

# County and City Employee

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

## Council 2 welcomes election results

For the most part, the election results were good news for labor in general and Council 2 in particular.

“The stakes were very high in this election at the state as well as the national level,” says Council 2 Deputy Director Pat Thompson.

“And in both cases we saw two solid victories for working families.

“We want to thank our membership for overwhelmingly endorsing the pro-worker candidates.”



Council 2 has especially welcomed the election of Jay Inslee as Washington State governor. He was endorsed by the union as he has

shown consistent support for labor and for Council 2 in particular. Inslee was a speaker at several Council 2

See ELECTION, Page 3

## Library staff join Council 2

Fifty-five employees of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library have joined Council 2. The group includes librarians and supervisors, confirming a growing trend in Council 2 for managers to be included in union contracts.

The employees were prompted to join a union after noting that other library employees who were unionized had a voice in their conditions of employment.

“They felt that they did not have such a voice,” explains Council 2 Director of Organizing Bill Keenan. “They saw the benefit of being represented, having a contract and bargaining for changes in their working conditions.

“So they set out to join a union. After investigating a number of unions, they chose Council 2 as the one they would like to join.”

The employees were prompted to work quickly and organize as a local union while an interim library director was in office. In this way, when the permanent director took office the union would already be in place.

“As it turned out, the library administration hired a new director from Utah, who came on board several weeks before the election,” Keenan says.

“The director issued a letter, urging the employees to vote ‘no’ in the election. As a result, the ‘yes’ vote received 66 percent support rather than the 60 percent we had been expecting.”

The employees, who are organized under a new local, 307-L, have approved a constitution, have elected their officers and have formed a contract committee. They will work with a Staff Representative to prepare their first proposal to start bargaining with the library administration.

## Retiring after 44 years of service



Joe Frisino

Two aspects of his working life set Joe Frisino apart from almost everyone else.

The first is that he has just retired from the King County Medical Examiner’s Office after doing the same job there for an amazing 44 years.

“He is one of the few people who have worked that long for a county or a city,” says Council 2 President/Executive Director Chris Dugovich. “Some people work for 30 years and then retire, but he has added an additional 14 years. This is an outstanding service that deserves everyone’s commendation.”

The second aspect that distinguishes Frisino is

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

that he turned what could have been a routine job into much more than that. He transformed it into a dedication to honoring the lost, the forgotten and the discarded in our society. He turned it into a vocation with a reward of its own that could not be measured in mere dollars and cents.

See FRISINO, Page 3

## Legislative Weekend to be held in January

Council 2’s Legislative Weekend — a popular once-a-year event on the union’s calendar — will be held from January 24 through 26 next year.

During the weekend, members tour the Capitol where they can see legislators at work.

They can also set up appointments to meet with their representatives and discuss issues

of importance with them.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

“I strongly encourage you to consider these meetings,” says Council 2 Deputy Director Pat Thompson.

“Those who have participated in past years found them very worthwhile.

“There is a great benefit to reminding legislators that real, live constituents can and do make their way to Olympia,”

The Council 2 Executive Board, the Women’s Action Committee and the Legislative Committee will hold meetings during the weekend.

A sign-up form and full details of the weekend can be found at [www.council2.com](http://www.council2.com).

# It's time for a reasonable revenue increase

**CHRIS DUGOVICH**

This is the time of year when counties and cities are in the process of finalizing the budgets for the next calendar year. Dollars continue to shrink and everyone in their respective jurisdictions can tell you about the individuals who have been laid off and the positions that are left vacant.



*Letter from the President*

Attrition management is the new code phrase for shrinking the size of government that leaves work undone and tasks grinding to a halt.

When a manager or department head has been faced with what have now become multiple years of cuts they are not about to fill a newly vacated position, however essential it may be when another cut is looming around the corner. Next year's possible cut becomes this year's real vacancy.

## Cuts are real

The cuts that have occurred are real. Since this recession started, bargaining unit membership in the City of Spokane is down by approximately 80, Snohomish County is down over 200 and even small jurisdictions are down — some drastically. In Grays Harbor County the road maintenance department and the courthouse has lost 67 positions. That's over 25 percent of the workforce. Keep in mind these aren't supervisors or managers, these are hands-on individuals who maintain roads, sell business licenses and perform all the tasks that make society work.

These real cuts were in spite of the efforts in all these jurisdiction where wage and benefit freezes occurred along with days off without pay to avoid even more severe cuts that would have resulted in deeper losses of services.

All parties have sacrificed and we all know the cuts in the private sector have also been severe. With the end now maybe in sight, there are very few reasons why our elected officials should not be looking at reasonable increases in revenue. Local government services are important and our patience is over for short-sighted politicians who have no problem throwing us under the bus while they make a calculation that further service cuts will preserve their standing with the voters.

# Filing a grievance? Check the contract

When filing a grievance, you should always check it against the terms of the contract.

That's the advice of Council 2 Senior Counsel Audrey Eide, who spoke at the presidents' conference in Chelan in October.

"By doing so you will be able to determine the articles of the contract that are violated," she said. "Checking the terms in the contract also will enable you to add a brief description of the grievance and the contract will enable you to determine the nature of the remedy that you are seeking."

When seeking a remedy, it is important to remember that the arbitrator is empowered to do only what is in the contract, Eide added.

Eide reminded members that it is important that grievances should be processed in time.

"If an employee does not comply with the prescribed time frames, the grievance is forever waived," she said.

"Should the employer fail to respond within the prescribed time frames, the grievant shall have the right to proceed to the next step."

A typical time frame is that the employee should submit a grievance in writ-

The form is titled 'OFFICIAL GRIEVANCE FORM' and includes the AFSCME logo. It contains several sections for employee information: AFSCME LOCAL, STEP, NAME OF EMPLOYEE, CLASSIFICATION, WORK LOCATION, TITLE, and STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE. It also has fields for the date of the grievance, the signature of the employee, and the signature of the union representative. At the bottom, it states 'THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' and '129'.

ing to the immediate supervisor within 10 working days of the occurrence of the grievance, or within 10 working days of the date when the employee could reasonably have known of the occurrence, Eide said. But every contract is different. It is important to be sure to follow the time lines in the contract that applies to you.

Eide also pointed out that it is sometimes possible to gain a remedy or benefit in a settlement that you might not have been able to gain in arbitration.



**Audrey Eide**

An arbitrator has to keep strictly to the terms of the contract, but in a settlement you can seek remedies outside the boundaries of the contract that might be more favorable to the grievant.

## Wrongly fired employee awarded interest on back pay

An arbitrator has awarded interest on back pay to a grievant found to have been incorrectly fired.

The grievant, an employee for the Spokane County Roads Department, inadvertently took home his corrected answer sheet from a flagger class administered by a county instructor. The employee realized his error, called the administrator to apologize, and returned the sheet the next day.

But he was let go three weeks later.

Council 2 filed a grievance on the employee's behalf and the arbitrator, M. Zane Lumbley, rescinded the termination and directed that the employee receive back pay.

In a subsequent application, Council 2 Senior Counsel Audrey Eide argued that the back pay should include interest. Lumbley agreed, finding interest at 3 percent to be appropriate.

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OFFICERS		
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<p><b>DISTRICT ONE</b>  <b>Roger Moller</b>, Local 109 (Snohomish County)  <b>Lee Lehman</b>, Local 1849 (San Juan County)  <b>Matt Wilson</b>, Local 114 (City of Bellingham)  <b>Patty Goins</b>, Local 1811-CA, Snohomish County</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT TWO</b>  <b>Cindy Richardson</b>, Local 1857 (King County Library System)  <b>Melissa Sprague</b>, Local 2084-CS  <b>Pat Miller</b>, Local 2170 (City of Renton)  <b>Cher Ravagni</b>, Local 2083</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT THREE</b>  <b>Patti Cox</b>, Local 3787 (Pierce County Library District)  <b>Conni Uhinck</b>, Local 1308</p>
<p><b>DISTRICT FOUR</b>  <b>Mark Sigler</b>, Local 275 (Grays Harbor County)  <b>Teri Plather</b>, Local 618</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT FIVE</b>  <b>Nicole Snider</b>, Local 307-CO (Clark County)  <b>Tracy Ross</b>, Local 307-VC (City of Vancouver)</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT SIX</b>  <b>Carol Travis</b>, Local 874-H (Prosser Memorial Hospital)  <b>Mike Haider</b>, Local 1122 (City of Yakima)</p>
<p><b>DISTRICT SEVEN</b>  <b>Allen Hill</b>, Local 1191 (Walla Walla County)  <b>Pam Fitzgerald</b>, Local 1191-W (City of Walla Walla)</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT EIGHT</b>  <b>Dave Hanshaw</b>, Local 270 (City of Spokane)  <b>Tom Trarough</b>, Local 492-CS (Spokane County)  <b>Rebekah Johnson</b>, Local 1553 (Spokane County)</p>	<p><b>DISTRICT NINE</b>  <b>Robin Ricks</b>, Local 433 (City of Coeur d'Alene)</p>



FRISINO, from page 1

Frisino began work as an investigator in 1968 at what was then known as the King County Coroner's office. When was summoned to a death scene, he was part of a team mandated to determine the cause of death. After examining the scene and the circumstances of the death, he would take the body to the coroner's office for an autopsy and toxicology investigation and he would try to determine the person's identity.

Frisino's duties could have stopped there. After all, that is what he was paid to do. And he did it well.

But, as he worked his way up to lead investigator and visited more and more death scenes, Frisino became concerned about the people who died alone. He looked beyond the bodies themselves to the wide circle of people who were involved in the person's passing. He thought of family, close friends and associates. Did they even know of this person's death? If they did, how would they cope with it?

He realized, too, that sometimes a person's remains were kept for as long as one-and-a-half years without the person being identified. They did not even have a name to put on the remains.

So Frisino dedicated more of his time to finding out who they were and tracing their families or friends. It was not always an easy task. In spite of the Internet, Frisino says, it has become harder and harder to find some deceased people's real names and next of kin.

"As we have become an increasingly transient community, you are finding more and more people who are unidentified or whose families cannot be traced," he says. "They have no paperwork. No driver's license, no bills, no credit cards. There's nothing to tell us who they are.

"During the investigation, I wondered where the people were who knew this person and had no idea what had happened to them. Perhaps they got into an argument and left without saying where they were going. Perhaps they had just lost contact with their family or friends. Perhaps they tried deliberately to disappear, erasing all traces of their past. An example is a woman who arrived in Seattle with a phony name. We found a bus ticket on her, but that was all and we never found out who she was.

"In today's society, if you don't want to be found, you can move to the next city and disappear.

"A lot who die on the streets are much younger than before. Sometimes they have no identification. We tried fingerprinting them and spent a lot of due diligence on it, but sometimes we were never able to find out who some of them were."

In many cases the hard work paid off, however. Frisino and his fellow workers were able to trace relatives. But often those people needed help with the burial and that help was either not readily available or involved fees that they could not afford.

Yet Frisino was determined that they would not be forgotten. He worked with pastors, priests, rabbis and ministers of every denomination to provide those who had died with funeral services. He worked with the county to purchase a cement vault in the Renton area and about every 18

# It's a rough road as bargaining moves from furloughs to layoffs

When the bargaining committee for newly unionized workers at the City of Arlington met with management to bargain their first contract recently, the budget crunch forced furloughs to the forefront of the negotiations.

But bargaining on this issue proved to be a lot tougher than the committee members, who represent 60 City workers, had expected.

The bargaining committee, formed earlier this year, bargained over furloughs for several months, eventu-

ally getting close to agreement.

"Just at the end, the City announced that they had additional budget problems and that they would have to negotiate layoffs rather than just furloughs," says Council Director of Organizing Bill Keenan. "So they had to go back and renegotiate the number of furlough days in the face of the layoffs. All the bargaining over the furloughs was toast."

Keenan says the situation was the first of its sort that he has faced.

In three subsequent bargaining sessions, the local negotiated five layoffs and a reduced number of furlough days.

Now the local is bargaining on the main contract. The employees are trying to complete the negotiations by the end of the year so that the new contract can be in place for all of 2013.

But, given the recent history, it seems that anything can happen before then.

## Council 2 considers filing unfair labor practice against Spokane County

Council 2 is to file an unfair labor practice against Spokane County over its plans to move 250 inmates out of the Geiger jail facility to a facility in Kennewick in Benton County.

The county wants to ship the prisoners to Benton County to save money. The Benton County jail can house inmates for less than \$60 a day; it costs \$110 a day to house prisoners at Geiger. But the inmates who would be moved are those with fewer mental, health or discipline problems and therefore can be housed for less money.

The move would result in layoffs at the Geiger facility. Spokane County employs more than 220 officers, sergeants and lieutenants at its correctional facilities.

Spokane County has filed a petition with the Public Relations Employment Commission to appoint an arbitrator and ask for a ruling that the inmates can be sent out of the county.

But Council 2 contends that moving the inmates

would result in an unfair labor practice as contracting out the work done by the Geiger correctional officers is not something that an arbitrator can determine, but is part of the contract-negotiation process.

"It must be negotiated and agreed to," explains Spokane Staff Representative Mike Smith. "Jails ship people all over the state because they are overcrowded, but, in terms of labor law, you cannot do so to save money unless it is negotiated."

The county is also considering closing down the Geiger facility and shipping the inmates elsewhere, Smith adds. "If they try to do so, that would be an even bigger issue."

The plans to move inmates and possibly close Geiger has caused several officers to find work elsewhere as they are afraid they will lose their jobs at the facility.

The locals that are affected are 492, 492-G, 1553-S, 492-S and 492-CL.

ELECTION, from Page 1

conventions, including the one held in Seattle in June last year.

"The race for the governorship was close, but obviously the more progressive factor won out," Thompson says, "For Council 2, it was good news."

Losses suffered in the Senate reduce the margin between the pro-labor and anti-labor forces.

Although the pro-worker members still represent a majority in

the Senate, that majority is slim and some anti-worker legislation will be put forward in that environment, Thompson says.

The pro-worker majority in the House of Representatives remains.

In one of the most hotly contested local races, former Microsoft vice president Suzan DelBene, who was endorsed by Council 2, defeated Snohomish County Council member

John Koster.

As expected, Tim Eyman's third renewal of the requirement that tax increases be approved by two-thirds of the Legislature passed easily. But, although it remains law, its constitutional validity is to be contested in the courts.

Under the Eyman initiative, 17 senators can, in effect, control the whole taxing process.

months buried them. Each burial consisted of about 200 urns of their ashes to honor them.

"I saw a need there," he says. "These people needed a burial with dignity."

In addition to putting considerable effort into tracing a dead person's family and friends, and seeing that the lonely were given a decent burial, Frisino was concerned about the suicides that were part of his investigation. He wondered whether a suicide could have been prevented through counseling the person, often alone in an alienated world. "There was nowhere for them to go." He wondered, too, about the effect on family and friends of the suicide.

So it was that Frisino helped set up the Survivors of Suicide Group in the early 1990s that works not only with those contemplating suicide but also helps the families, significant others and friends to cope with such a death.

Frisino might now be retired, but he is still involved

in his life's mission.

He is serving out a three-year term with the American Board of Medical Legal Death Investigation, which sets up a standardized method of death investigation. Being on the board enables him to see how other officers around the country run their operations and to pass on any advice he has from his years of investigation.


Ever since he joined the office of the coroner/medical examiner, Frisino has been a member of Local 1652, the oldest union in the county, of which he served as president for some time.

"Council 2 was very supportive," Frisino says, enabling him and his fellow workers to gain good contracts, even though they went through some tough times. "They were always there when we needed them," he adds.

He knew that, even as he was helping others, Council 2 was helping him.

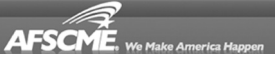
**COUNTY AND CITY EMPLOYEE**  
 Official publication of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees

**AFSCME, AFL-CIO**  
 Published quarterly



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

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**AFSCME** We Make America Happen



# 2012 scholarship winners



Helen Pendergraft



Theo Henderson



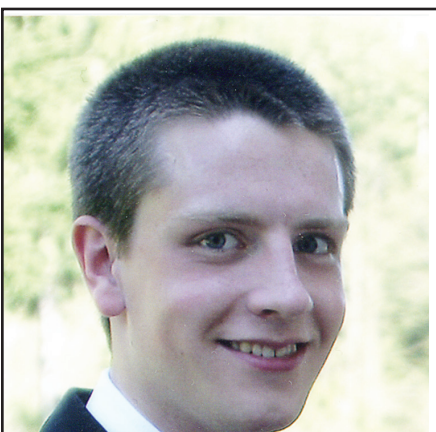
Kelly Diefert



Matthew Glenn



Alicia Sundby



K. Caleb Eades

In this issue, we publish photographs of many of the scholarship award winners announced earlier this year.

## Dependent Scholarship Awards

*In Honor of Alpha O'Laughlin, Council 2 Staff Representative, Retired*

### Four-year scholarship award (\$5,000 per year for 4 years)

*In Memory of George Schultz, past member of Skagit County Road Department*

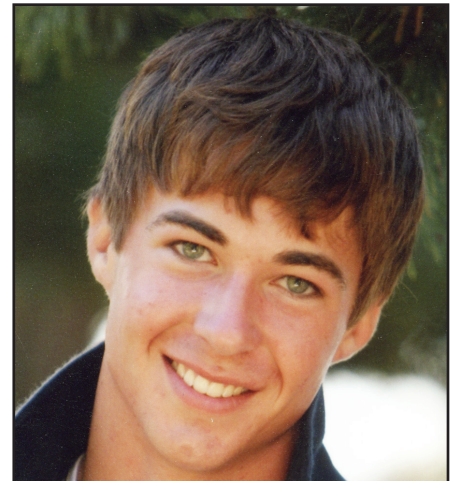
<b>Recipient</b> Helen Pendergraft	<b>Council 2 member</b> Norman Pendergraft	<b>Member's Local</b> 114 City of Bellingham
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Riley Hill

### \$2,000 Award

<b>Recipient</b> Kendal Bates Riley Hill Katie Weichel Jordan Cravens Chelsie Nathe Sheherazed Poshtkouhi	<b>Council 2 member</b> Don Bates, Jr. Allen Hill Henry Weichel Janay Pettet Valentina Espinosa-Bushman Irene Poshtkouhi	<b>Member's Local</b> 176 Skagit County Road Dept. 1191 Walla Walla County 1341 Lewis County 1811-DC Snoh. Co. Dist. Ct. 1837 City of Kirkland 3787 Pierce County Library
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David Irwin

### \$5,000 Award

<b>Recipient</b> David Irwin Kyle Brogan-Ferguson Dylan Chase Kevin Celustka Dana Michels Theo Henderson	<b>Council 2 Member</b> Jeff Irwin Lisa Brogan Scott Chase Larry Celustka Tory Haschak Linda Johns	<b>Member's Local</b> 109 Snohomish Co. Road Dept. 114 City of Bellingham 120 City of Tacoma 1811-M City of Mill Creek 1837 City of Kirkland 2083 Seattle City Library
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### \$2,025 Golf Award

<b>Recipient</b> Katelyn McLeod K. Caleb Eades Matthew Glenn Noah Doran	<b>Council 2 Member</b> William McLeod Norma Eades Dana Glenn Hugh Doran	<b>Member's Local</b> 120 City of Tacoma 1857 King County Library System 2658 Kittitas Co. Appraisers 3787 Pierce County Library
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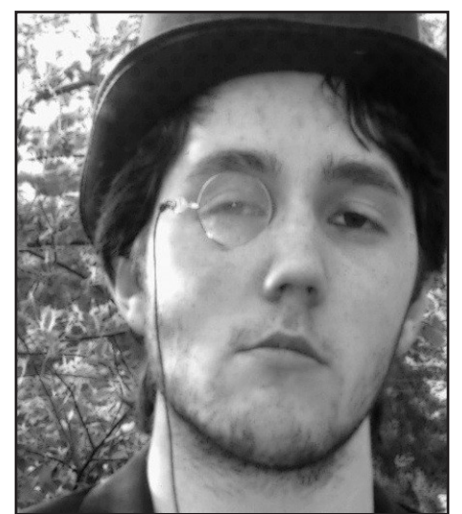


Dana Michels

## Continuing Education Award

*In Honor of Kevin James, Retired Member of Grays Harbor County, Local 275 and former Council 2 Executive Board Member*

<b>Recipient</b> Pei-Shaun Chang Anna Huett Alicia Sundby Angela Davis Kelly Diefert	<b>Recipient's Local</b> 114 City of Bellingham 275 City of Hoquiam 1533-SH Skyline Hospital 1811-CA Snohomish County Auditors 1845-I Island County
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Noah Doran

## Golf tournament funds scholarships

The 2011 tournament raised a little over \$8,000 to fund four additional scholarships for 2012. The 2012 tournament upped the total raised to \$21,500. Those additional scholarships will be awarded for the academic year starting in the fall of 2013.

The 2013 Golf Tournament will be held July 12, 2013 at Chambers

Bay Golf Course on Puget Sound just south of Tacoma. Sign-ups will be available in our website [www.council2.com](http://www.council2.com) right after the first of the year. Additionally, Local Unions can again show their support for the scholarship program by sponsoring a hole.

It's a great day of golf and it all goes to a great cause!



Jordan Cravens



Kevin Celustka



Angela Davis