

Solidarity Update

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



A Year Of Numbers And Signatures

2013 was a year of numbers for ASEA members and staff. A minute's worth of research will lead you to a host of types of numbers: natural numbers; integers; real numbers; complex numbers; computable numbers; and, rational numbers to name a few.

Perhaps Alaska has categorized an addition to the trove of numerical treasures – irrational numbers.

As state employees, the numbers 6 and 8 come to mind. It's the State of Alaska's idea to move a swath of state employees from private offices to cubicles, where important and confidential client information should not be as freely and openly shared as air. In the dubious name of cost saving and without figuring in construction cost overruns or notifying the union or state legislature of its scheme, the State of Alaska looks to change many workspaces from offices to 6' x 8' cubicles. This "universal space standards" notion relieves the state of a few unwanted lease properties, but universally compromises the logistics of serving Alaskans in the efficient and professional manner to which they have become accustomed. ASEA is fighting back against the cubicle notions with a class-action grievance set for arbitration in May.

Twenty-One (21) is another irrational Alaskan numeral deserving of attention. A disguised political scheme gives Big Oil our state treasury under the veil of SB-21. It makes the heist look like its ramifications would take Alaska to the promised land of economic prosperity – when in reality; we all know nothing could be further from the truth. Television and radio ads try to persuade you that the pipeline and its jobs will dry up and blow away. But savvy Alaskans – over 50,000 of them statewide – believe this matter will be better decided in the voting booth than in Juneau and signed a referendum petition to let us have that very right in 2014.

A 2013 number with no rationale for us all to ponder in Alaska is 37. As a union of public employees whose working conditions are administered through collective bargaining, this Anchorage number has possible far-reaching ramifications for all ASEA members. AO-37 is a brutal initiative that seeks to strip 40 years of collective bargaining rights from Anchorage Municipal employees via the local legislative process. Over 21,000 referendum signatures for repeal were gathered – many by ASEA members and staff – to require a vote on its merits; or more importantly, its lack thereof. AO-37 is wrangling its way through the Alaska Supreme Court to determine when a referendum vote can be held in 2014.

Finally, a rational number to remember for 2013 is 975. Alaska's minimum wage hasn't been raised at the state level since 1959 when the national minimum wage was instituted at 50 cents per hour. Alaska responded back then by paying 50 cents more for a total of \$1.00 per hour. Currently, the minimum wage pays \$7.25 per hour in most states; the 1959 difference makes it \$7.75 in Alaska now. An initiative petition ASEA members and staff helped circulate has sufficient signatures from thousands of Alaskans to raise the minimum wage via an election in August 2014. The goal is to have an increase to \$8.75 in 2015 and to \$9.75 in 2016 with a cost of living escalator built in thereafter in our effort to settle this lopsided societal score.

Alaskans – in spite of obstacles, find ways to right wrongs – to make the irrational come correct and turn rational. We're willing to sign our names on the line by the thousands or take our grievances to arbitration when necessary to bring about fairness and bring us all closer to the equality that makes the sum of our collective Alaskan lives at work and in our communities all add up – by the numbers.

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Famous Words of Solidarity

The greatest enemy of the union-busting process is unity of solidarity and a strong commitment and belief in what the employees are doing. - *Martin Jay Levitt*

You can't have solidarity with sheep.
- *Anonymous*

(Quotes from: *Great Labor Quotations Sourcebook and Reader* - Peter Bollen)

Solidarity Update

DID YOU KNOW?

Did You Know That:

The world's largest Christmas present weighing 225 tons was the Statue of Liberty. The French gave it to the U.S. in 1886.



Did You Know That:

Baby New Year is the most common symbol associated with this holiday. He is a toddler dressed in a diaper, hat and sash bearing the numbers of the new year. The myth states that he matures into an old man during the course of the year. On December 31st, he hands his hat and sash to the new Baby New Year.



Did You Know That:

New Year's Day marks the start of a new year on the Gregorian II calendar. This calendar was first introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582.



AFSCME 2013 Women's Conference

The AFSCME Women's Conference was held in Denver, Colorado, from September 20 - 22, 2013. The theme for this year's conference was "Coming Together, Seizing the Moment."

The conference provided participants an in-depth look at issues affecting women. Topics included mentoring, the importance of creating collaborative rather than competitive relationships and the challenges women face achieving positions of leadership. In planning meetings before the conference, the NWAC Committee identified 22 workshops and a myriad of wonderful women leaders and speakers. They also designed a green Rosie T-shirt with the AFSCME Women's Leadership tagline "AFSCME WOMEN ON FIRE TO ASPIRE!" Leadership Academy mentees arrived on September 19th to prepare as workshop hosts for the PEOPLE Squad members and to get their AFSCME in Action Project (community beautification, GOTV/ Federal Budget Phone banking, and Special Leadership Workshop) assignments. Members who spoke multiple languages volunteered at the Buddy Booth and helped guide attendees who primarily spoke their native language through the conference.

The Alaska Women's Issues Committee (WIC) had a vendor booth to sell their pink fleece vests, sweatshirts and WIC pins. Amazingly, they sold all their items within the first two hours and took orders throughout the conference because so many Sisters and Brothers wanted pink attire. Other local/council booths were either selling attire or distributing handouts. The PEOPLE booth was the biggest hit, selling NWAC T-shirts and other AFSCME items. Booths were open all three days and were an opportunity for participants to browse, network and contribute to each other's fundraising efforts.

Dawn Bundick, (AFSCME/ASEA Local 52) and Annette Gonzalez (Puerto Rico) recited the Pledge of Allegiance in English and Spanish. AFSCME President Lee Saunders was the keynote speaker and he discussed both successful leaders and the accomplishments achieved by councils/locals from around the country. He championed the Women's Leadership Academy and spoke

words of wisdom and encouragement for unifying Sisters and reminded everyone that 58% of AFSCME's membership is **WOMEN**. He noted that there are 80 locations pursuing legislation to stop outsourcing, which is dangerous to public service. Our main priority is "Organizing." We need to add strength/power to our Unions so we have a strong voice. He encouraged us to "Dig deep and to find out who we really are and how we can help our locals/communities."

We also heard from guest speaker, Former U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, whose main point was that women in the labor movement have a place in America and that we need more women in leadership positions.

Secretary Solis was followed by a panel discussion comprised of: Terry O'Neill of NOW; Sarita Gupta, JWW; Carol Joyner, Working Families Project; and Moderator Carmen Berkley, AFL-CIO. The panel discussed Progressive Allies: Sparking Movement in Communities and How To Engage Our Community.

Afterwards, all 800 plus attendees participated in three AFSCME Action beautification projects: (1) the Denver Community for Phase II Beautification of Neighborhoods (2) Globeville Neighborhood/Holy Rosary Church trash clean up and beautification and (3) Villa Park: Extreme Community Makeover.

Each NWAC member was required to host and introduce workshop speakers. The 22 workshops ranged from: "Child Care," "Defending Collective Bargaining Rights in the States and Cities," "Digital Media," "General Budget Cuts Affecting Women," "Outsourcing," "Speaking off the Cuff - Crafting an Impromptu Presentation," "The Ultimate Action: Running for Office at Local, State Level," and "Your Family in Balance: Managing Work and Family."

Secretary-Treasurer Laura Reyes was the keynote speaker on Day 2 and she got things pumped up! We had the opportunity to watch the Romero Theater Troupe perform the play, "Our Issues, Our Struggles and Our Hopes for the Future." It was a very (continued on page 4)

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15th Biennial Convention Dates

January 24: *Chapter Delegate list, Credential Forms, Proposed Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions must be received at Anchorage Headquarters by close of business (5:00 p.m.)*

February 3: *Delegates Information Packets mailed to Certified Delegates and Alternates. Packet includes travel/parking, lodging, Union business leave information and hotel and travel forms.*

February 19: *Travel forms due to ASEA Headquarters*

February 24: *Convention Packet mailed to Delegates*

March 12: *Delegate Education Training*

March 13 - 14: *Parliamentary Procedures Training / Convention Committee - Work Sessions*

March 15 - 16: *15th Biennial Convention Business Session*

Other Important Dates

Feb. 18 - 19, 2014 Juneau - Business Session of ASEA Executive Board

May 13 - 14, 2014 Kenai - Business Session of ASEA Executive Board



ASEA HEALTH TRUST NEWS

The Coalition Health Center Saves You Money

You'll Never Get a Bill with Surprise Charges Here

Did you know that a visit to the Coalition Health Center will only cost you \$10 (or less!)?

You just pay a \$10 copay when you need care because you are sick or have a health concern. You do not have to meet your deductible first, and you won't have other charges that are billed later.

Preventive care is free. There's no copay, no deductible, and no over-the-allowed-amount charges.

Generic medication to treat your condition may be free, if it is one of the many basic medications the Center keeps in stock.

The Coalition Health Center can treat common medical problems (allergies, ear infections, strep throat, the flu, minor

infections, rashes, etc.), provide diagnostic lab work, write prescriptions, do pregnancy tests and much more.

Preventive care at the Coalition Health Center includes routine checkups for men, women and children, standard immunizations, flu shots, blood pressure checks, certain cancer screenings, and more. Be sure to ask your provider what preventive tests you should have (recommendations vary by gender, age and risk factors).

Coalition Health Center

Phone: (907) 264-1370

Website: www.coalitionhealthcenter.org

Address: 2741 DeBarr Road,
Suite C210, Anchorage

Hours: Mon-Fri: 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Sat: 8 a.m.-12 noon

Make an appointment online, by phone or just drop in.



Looking For News!

If your Chapter or Committee has news, events, picnics, parties or scholarship items, please contact ASEA Communications Specialist Sharon Dart @ SharonD@afscmelocal52.org.



Solidarity Update

2013: The Year In Pictures



ASEA A Year In Pictures: Top Left: Imeda White in front of Senate President's Seat at PEL Conference
Top Right: ASEA Executive Board in Fairbanks Labor Day Parade
2nd Row Left to Right: Fairbanks Picnic, CNC Rally in Juneau, Hollis French speaking at Anch. Chapter Meeting, Spring Steward Training
3rd Row Left to Right: City Of Sitka (CBS) ASEA Picnic, Juneau Chapter Holiday Party, Spring Steward Training,
Last Row Left to Right: Anch. Chapter softball team, Mat-Su Picnic, Dawn Bundick, Lisa Murkowski, Cassandra Lynch at the Political Leadership Conference (PEL), CNC Rally in Juneau

AFSCME 2013 Women's Conference

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emotional and moving play that showcased the past historical struggles of unions and the people who were involved. There was not a dry eye in the ballroom after the performance.

We then connected with the Vermont Home Care Workers via Skype to congratulate them on their accomplishments and to let them know that AFSCME is standing with them through their continued efforts and endeavors.

The next speaker was Wisconsin State Representative, LaTonya Johnson who spoke of her successful run for political office. She attended the AFSCME Women's Conference two years ago and thanked AFSCME for their unwavering support in helping her run and win her seat. Later that evening an optional Meditation session was held to help participants learn how to strengthen their minds as women leaders and how to take what had been learned in the workshops to get

AFSCME's power behind them and to start "Seizing the Moment" in locals and in their communities.

Day 3 started with a courage vignette followed by a spiritually enlightening political powerhouse speaker, Ohio State Senator Nina Turner. She definitely evokes "Ministry in Politics." Senator Turner gave the most powerful rendition of what we must do to get folks involved, motivated and concerned about political decisions that affect us, our families and our way of life. There is a need to reject politicians who are voted for by the people but who are not FOR the people.

Lastly, panelists Jo Patton, Blaine Rummel and Nicole Porter with moderator Kerry Korpi discussed new approaches to fighting against outsourcing and privatization. The discussion centered on correctional facilities and the ongoing strategy of fighting against outsourcing

and privatizing those facilities. Be cognizant that privatizing correctional facilities is impacting a large number of public sector jobs and that we must be diligent in addressing these issues head on if we are going to protect our jobs.

Secretary-Treasurer Laura Reyes closed the conference with a call to action. She asked the Women of AFSCME to "Come Together, Seize the Moment" and be the Women "ON FIRE TO ASPIRE."

Visit AFSCME.org and watch the inspiring videos and AFSCME TV of our Conference, so you can be: **ON FIRE TO ASPIRE!**