doesn't contain any guarantees that will happen. Airbus, a subsidiary of EADS, has had a history of questionable claims of job creation. Senator Cantwell, along with three other senators, on May 9 sent a letter to the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Labor, calling on them to verify the job creation claims of NG/EADS.

Over the lifecycle the cost of the NG/EADS aircraft will be roughly double the initial cost, in large part because the NG/EADS planes use 30 percent more fuel than the Boeing planes. Shouldn't the Air Force be considering the entire cost to taxpayers when they decide which is the best deal?

Finally, we have the environmental impact of this bad decision. The Air Force consumes half of the fuel used by our federal government; the Boeing planes presented in the bid use 30 percent less fuel than the Northrop/EAD planes.

Certainly last, but not least, our local government jurisdictions across Western Washington and the whole of our state's economy has benefited greatly from Boeing successes. The tax dollars are irreplaceable. This original program came on the heels of 9/11 not only to provide a needed assist for our nation's defense but also to help keep a wounded U.S. industry afloat. The plane that NG/EADS will be producing is an Airbus, and the last time I checked, that was a European company.

# New retirement investment option will assist investors in troubled times

Troubled economic times present a challenge to Council 2 members whose retirement funds are invested in defined contribution (DC) plans.

The questions abound: How much should I invest in each available mutual fund? Where is the best place to put my retirement money at this time of financial turmoil? Should I move all my money out of stocks because they are going down and might continue to fall further? Should I put all my money in the safest investments I can find?

For the individual investor in DC funds, deciding how to invest retirement funds can be tough, agrees Joe Dear, executive director of the Washington State Investment Board who makes many of the investment decisions for our pension funds.

But, he says, help will soon be on the way.

A new series of options called target-date funds will become available for PERS 3 defined-contribution investors in the near future.

These funds are usually identified by the year closest to that in which the person expects to retire, such as the 2030 fund or the 2040 fund.

They are designed to change the investment mix over time as an investor nears retirement age.

As a result, they provide the appropriate risk level for every age.

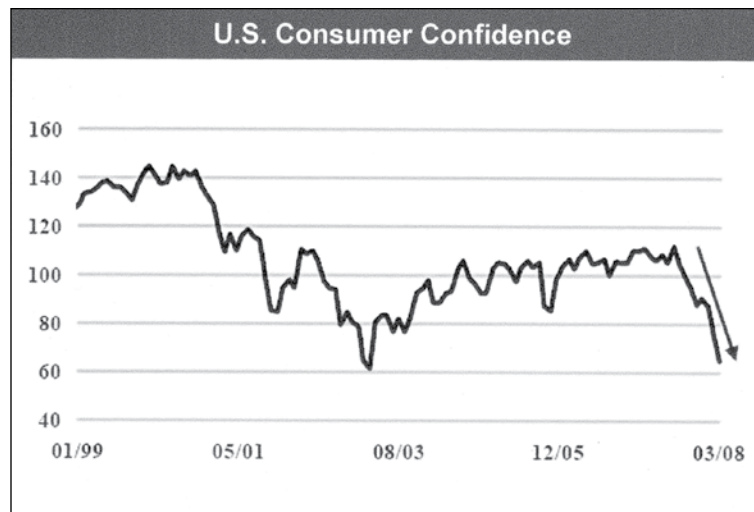
"These are portfolios managed for the long term and devised to be able to withstand the ups and downs of investing in risk markets," Dear explains.

"By providing one-stop shopping, they are easier for participants to understand. And they place the critical asset-allocation and rebalancing decisions in the hands of investment professionals."

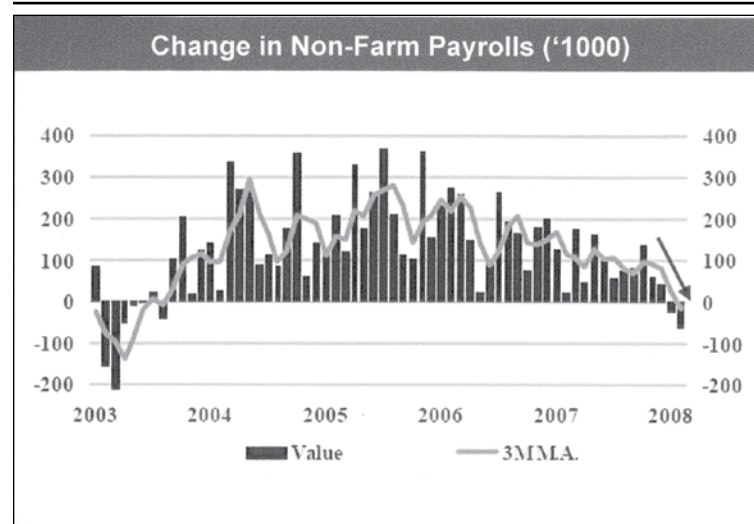
The funds will eliminate the need for investors to find time to manage their choices, to understand all available investment options, to make the best

See DEAR, Page 3

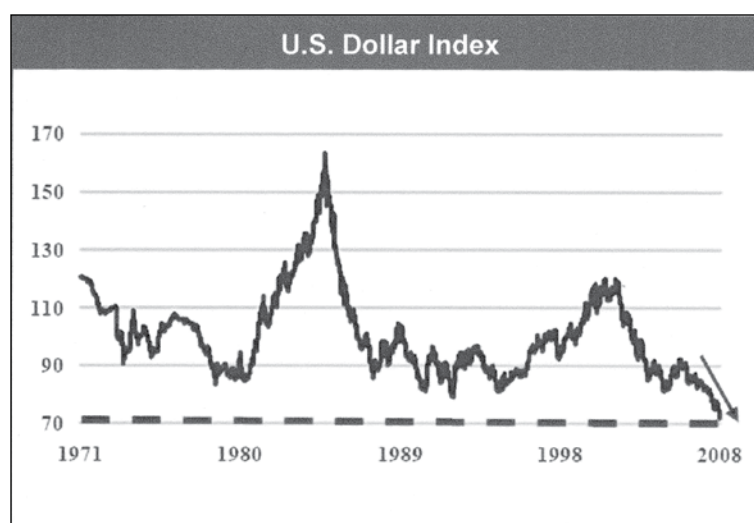
### CONSUMER CONFIDENCE WEAKENS



### LABOR MARKET SOFTENS



### FLIGHT FROM DOLLAR INTENSIFIES



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# Procedural changes will complicate state elections

Although both parties are trying to field a strong roster of candidates for the November general election, there are likely to be few surprises and the Democrats are expected to retain the majority hold on the Legislature.

But this year's election is less predictable as it will be marked by two significant differences from those of earlier years.

• Pierce County has adopted an instant runoff voting system.

The new system — which was approved by voters earlier this year — eliminates a primary.

Instead, it substitutes a voting procedure that asks the voter to rank the candidates in order of preference. For

example, if there are four candidates, the voter will be asked to rank them as first, second, third and fourth.

The new system also means that more than one of the candidates could be from the same party. The four-part lineup, for example, could consist of three Democrats and one Republican or two from each party.

The system means that a candidate ranked third by most voters could potentially win the election. Such an outcome

would result if the percentage of third-place rankings exceeds those of the first-place and second-place rankings.

“As this is the first time the system will be used, mass confusion could result,” says Council 2 Deputy Director Pat Thompson. “I am not even sure if the system itself is in place to handle all the complexities.”

“After all, we have had enough problems recently with ballots.”

• The other innovation that will com-

plicate the legislative races is the state's adoption of the “top-two” system.

In terms of this system, all the candidates, regardless of party, will appear on the August primary ballot. The voters will choose the candidate they prefer, regardless of party affiliation.

“This means that in a number of races in Eastern Washington two Republicans will be running against each other,” Thompson says.

“And in a number of places, two Democrats will be competing against each other in the general election.”

No one can predict the effect of these changes, Thompson adds, as it is the first time they are being put into place.



## Coeur d'Alene local raises funds for children's center

It was no ordinary soup lunch. Not only were 13 varieties of soup served, but the proceeds also went to a deserving cause.

The occasion was a fund-raiser organized by members of Local 433, Lake City Employees Association, Coeur d'Alene. All the city employees were invited.

“We had people come in and donate food and money to the Children's Village,” explains Keith Clemans, president of Local 433. The Children's Village is a safe haven for children who are abused, ne-

we want to support their efforts.” The soup lunch was the third time that the local union has raised funds for the home.

On previous occasions members raised money at a barbeque and another soup lunch.

The local union represents about 100 people who work for the Coeur d'Alene City's build-



Keith Clemans, president of the Lake City Employees Association (left) and Robin Ricks, vice president, pose with some of the donations made to the Children's Village.

**‘They do so much for those kids that we want to support their efforts!’**

glected, homeless or in severe family crisis. It also provides therapeutic services for children and adolescents in need of structured, individualized and behaviorally focused residential treatment.

“People pour their lives into those kids and make sure they are helped,” Clemans adds.

“They do so much for those kids

ing, water, wastewater, engineering, streets, planning and financial departments.

About 70 people attended the soup lunch. They donated \$300 and 200 pounds of food.

“We decided to do this so the union could be involved in the community and be of service to others,” says Clemans.

### DEAR, from Page 1

investment allocations and to change their investment mix over time.

Individual investors often make unwise investment decisions at the outset by investing in what they see as the safest funds rather than those that might be volatile but might provide the best returns over time.

They also fail to rebalance their funds on a regular basis, leading their accounts to become top-heavy with funds that have performed well in the short term, but might not always do so.

Dear says the troubles in the U.S. economy are likely to continue for a while, testing patience and confidence in our investment strategies.

But policy makers are responding and eventually returns will revert to their long-term averages and the benefits of investing in a globally diversified portfolio of high quality assets managed by skilled investors will become apparent, he adds.

### SMITH, from Page 1

members recognized for the hard work she does,” says Council 2 Staff Representative Brock Logan in the Olympia office.

Smith says she was blown away when she heard that she had received the award, only one of five national awards presented at the ceremony. She has a special word of thanks for her former supervisor, Karen Daniels, who nominated her.

“It was quite an honor,” she says. “But

I totally did not expect to receive an award of this magnitude. I like to work in corrections and to make a difference in people's lives. If they have medical problems or special needs, that's the part I like to do.”

Smith says inmates are incarcerated for a variety of reasons and are not all bad. “Some of them make mistakes, as we all do. We are all human and it takes a bigger

person to try to turn them around.”

For her, the reward is to receive a letter or card of thanks from an inmate, Smith adds, or to see a former prisoner earn a high-school diploma and a college degree.

“Don't give up on people,” Smith says. “There is good in everybody. Look for it and you will find it. That will be a reward in itself.”

## COUNTY AND CITY EMPLOYEE

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# Whatcom County Local helps replenish food bank

**W**hen members of the executive board of Local 1581 (Whatcom County Library System) read a report that an area food bank was facing a shortfall, they decided to do something about it.



They encouraged board members to bring contributions to the next board meeting. These were followed with more contributions at the general membership meeting the following week.

“With food prices rising, more people need help and the food bank needs more contributions,” says Lisa Gresham, local vice president. “We are glad we could do our part in helping our community in this way.”

Local 1581 executive board members (pictured) represent all facets of library work. Among them are assistant managers, branch managers, distribution/delivery drivers, children’s specialists and graphic designers.



**Members of Local 1581 pose with the initial results of their food drive. They are (from left): Front row: Joanne Simonarson (steward), Kevin Harris (secretary), Zynet Schmid (steward) and Lisa Gresham (vice president). Back row: Karl Thompson (steward), Sarah Koehler (steward), Dianne Smith (steward), Patty Macheras (president) and James Weaver (treasurer).**

## BUILDING BRIDGES



**Members of Local 176-SW help build a house for Habitat for Humanity. (See report and pictures Page 1.) Above: Carrie Crisp, Rob Macready, Bob Rindal, Blair Bunke and Nathan Salseina take a break in the work. Above right: Stu Earnst (center) with church volunteers. Right: Julie Rosario hard at work.**



### RACES, from Page 1

Dino Rossi, whom she beat in 2004. Council 2 is endorsing Gregoire.

“Gregoire is the clear choice of organized labor,” says Council 2 Deputy Director Pat Thompson.

“As a result, if Rossi were to be successful any progress we have made in the past four years is likely to be reversed.”

The major issues on which progress has been made have been on pensions and collective bargaining, Thompson adds.

Last year, Gregoire signed into law the most significant improvement in local government employees’ pensions in decades.

Another major race at the state level is that for attorney general.

In that race, Council 2 is endorsing Pierce County Executive John Ladenburg, who will step down from his present position to take on the incumbent, Republican Rob McKenna.

That race, too, is expected to be fiercely contested.

Among the other candidates whom Council 2 is endorsing is Calvin Goings for the position of Pierce County Executive being vacated by Ladenburg.



**Gov. Chris Gregoire**



**John Ladenburg**

**See also: Procedural changes will complicate elections — Page 3**