

# Solidarity Update

September 2005

## Alaskans Working for Alaska!

A publication of the Alaska State Employees Association—AFSCME Local 52, AFL-CIO



AFSCME members join AFL-CIO President John Sweeny during a special occasion on stage at the 2005 AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention held July 25-28 at Navy Pier in Chicago.

*A Report from President Gordon Glaser:*

## AFL-CIO Delegates Seek Solidarity

On Saturday, July 23, five delegates from Alaska joined some 1,000 other men and women from every part of the United States for the 25th AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention in Chicago.

As you may know, there has been a spirited discussion within the labor movement for several months leading up to the convention. Five unions (Teamsters, UFCW, SEIU, Laborers and UNITE-HERE) created the Change to Win Coalition, and began advocating for increased organizing efforts within the labor movement.

The AFL-CIO leadership believes that organizing is important, but equally important is the political process. That difference in philosophy was to prove critical to action taken at the Convention.

The Change to Win viewpoint can be found at <http://www.changetowin.org/>. You will find the AFL-CIO perspective at <http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/ourfuture/index.cfm>.

To read a powerful critique from

AFSCME President Gerald McEntee, go to <http://www.afscme.org/press/mcenteememo.htm>.

The five Alaska delegates went with instructions from constituents to support reform within a unified AFL-CIO. We were willing to consider any changes to prevent division.

We arrived in Chicago ready for discussion, debate, compromise, and maybe a few fights.

However, the leadership of the Change to Win Coalition chose not to participate.

We were disappointed that the dialogue ended before the convention began. However, the convention went on--we passed resolutions and approved constitutional amendments to reorganize and improve the representation with AFL-CIO structures.

We committed additional resources to organize the unorganized, to support worker friendly candidates, and to roll back regressive legislation that (cont. page 4)

*From Business Manager Jim Duncan:*

## Political Action is Member Supported

ASEA receives the support and advocacy of many elected officials on both sides of the legislative aisle.

For example, we received support from many legislators last session in defending our members and protecting their jobs against efforts to privatize all state procurements functions.

Additionally, friendly legislators forced numerous compromises to SB 141, an outright attack on the retirement system for state employees.

The Public Employee Retirement System is perceived to be suffering from underfunding and the Administration has undertaken a campaign to seriously reduce the retirement benefits for future state employees instead of seeking positive solutions to address the issue.

Our support in the Legislature was nearly enough to stop the bill from reaching the Governor. But nearly enough isn't good enough.

There is also no reason to believe that legislation at the expense of public employees won't continue to appear in the next legislative session beginning January 2006.

It is clear that our union is at a tipping point in state politics. We need more resources to support those labor-friendly incumbents and candidates who support us.

To be successful, we need to increase our membership participation and monetary contribution to the ASEA Political Action Fund.

The ASEA Political Action Commit- (cont. page 3)



**Union Labor at Work**—An ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 banner flies in Anchorage on the new highway overpass at the C Street extension. The banner was provided by ASEA Headquarters to GGU member Shaun Combs, an Engineer Assistant II in Construction and Operations (CCO) at DOT/PF, who placed it on the new construction this month.

## ASEA Assists Municipal Employees

Employees of the City and Borough of Sitka don't enjoy the benefits of collective bargaining that protect them from subjective policy interpretations, wage increases subject to cash on hand, and working conditions influenced by unpredictable local politics.

However, a group of motivated Sitka city employees who sponsored a successful ballot initiative won't stop at anything less.

Some twenty city employees began working with ASEA staff this spring to replace a "meet and confer" ordinance governing labor relations with a collective bargaining ordinance that would offer employees a choice to organize.

They turned to the ballot initiative process to put the question of collective bargaining for city employees to Sitka voters. The petition drive that followed gathered nearly twice the number of signatures necessary to add it to the Oct. 4 general election ballot. In total, the sponsors collected more than 1,100 signatures during their petition drive, equal to about one-third of the ballots in the last general election.

ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 is leading the organizing effort. The Sitka Chapter of ASEA has also been involved from the start. "City employees should have bargaining rights as state workers like myself do," said Sitka Chapter President Glenn Howard. "ASEA members should encourage others to vote for collective bargaining in the next city election."

If successful, the ballot question

would allow local control of labor relations between the city management and city employees according to the terms of the collective bargaining ordinance. The proposed ordinance reflects the desire by city employees for more options and acknowledges local circumstances. In particular, the ordinance creates a board to approve the creation of bargaining units by employees within the workforce and allows employees the option to seek union representation.

The ordinance also features a "no strike" clause that city employees requested out of respect for the many local families that were harmed by a prolonged strike at a Sitka pulp mill in the 1980s.

Ballot Initiative sponsors like Shawn McLeod, City Groundskeeper, appreciate the support from ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 and the Sitka Chapter. "I am grateful ASEA has helped us from the beginning," Shawn said. "ASEA has acted boldly and that's the kind of union I want."

"We welcome the prospect of the addition of Sitka city employees to ASEA/AFSCME Local 52," said Business Manager Jim Duncan. "Winning and keeping collective bargaining rights for workers is imperative in today's difficult labor environment."

Employees from Sitka and other cities may join ASEA/AFSCME Local 52. An ASEA 2004 Constitution revision agrees to the inclusion of municipal bargaining units.

## News In Brief

### State Board Meets

The ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 State Executive Board will meet for its quarterly session on Sept. 3 and 4 in Fairbanks.

The State Executive Board will convene at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 3, 2005, at the Fairbanks Westmark Hotel.

In accordance with Article 8.02.A.2. of the ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Constitution, "All meetings of the Executive Board are open to observation by any member in good standing of the union..."

Member comments will be taken on both Friday and Saturday.

The Fairbanks quarterly session will be preceded by a two-day board visioning retreat and followed by Fairbanks Labor Day Celebrations.

### Labor Day in Fairbanks

The Midnight Sun Chapter is preparing with other unions for the 21st Annual Labor Day Parade and Picnic on Sept. 5 in Fairbanks.

The Parade of Unions begins at noon from Noel Wien Library to Pioneer Park via Airport Way.

The Labor Picnic at Pioneer Park starts at 1 p.m. The picnic is free, but donations of canned food for the Fairbanks Community Food Bank are requested.

There will be food, drink, games for the children, and a few informational booths. The Midnight Sun Chapter has contributed \$500 and purchased door prizes for the event.

### Scholarships Awarded

The winners of three \$1000 scholarships offered by the Juneau Chapter have been announced.

Erik Adamson received the award in the category of member's child enrolled in a vocation school program.

Natalie Hale received the award in the category of member's child enrolled in a 4-year degree program.

Matt Vansteenwyk received the award in the category of a member enrolled in 4-year degree program.

## News In Brief

### Contracts Delivered

Printed copies of the 2004-2007 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Union and the State of Alaska are now available for all members.

Copies of the agreement are being delivered to all union stewards in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. Copies have been mailed to the presidents of all rural chapters or their designee.

Additionally, the union offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau have copies available. Union business agents will also have copies with them when they visit worksites in their area.

If you have not received a copy of the contract please contact a union steward at your worksite or contact your union business agent.

You can also access an electronic copy of the agreement by going to the union website and clicking on 'Union Contract' in the menu bar on the left of the page.

### Emergency Leave Bank

If you elected to participate in the ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Emergency Leave Bank, the operational procedures and guidelines for leave use have been posted to the union website.

The Emergency Leave Bank Guidelines can be found by selecting 'Forms & Files' on the main menu, and by selecting 'Administrative Forms' on the resulting page.

### Class One News Online

At the request of the Class One Committee, a webpage featuring news for Class One members is available on the union website.

In addition to news, Class One members may also start or join an online discussion by submitting items to the Class One Communication Board.

A link to the Communication Board can be found by visiting the Class One Pages.

## Political...

(cont. from page 1)

tee is renewing its effort to enroll GGU members, and all members are strongly encouraged to contribute.

A new Authorization for Payroll Deduction Form has been developed to enroll current GGU employees who have not yet become members of the PAC. This new form also allows more flexibility for contributing to the PAC.

The form offers a provision for contributing at several levels by payroll deduction and an option for a one-time donation. Additionally, members can elect to use a personal credit card for their one-time donation.

The form also requests the name of the individual who is responsible for recruiting the new PAC member. In the course of its membership drive, the PAC intends to provide incentive awards to members who actively recruit new members to join the PAC.

AFSCME International is calling upon all of its members to become more active in contributing to political action. On July 20, 2005, AFSCME President Gerald McEntee announced the new goals of the PEOPLE program, as approved by the 21st Century Subcommittee on Politics.

The PEOPLE goals include an appeal to AFSCME leadership throughout the organization to contribute at the 1% level. The goals also challenge AFSCME affiliates to set and meet PEOPLE fundraising objectives.

In response to the new goals of the PEOPLE program as announced by Pres. McEntee and the International Executive Board, I have raised my contribution to the maximum allowed under state law, which equates to the 1% level.

I am pleased that ASEA Lobbyist Fate Putman and other ASEA leaders have joined me in the commitment to political support of the PAC. I hope each ASEA member will consider what he or she is capable of contributing to political action.

The modest contribution that nearly all of us can make will ensure that ASEA has the necessary local and national political support.

Jim Duncan  
Business Manager

## New Anchorage Business Agent Assignments

**Stan Hafferman**

Dept. of Education & Early Dev.  
Dept. of Transportation  
Dept. of Military & Vet. Affairs  
Dept. of Law  
Kenai Peninsula (All Depts.)

**Sue Ernisse**

Dept. of Fish & Game  
Dept. of Natural Resources  
Dept. of Environmental Conserv.  
Dept. of Corrections  
Dept. of Labor & Workforce Dev.  
Bethel (All Depts.)  
Dillingham (All Depts.)  
Kodiak (All Depts.)

**Charles Felder**

Dept. of Administration  
Dept. of Commerce, Comm. & E/D  
Dept. of Revenue  
Mat-Su Valley (All Depts.)  
Anchorage Pioneers' Home

**Doug Carson**

Dept. of Health & Social Services (not Anchorage Pioneers Home)  
Dept. of Public Safety

**George Zuke**

Organizing  
Steward Development & Training  
Chapter Support

**Sam Rhodes**

Organizing  
Chapter Support

## Are You Receiving Work Evaluations?

Article 18.01.A.1. of the GGU Collective Bargaining Agreement states:

"Evaluations shall become due fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the mid-probationary period, completion of probation and the merit anniversary date."

If you have not received an evaluation at fifteen (15) calendar days prior to your mid-probationary period, your completion of probation, or your merit anniversary date, please contact your ASEA Business Agent.

Evaluations are especially important for promotions and advancement within the state. Without evaluations, your opportunity for professional advancement is at risk.

## Delegates...

(cont. from page 1)

injures seniors, increases medical costs, and protects Wal-Marts and sweatshops here and abroad.

The convention also voted to support full funding of veteran healthcare facilities, immediate funding of military equipment for our troops in the field, and the “rapid removal” of our troops from Iraq.

What does this mean to Alaska?

The internal union conflicts are being argued on a national level and labor leaders in Alaska have limited influence in this debate. No responsible labor leader in Alaska supports this split because organized labor in this state can ill afford internal division.

All progressives must unite, including labor, if we are going to protect benefits for our elders and future retirees, and to provide good health care, housing, and education for Alaskan families. There is an African proverb: When elephants fight the grass gets trampled. These elephants need not fight in Alaska.

This is my report on the AFL-CIO Convention. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of U.S. labor history. Thank you for the opportunity to be your CLC representative and ASEA President.

*Of the five Alaskans attending the 2005 AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention, three are associated with ASEA. President Gordon Glaser attended as Anchorage Central Labor Council alternate, Business Agent Bill Johnson represented the Fairbanks CLC, and Legislative Lobbyist/Assistant Business Manager Fate Putman represented the Juneau CLC.*

## Staff Transitions

**Doris Thompson** recently retired as secretary in the Fairbanks office of ASEA. Doris was respected by co-workers and appreciated by union members for her effective work habits and unflappable nature.

**Xenia DeVito** has been hired to fill the position of secretary in Fairbanks. Xenia was a former member of ASEA at her last position in the Dept. of Environmental Conservation.

**Michael Robbins** left the position of business agent in the Anchorage headquarters earlier this year to work with Ahtna, Incorporated. Mike will be remembered for his passionate defense of GGU member rights.

**Sam Rhodes** has been hired to fill the vacant position of business agent in Anchorage. Sam, an organizer from Texas, will put his extensive experience to work for ASEA.

**Jacquelyn Schultz** was promoted to secretary in the Anchorage headquarters. Jackie has been an ASEA employee since 2003.

**Alyson Bybee** has been hired to perform the duties of receptionist in Anchorage. Alyson is a longtime Alaska and Anchorage resident.

## Member—to—Member

Annual and personal leave can be donated to Local 52 members for use as “sick leave” after sick, annual or personal leave has been exhausted. Recipients must use all accrued sick and annual leave before using donated leave, and unused donated leave cannot be returned to donors. Members can donate leave by filling out a leave slip in the name of the person receiving the donation and delivering, or mailing it, to ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 at 1577 C St., Ste. 201, Anchorage, AK 99501.

### The following members need leave donations

**Patricia Harrell**, Military & Veterans Affairs, Anchorage  
**Toni Thomas**, Revenue, Anchorage  
**Cynthia Creekpau**m, Fish & Game, Juneau  
**Vanessa Stevenson**, Labor & Workforce Development, Juneau  
**Linda Koenig**, Health & Social Services, Anchorage  
**Leticia Castanos**, Health & Social Services, Juneau  
**Pamela Osler**, Health & Social Services, Anchorage  
**Vernon Craig**, Transportation & Public Facilities, Ketchikan  
**Kevin Ridges**, Law, Douglas  
**Deron Clark**, Administration, Juneau  
**Margaret Simmons**, Public Safety, Anchorage  
**Joy Craig**, Public Safety, Anchorage  
**Nancy Brown**, Labor & Workforce Development, Juneau  
**Mona Miguel**, Natural Resources, Anchorage  
**Jody Schuyler**, Revenue, Anchorage  
**Davra Faye Hayes**, Corrections, Juneau

## Solidarity Calendar

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|-----------------------|---|
| Sept. 3-4             | State Executive Board Quarterly Session, Fairbanks, Fairbanks Westmark Hotel                                |
|                       | <b>Labor Day</b><br>State Holiday   |
| Sept. 5<br>Monday     | Fairbanks Labor Day Picnic, Pioneer Park, 1:00 p.m. (Donations for Fairbanks Community Food Bank requested) |
| Sept. 7<br>Wednesday  | Anchorage Chapter Executive Board Meeting, Atwood Bldg., Ste. 1620, 5:30 p.m.                               |
| Sept. 8<br>Thursday   | Midnight Sun Chapter Executive Board Meeting, Fairbanks Union Office, 5:15 p.m.                             |
| Sept. 13<br>Wednesday | Anchorage Chapter General Membership Meeting, Carpenter's Hall, 5:30 p.m.                                   |
| Sept. 15<br>Thursday  | Midnight Sun Chapter Stewards Meeting, Fairbanks Union Office, 5:15 p.m.                                    |
| Sept. 20<br>Tuesday   | Political Action Committee (PAC) Teleconference, 5:15-6:00 p.m.   |
| Sept. 27<br>Tuesday   | Juneau Chapter Meeting, Juneau Chapter Office/ Teamsters Hall, 12:05-12:35 p.m.                             |
| Oct. 4<br>Tuesday     | Midnight Sun Chapter Executive Board Meeting, Fairbanks Union Office, 5:15 p.m.                             |
| Oct. 5<br>Wednesday   | Anchorage Chapter Executive Board Meeting, Atwood Bldg., Ste. 1620, 5:30 p.m.                               |
| Oct. 12<br>Wednesday  | Anchorage Chapter General Membership Meeting, Carpenter's Hall, 5:30 p.m.                                   |