



COUNTY & CITY EMPLOYEE

AFSCME AFL-CIO

GCU
<http://www.council2.com>

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Convention set for Anaheim

AFCMCE's International Convention will be held in Anaheim, California, from June 21 to 25, with a welcome reception on June 20.

On Thursday night, June 24, Council 2 will co-sponsor an event in conjunction with state councils from Iowa, Indiana and Oregon.

Credentials will be sent by AFSCME starting in April and your Local president will have full details shortly after that.

Council 2 contributes toward the airfare of duly elected delegates.

How to tell us of address and other changes

If you have changed your personal details, such as address, telephone number or names you now can use our Web site to notify us of those changes.

A form enabling you to do so can be accessed at www.council2.com by clicking on the relevant link at the top right corner of the home page. The information is transmitted using a secure connection to the server and cannot be viewed by others in transmission.

Receive news when it happens—by email

To hear about fast-breaking Council 2 news, send us your home email address. You will receive notification of events, newsletters and matters of importance to members.

Your email address will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside Council 2.

To be added to the list, send your home email address to: c2everett@council2.com or complete the form on our Web site, www.council2.com.

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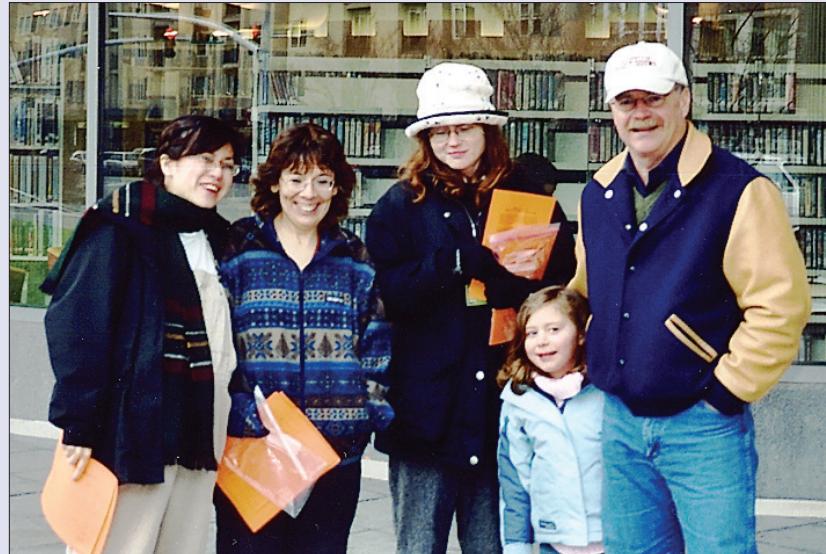
Bills seek to improve your pension

Several changes — many relating to early retirement — will be made to Council 2 members' pension programs if a number of bills introduced in the state legislature this session become law.

The bills were introduced by the new 20-member Select Committee on Pension Policy, established last year, which provides



a broader representation for union members' views. Council 2's Deputy Director Pat Thompson, who played a leading role



Distributing leaflets to protest King County Library's bargaining approach are Ann Crewdon, Rosalie Olds, Ceridy Claypool and Council 2 President/Executive Director Chris Dugovich, assisted by his daughter Rachel.

Angry library workers launch leaflet campaign

It seemed a reasonable request. When employees of the King County Library System began negotiations last year for a new contract, they asked to be raised to the same level of wages, benefits and working conditions as those of employees at other libraries in Washington state.

Supporting their request was a comprehensive study by Council 2 that showed that the staff at King County Library System received less in these fields than the other library systems in the state.

But library management did not see the request that way.

"The employer responded with some of the most outrageous contract language seen by Council 2 staff," says Bill Keenan, Council 2's Director of

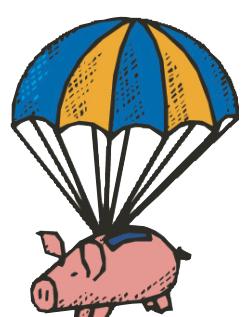
Organizing. "The language appeared in areas of management rights, the grievance procedure and several other key areas of the contract."

For example, Keenan adds, the employer's proposal says that once the contract is signed, no new changes can be negotiated at any time in the period covered by the contract.

As a result, about four months ago members of Local 1857 launched a campaign to issue protest leaflets at branch libraries throughout King County. Since then, members have handed out leaflets every Sunday in front of the branch libraries, talking to library patrons visiting the branches.

The leaflet compares the wages,

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An individual Medical Savings Account for employees is a new feature in a contract negotiated by Council 2 for members of Local 433, who work for the City of Coeur d'Alene.

The contract calls for the City to contribute \$63 a month into an MSA account for each member of the Local. The money can be used for any out-of-pocket medical expenses that employees incur. The amount increases by \$5 each year of the five-year contract until it reaches a total of \$85 a month.

The MSA is provided in addition to employees' existing medical package.

The contract is for five years. Washington state law limits contracts to three years, but longer terms are possible in Idaho.

The contract also includes a cost-of-living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for each year of the contract. The adjustment cannot be less than 2 percent or higher than 3 percent.

The contract, ratified in December, is the first that recognizes Council 2 as the exclusive representative for the City em-

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862 Spokane County employees receive checks

A total of 862 current and former Spokane County employees are receiving checks totaling \$227,805 following the settlement of a lawsuit between Council 2 and Spokane County.

The amounts paid to each member vary widely, from \$3,600 to less than a dollar.

The dispute involved a cash payment

by Standard Insurance Company to Spokane County. A portion of that money should have been passed on to County employees,

Council 2 argued, but was not.

Standard provided basic life insurance to Council 2 members, paid for by the County. If union members wanted additional coverage, they were offered the option of buying supplemental life

See SETTLEMENT, Page 4

Northwest to have two International Vice Presidents

CHRIS DUGOVICH

For close to eight years now, I have had the privilege of representing the Northwest region (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington) on the AFSCME International Executive Board. Currently 31 people serve as International Vice Presidents from districts that vary quite a bit, both in geographic size and number of members represented. The Northwest region is not only one of the largest geographically but also is one of the two largest in terms of number of members — the other is California.

For several years I've worked hard to make others on the board aware of our inequities and looked forward to an opportunity to correct the situation. Well, the opportunity arrived and we came out on top.

Due to our continued growth and a significant realignment of a number of International Vice President positions across the country, I am pleased to inform you that, if all goes as planned (and I am sure it will) the Northwest region will be able to elect two International Vice Presidents at the International Convention in Anaheim in June.

During the last several weeks a committee made up of several unaffected International Vice Presidents met to look at a number of redistricting plans designed to correct the inequities that occurred as a result of increases and decreases in membership in several parts of the country.

I attended a meeting of that committee and advocated for the viewpoint that the Northwest region's growth and potential growth justified the creation of a second International Vice President position.

Committee has agreed

The committee is recommending a plan supported by International President Gerald McEntee that contains the following:

- Creates a second IVP position in the Northwest region
- Creates a second IVP position in California
- Creates a new district for Puerto Rico and creates a new IVP position for that territory
- Merges the Southern District into the Caribbean District, removing the Southern District's IVP

This plan will be submitted to all the International Vice Presidents at our March meeting and I am confident they will recommend its approval.

The plan then would be submitted in the form of an amendment to the AFSCME constitution and presented to the delegates in Anaheim for their approval.

If the plan is approved by the delegates, the Northwest region would elect two IVPs on Thursday, in Anaheim at the International Convention.

Thanks go to a number of International Vice Presidents who worked with me and in the end supported our effort. Naturally, President McEntee's support was critical to this effort. His push put us over the top in a series of meetings that culminated in a meeting with me on Friday, February 20.

At this juncture, it looks as though the plan is well on its way to reality.

Two International Vice Presidents for Northwest region

I am extremely proud of this effort. First and foremost because it is the right thing to do. It brings not only added representation to the Northwest region, but added clout.

It recognizes our region-wide organizing successes and will help further tie this vast region together. I am extremely pleased to have played a part in making it happen.



Letter from the President

After almost a year, eight members of the Vancouver City Attorney's support staff joined Council 2 December 9 following a successful card check. A card check means sufficient number of members — in this case 90 percent — have shown written support for the union, making an election unnecessary.

Aberdeen non-profit gain is a first for Council 2

For the first time, employees at a private non-profit company have joined Council 2. Twenty-one residential support staff at Twin Harbors Group Home in Aberdeen became members of the union after a January 14 vote.

The election process was organized through the National Labor Relations Board.

Until 1996 Council 2 represented only those who worked for public bodies. But in that year staff at Laidlaw Transit, North America's largest school bus company, voted to join the union.

Their action marked the first time employees from the pri-

vate sector had become members of Council 2.

Other organizations outside the ranks of employees of counties and cities followed. Now a private non-profit company also has joined the ranks.

But the latest victory is still causing ripples. After the Aberdeen election had been won, the management of the home challenged the election, claiming the employees' supervisor had been involved in campaigning for Council 2.

The union responded that the supervisor was a lead worker and other supervisors had been allowed to vote.

The union also is planning to file unfair labor practice charges for the alleged retaliation.

Meanwhile three employees have been suspended with pay pending what Council 2 sees as "trumped-up charges" that the union believes related to the employer's perception of their union activities.

In addition, the union has filed another charge to support its belief that the employer unilaterally changed the medical benefits after the petition had been filed.



Vancouver win has its share of drama

After almost a year, eight members of the Vancouver City Attorney's support staff joined Council 2 December 9 following a successful card check. A card check means sufficient number of members — in this case 90 percent — have shown written support for the union, making an election unnecessary.

But the win was not without its drama. After the employees announced their intention to

seek union representation, the City challenged the attorneys' eligibility to be part of the union. Council 2 filed unfair labor practice charges, alleging that the City had retaliated against employees who had participated in the campaign and had helped organize it.

Meanwhile, the staff already has a contract in place; they will become part of the existing contract with the City of Vancouver, Local 307-VC.

Council 2 has 57 new members following an election on November 12 in which employees of the Kitsap County Community Development in Port Orchard voted to join the union.

The workers, who were not organized before, were concerned about preserving their benefits in face of a tight County budget.

The new members, who will form a sub-chapter of Kitsap County Local 1308, are negotiating a new contract.

How you can help PEOPLE program

The voluntarily-funded PEOPLE Department is an essential part of AFSCME's political program.

Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality is AFSCME's Political Action Committee (PAC). It is the second largest AFL-CIO PAC and is among the top 10 PACs nationwide.

Union members from Washington state, including a number of Council 2 members, contribute

voluntarily to the program. The money is used to provide direct contributions to candidates at all levels.

AFSCME also sponsors any member who is selected as a delegate, alternate, or member of a standing



committee to a national political party convention.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to those members who give above and beyond the call to participate voluntarily in the political process. It benefits us all," says Pat Thompson, Council 2's Deputy Director. To find out how you can contribute call Anita Teague at the Council 2 offices in Spokane — 800-932-4850.

COUNCIL 2 EXECUTIVE BOARD

OFFICERS

Chris Dugovich, President/Executive Director
Ron Fredin, Vice-President
Judy Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer

| DISTRICT ONE | DISTRICT TWO | DISTRICT THREE |
|---|--|--|
| 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) | Doug Peterson , Local 21 (City of Seattle) Kathleen Seneca , Local 2617 (City of Kent) | Patti Cox , Local 3787 (Pierce County Library) Connie Uhink , Local 1308 (Kitsap County) John Ohlsen , Local 120 (City of Tacoma) |
| DISTRICT FOUR | DISTRICT FIVE | DISTRICT SIX |
| Kevin James , Local 275 (Grays Harbor County) Sandy Griffin , Local 618 (Thurston County) | Tracy Arney , Local 2699 (Columbia River Mental Health) Bill McEntire , Local 307-CO (Clark County) | Carol Travis , Local 874-HC (Prosser Memorial Hospital/Benton County) Yvette Lewis , Local 1122 (City of Yakima) |
| DISTRICT SEVEN | DISTRICT EIGHT | DISTRICT NINE |
| Chris Wood , Local 1476-AC (Asotin County) Pam Fitzgerald , Local 1191-W (City of Walla Walla) | Ken Thomas , Local 492 (Spokane County) Dave Hanshaw , Local 270 (City of Spokane) Amie Swenson , Local 1553 (Spokane County) | Paula Laws , Local 433 (City of Coeur d'Alene) |

Contracting-out measure appears likely to fail

A measure that would have allowed the state Department of Social and Health Services to contract out services performed by Council 2 members for the Area Agencies on Aging appeared to have little chance of approval in this year's legislative session.

About two weeks before the session was scheduled to end, the bill, ESB 3007, was "technically dead."

But, warned Pat Thompson, Council 2's Deputy Director, "they could grab the language and attach it to another bill."

The measure's apparent failure was largely a result of efforts by Council 2, aided by Rep. Brian Sullivan and House Speaker Frank Chop, Thompson added.

"We are still fighting DSHS's Medicaid Integration Project in Snohomish County through attempting to include a budget provision that would delay the program until all stakeholders can assess its impact."

Another measure being watched by Council 2 is House Bill 3048.

The bill is designed to stop those who seek to harass and intimidate public employees by requesting that their personal



information be released to the public. In some cases, details have been published on specially created Web sites.

Although the bill appears to have failed in this session due to time constraints, we will be revisiting this important issue next year, Thompson says.

PENSIONS, from Page 1

"We wanted to make sure that the bills we referred to them were well received."

It seems as though they succeeded. About two weeks before the session was due to end all seven bills had made it past the first cut-off date and were still alive and well. They all received unanimous support from either the Senate or the House or both.

"But none are signed into law yet and a lot can happen between now and the end of the session," Thompson added.

The bills survived even though a larger volume of bills than normal characterized the 60-day session. The rush of measures likely was due to the fact that members of the legislature were trying to define their positions ahead of the elections later this year.

Here are details of the pension bills.

SB 6246/HB 2537

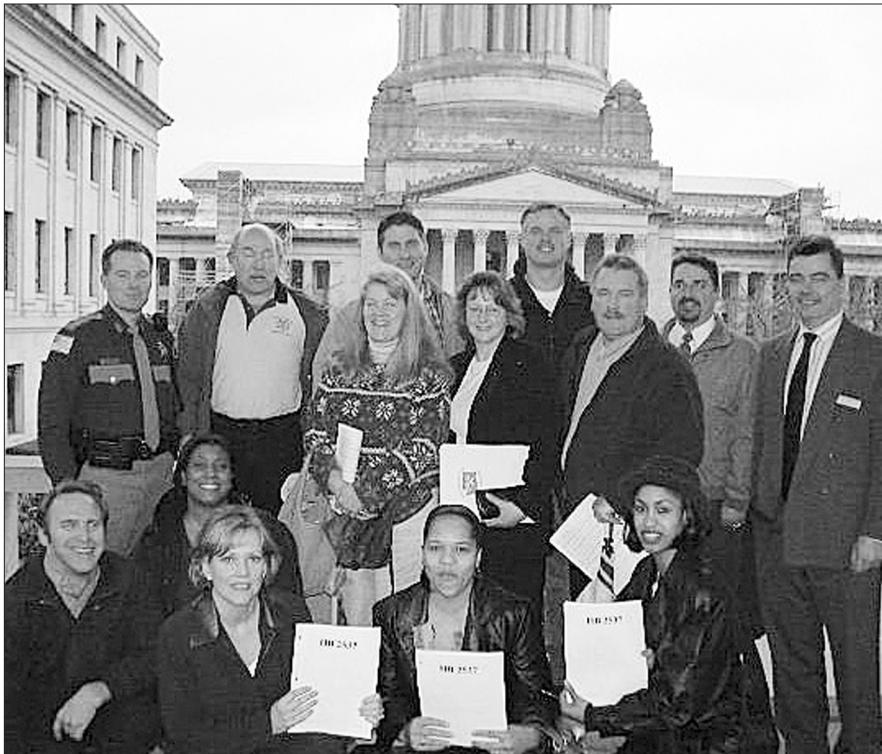
Establishes a Public Safety Employees' Retirement System Plan II, which allows members a normal retirement age of 60 with 10 years of service and early retirement beginning at age 53.

Members with 20 years of service may retire early with a 3-percent-a-year reduction in their benefits.

The measure includes specific job classes — city corrections officers, jailers, police support officers, custody officers and bailiffs, county corrections officers, county probation officers and probation counselors, state correctional officers, correctional sergeants and community corrections officers, liquor enforcement officers, park rangers, commercial vehicle enforcement officers and gambling special agents.

SB 6251/HB 2535

Permits members of the Public Employees' Retirement System Plan II and Plan III and the School Employees' Retirement System Plan II and Plan III who qualify for early retirement or alternate early retirement to make a one-time purchase of up to five years of additional service credit.



Some of the correctional officers and state park rangers from Council 2 and Council 28 who worked together to promote a measure that allows a normal retirement age of 60.

SB 6252/HB 2536

Permits members of the Public Employees' Retirement System Plan II and Plan III and the School Employees' Retirement System Plan II and Plan III to buy down reductions made to pension benefits when a member retires before age 65.

SB 6253/HB 2538

Establishes a \$1,000 minimum monthly benefit for Public Employees' Retirement System Plan I members and Teachers' Retirement System Plan I members who have at least 25 years of service and who have been retired at least 20 years.

SB 6248/HB 2539

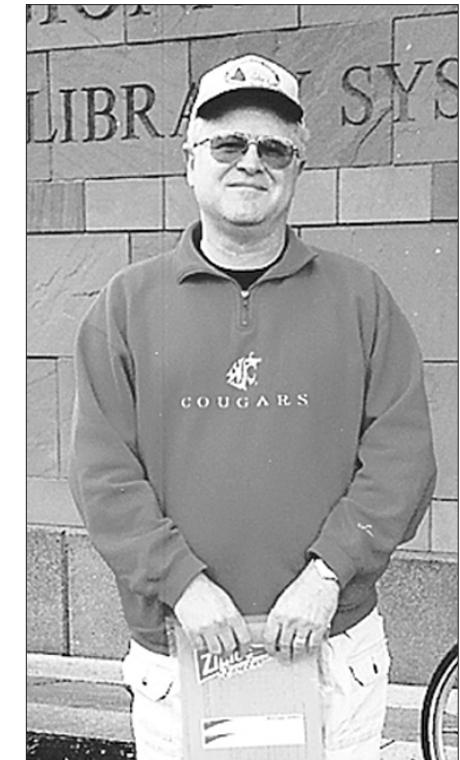
Provides annual increases in retirement allowances.

SB 6247/HB 2540

Provides for vesting after five years of service in the defined benefit portion of the Public Employees' Retirement System, the School Employees' Retirement System, and the Teachers' Retirement System Plan III.

SB 6249/HB 2541

Establishes an asset-smoothing corridor for actuarial valuations used in the funding of the state retirement systems.



John Cole retires after 23 years

After working for more than 23 years at Council 2, John Cole, Assistant Director of Staff Services, retired on February 1.

Cole, 54, began working for Council 2 in 1980 as Staff Representative in southeast Washington. Over the years, he represented county and city employees in 50 locals in these counties: Walla Walla, Franklin, Spokane, Pierce, Columbia, Asotin, Whitman, Skagit, King, Island, Thurston, Clallam and Kitsap.

At the time of his retirement he was working at the head office in Everett.

Looking back over his career, Cole said, "It was a time of continual challenges, but it was rewarding. It was my pleasure to represent the employees. I have made many lifelong friends through my profession."

He said the face of public employment has changed dramatically since he began working for Council 2. "We are now governed by initiatives," he said. "As a result, union activities have become far more political than before. They also are more complex and sophisticated these days."

"He has deservedly more than earned his years in retirement," Chris Dugovich, Council 2 President/Executive Director said. "John and I worked together for close to 22 years. When I started working for Council 2 the staff numbered seven, of whom John was one."

"We had a long working friendship that grew out of many years of settling contracts and representing members across the state. I think John will still be stopping by from time to time."

Cole said he will indeed stay in touch with Council 2 and will follow union activities. He also will stay involved in local politics in Camano Island, where he lives, will continue to serve on the board of directors of TAPCO Credit Union and will volunteer at the Stanwood Senior Center. He also plans several trips overseas.

REMINDERS

- The deadline for Council 2 scholarship applications is March 15. (See www.council2.com for details.)
- The WSCCE Northwest Regional Conference will be held in Hood River, Oregon, October 8 and 9.

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New features mark Legislative Weekend

Several new features marked this year's Legislative Weekend, the annual event that provides Council 2 members with the opportunity to see the legislative process in action.

- For the first time, Council 28 leaders participated in the Weekend. Council 28 officers, members of the executive board and local leadership joined the almost 150 Council 2 members who attended.

- During the weekend, Council 2's Executive Board unanimously passed a resolution supporting Council 28 in negotiating its first contract since it achieved collective bargaining rights. Council 2 President/Executive Director Chris Dugovich and Vice President Ron Fredin submitted the resolution.

Fredin presented the resolution to Bruce Zeller, Treasurer of Council 28, who outlined the stage that the negotiations had reached.

- The Weekend included a special workshop on how to participate in the Washington Democratic primary caucus, which was held on the weekend after the event. The two-hour workshop was led by Jeff Smith, representing Washington Democrats, and Don Craig, AFSCME's Education Coordinator.

- The Weekend was held in Seattle rather than in Olympia this year. The reason for the move was that the Washington caucus for the Democratic primary was scheduled for February 7, one of the days on which the Legislative Weekend originally was to be held. The organizers moved the event to the previous weekend, January 30



Jay Inslee

to February 1, but found that insufficient rooms were available in Olympia on those days.

This was not the first time that the event was moved to Seattle, however. A similar move was made in 2001 when the facilities in Olympia were damaged in an earthquake that struck the region a couple of weeks earlier.

Among the elected officials who attended this year's event were Congressman Jay Inslee, who was the lunch speaker on Saturday, King County Executive Ron Sims, King County Council members Dow Constantine and Dwight Pelz, and City of Seattle Council members Jan Drago, Jean Godden and Tom Rasmussen.

IN SUPPORT OF COUNCIL 28

1 WHEREAS:
2 Our brothers and sisters in the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE, AFSCME, Council 28) have achieved collective bargaining rights for the first time; and
3
4 WHEREAS:
5 The Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME, Council 2 recognizes the importance of collective bargaining in achieving fairness in the workplace and economic justice for working families; and
6
7 WHEREAS:
8 Our entire union movement is founded on the belief that by working together workers can achieve their goals; and
9
10 WHEREAS:
11 AFSCME has become the most successful and largest union in our country by working together across all city, county and state lines to join together and fight for our common goals; and
12
13 WHEREAS:
14 The Executive Board of Council 2 and its Executive Officers appreciate the enormous task Council 28 is undertaking in negotiating its first contract and recognizes the impact it will have on all collective bargaining agreements in our region.
15
16 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:
17 That we continue to work together by coordinating joint trainings, seminars and forums to bring our membership together to discuss these and other important issues; and
18
19 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:
20 That on behalf of our 16,000 members from all across the state, the Executive Board and its Executive Officers pledge their full support for successful negotiations and offer whatever assistance necessary to our brothers and sisters in Council 28 so that they may be victorious in gaining this historic first contract.
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Respectfully Submitted:
Chris Dugovich, Council 2 President
and
Ron Fredin, Council 2 Vice-President
Approved unanimously by the Council 2 Executive Board 1/31/04

Copy of resolution supporting Council 28 in its negotiations was presented to Council 28 by Council 2.



Council 2 Vice President Ron Fredin shakes hands with Council 28 Treasurer Bruce Zeller after presenting him with a copy of the resolution, left.



Head of Council 28's Women's Committee, Cheri Garrett addresses attendees. Left is Lois Clement and right Alpha O'Laughlin.

LIBRARY, from Page 1

benefits and employment conditions with those at other libraries. It also includes an explanation of why the employees organized and joined the union.

"Local 1857 members' main purpose and theme for their organizing efforts was 'make a choice, gain a voice,'" explains Keenan. "The reason is that they believe that they have little say in the policies, procedures and ideas as far as the way in which the King County Library system is run."

Members have distributed thousands of leaflets over the last four months. Keenan says the campaign has been successful—many patrons have called the telephone number on the leaflets that asks them to let the King County Library know they support the employees in their efforts.

"The patrons are eager to hear the story because they support the library and the employees who work there," Keenan adds.

The King County Library System professes to be the most progressive library in the state. In fact, based on their actions at the bargaining table, they are far from being progressive in labor relations."

Council 2 has filed two unfair labor practice charges for unfair bargaining

on wages and at-will employment in connection with the bargaining of a new contract.

"State law has required for several years that all employees in libraries statewide have to have just-cause termination," says Keenan.

"But the libraries' policies and procedures up to now have been at-will termination.

"They claim that just-cause should be a part of the bargaining process. But it is state law."



Bill Keenan, Andy Wickens, Rosalie Olds, Ann Crewdson, Laura Ritter, Susan Manning and Lindy Claypool distributed leaflets.

MSA, from Page 1

ployees. Although Council 2 negotiated the previous two contracts for the Local, the union was not formally recognized in them.

Indeed, Council 2 has gained considerable ground over the last seven years in Coeur d'Alene, explains Gordon Smith, Council 2 staff representative in Spokane, who was involved in negotiating the new contract.

In 1997 the City voted to remove collective bargaining. Council 2 later succeeded in having collective bargaining reinstated through a successful initiative that was placed on the ballot in 1998.

The latest contract is testimony to the effectiveness of that initiative, for which many Council 2 members worked extremely hard.



Flashback to 1998 when Council 2 successfully fought to win an initiative to reinstate collective bargaining in Coeur d'Alene.

SETTLEMENT, from Page 1

insurance and paying the premiums for this extra coverage themselves.

In 1997 Oregon-based Standard decided to change from being a not-for-profit mutual fund insurance company to a for-profit stock-issuing company. When it demutualized, Standard issued shares or cash to its customers. Counties such as Spokane County were paid the cash equivalent of the shares.

As a result, an amount of about \$1.3 million was paid to Spokane County.

Council 2 representatives argued that a large portion of that money should have gone to employees who had taken out their own supplemental insurance policies and had paid the premiums on the policies themselves. But, they added, the County did not pass on the money to those members.

"In many other counties in which the same situation had arisen, the money had been paid to the insured people themselves," says Marty Garfinkel, of the Seattle law firm Schroeter Goldmark Bender, who represented Council 2 in the case. "But in this case, Spokane County insisted it was all their money."

When it first became aware of the situation, Council 2 attempted to persuade the County to reach a compromise solution. When the County refused to negotiate, a lawsuit was filed in Spokane County Superior Court with Council 2 and Spokane staff representative Gordon Smith as the named plaintiff representing all Council-2 represented employees.

The suit was settled and the money is to be divided among the 862 Council 2 members. The cash paid to each member depends on the amount of insurance premiums paid by the member over a six-year period from January 1, 1992 through December 31, 1997. It is estimated that each recipient will receive 50.2 percent of the total premiums he or she paid during the six-year period involved.

"Council 2 and the County have sent letters to the members advising them of the settlement and requiring that certain forms be completed and returned," Garfinkel says. "Once they do that, they will be sent the money owed to them."