



# COUNTY & CITY

# EMPLOYEE

AFSCME AFL-CIO

Vol. 18 No. 4

  
<http://www.council2.com>

Fall 2003

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Keep up to date on Council 2 news

Send us your home email address and we will ensure you are kept up to date with information on events, newsletters and matters of importance to members.

Your email address will be kept strictly confidential and will not be distributed outside Council 2. We will use it only to tell you of information that we feel is important to you.

To be added to our list, please send your home email address to: [c2everett@council2.com](mailto:c2everett@council2.com) or complete the form on our Web site, [www.council2.com](http://www.council2.com).

Forms enabling members to update their personal information, such as addresses, will soon also be available on our Web site.

### International convention set for June

AFSCME's International Convention will be held in Anaheim, Calif., from June 21 to 25. If you are planning to attend now's a good time to block out the dates on your calendar. More details will be available early in 2004.

### Legislative weekend to be held Feb. 5-7

Another time to block off on your 2004 calendar is Council 2's annual legislative/executive board weekend. It will be held February 5 through 7 at the Red Lion in Olympia.

Notices and sign-up sheets will be mailed to Local presidents in December.

## INSIDE

### Board seeks lower pension age

— Page 4

### 2004 scholarships are named

— Page 2

## Northwest Regional Conference

# Murray: I'll fight to retain programs

Once again the popular Northwest Regional Conference shattered the record books by attracting some 240 delegates, the biggest attendance ever.

The conference, held in Olympia at the end of October, was attended by contingents from Council 2, Council 28, Council 75 and Local 52 in Alaska.

"It was an excellent conference," says Council 2 President/Executive Director and International Vice President Chris Dugovich. "We are so pleased that the attendees enjoy this annual event. This is our seventh year and we are extremely gratified that it continues to grow and people continue to appreciate the presentations."

Council 2 is always trying to enhance the event and any suggestions for improvements next year will be appreciated, Dugovich added.

The keynote speaker at the conference was US Sen. Patty Murray who said that efforts are being made at the federal level to retain programs important to public employees.

She said, too, that new prescription drug programs are needed and the Social Security and Medicare systems need to be maintained.

The Bush Administration is sending \$87 billion to Iraq, but that sort of money

## Conference snapshots — Page 4

needs to be invested in this country, Murray added.

Among the other speakers was Larry Scanlon, AFSCME Director of Political Action, who pointed out that every effort will be made in next year's races, both at the presidential and congressional level, to regain a labor-friendly US Congress.

Chuck Lovless, AFSCME Director of Legislation, told how the union was able to raise \$23 billion in state and local aid, while Seattle labor law attorney Jon Rosen spoke on the ways in which legal issues affect the bargaining process.

In his presentation, Steve Regentreif, Director of the AFSCME Retiree Program, pointed out that the size of the over-65 population will more than double when the baby boomers reach retirement age. Their massive retirement will create a huge drain on the labor movement, he said.

He discussed ways in which labor can hold on to its retiring members in order to preserve and enhance the unions' strength.



US Senator Patty Murray addresses the Northwest Regional Conference in Olympia.

## Councils 2 and 28 working together

Council 2 and Council 28 will join forces in SeaTac on December 5 at a forum on the Wash-

ington state governor's race. The event, to be attended by leaders from both councils and to be addressed by leading gubernatorial candidates, could be followed by other joint efforts by the two councils in the future.

The forum will mark the start of a process to decide whether the two councils

will pursue a joint gubernatorial endorsement and, if so, which candidate they will support.

No decisions will be made at the meeting. The endorsement process is expected to take at least the first part of next year to complete.

A joint endorsement would be significant as together the two councils represent more than 35,000 public employees



Council 2 members campaigning. (See Page 3 for names)

## Reardon wins county race

Hard work by Council 2 campaign volunteers was rewarded in early November when voters selected Aaron Reardon as the new Snohomish County Executive.

Several volunteers assisted the Reardon campaign for some weeks with telephone banking, sign waving and doorbelling. Among the most active were Bob Mueller, Terry VanWyck, Pete Dykstra, Gerri Delisle, Tamara Dutton and Roger Moller, who campaigned in the primary as well as the November 4 election.

Also assisting were: Karen Kahmann, Ryan Larsen, Ken Lechner, Joe Kraft, Al-

See REARDON, Page 3

## AFSCME endorses Howard Dean

AFSCME has endorsed Democratic candidate Howard Dean for president.

The decision was based on his record, his position on the issues, the strength of his campaign and the overwhelming and enthusiastic support for his candidacy among AFSCME's membership, the union said.

"We have a candidate who represents our values and who can defeat this president," AFSCME President Gerald W. McEntee said. "AFSCME is going to

See AFSCME, Page 3

See ENDORSEMENT, Page 4

# Initiative process has been hijacked by profiteers

**CHRIS DUGOVICH**

While many of our citizens believe our state initiative process is the true form of democracy, a "real" look at the mechanics of the process shows how much it has gone against its original intention. Just look at how most signatures have been gathered in the last few campaigns.

Under the surface, the signature gatherer you see is not what most people expect such a person to be. You expect — and possibly even believe after an encounter — that this person is an active proponent volunteering for a cause. In many cases, however, this person is really an individual who is paid for every signature and is trying to make a few dollars. The cause is usually the last thing they're concerned about. In most cases they don't even understand the individual issue's effects.

The result is that our populist citizen initiative process has been hijacked for the purpose of profit. Of course, Tim Eyman is the real profiteer, pocketing more than \$220,000 just in 2002 from his supporters to provide himself with a very comfortable lifestyle. However, the whole system produces profits.

During the past few years we've learned a great deal about paid signature gatherers and their methods. In reviewing the actual signatures it's apparent that forgeries are prevalent. When you sign a petition your signature is worth anywhere from \$1 to \$4. The temptation to duplicate it on other petitions is certainly too great for many to resist. Not to mention the fact that actual fictitious signatures appear.

The system set up to check any possibilities of fraud is just full of holes. The Secretary of State's office, where all signatures are submitted, is — like all government agencies — understaffed and capable only of doing spot checks.

Although outside individuals are able to access the actual signatures, they and the Secretary of State's staff are both prohibited from comparing the initiative signature from a signature on file for a voter's registration card. This makes the identification of forgeries extremely difficult except for the obvious, such as misspelled names or different, but false, first names. Due to the limited ability of the Secretary of State's office to do nothing more than review a sampling of signatures, many obvious mistakes, forgeries and even flat-out jokes pass and are counted as signatures.

So much so that in the signatures submitted to place Initiative 747 on the ballot "Snoop Doggy Dog" was able to sign a petition and be counted.

Dollars drive the system. Eyman takes his supporters dollars and pays himself and then pays a signature-gathering firm. The firm pays individuals a set amount for each signature. The price for each signature varies and goes up as the deadline to submit the required number approaches.

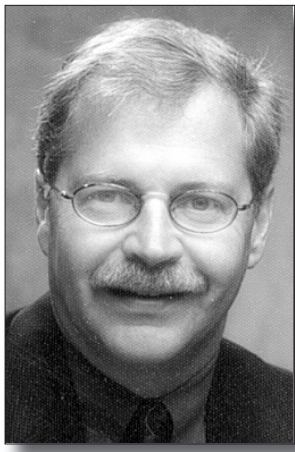
Cottage industries have been established in which individuals gather signatures for more than one petition. Individuals travel from state to state and become professional paid signature gatherers. A few have been convicted of forgery and some, such as those in Oregon a couple of years ago, were captured on camera.

Stronger laws are needed to place this process back in the hands of the voters. Until that happens this system will continue to be exploited for profit.

It's important to be aware that Eyman is touting an initiative to cut the state property tax by 25 percent in 2004. That will devastate all levels of government, including our public schools

No doubt in the process of attempting to place such an initiative on the ballot he'll be pocketing his donor's money and paying signature gatherers who will attempt to present themselves as individuals promoting a cause.

How will "Snoop Doggy Dog" weigh in on this issue, I wonder?



*Letter from the President*

# 2004 scholarships are named for eight people

The Council 2 scholarships for 2004 have been named in honor of, or in memory of eight people, who are listed below. Tributes from the Locals of which they were members are included. Applications for the scholarships will be available in early December or online at [www.council2.com](http://www.council2.com). The deadline is March 15.



## \$2,000 scholarship awards are named for Todd Huff, Shawn Valdez and Tuan Nguyen

On April 5, the officers and staff of the Spokane County Jail lost a remarkable person. Corrections Officer Todd Huff, a 13-year veteran of the Sheriff's Department and Local 492, died suddenly in his home, the victim of a heart attack. Todd was buried on what would have been his 41st birthday. He leaves his wife Kathy and two young daughters, Brianna and Katlyn.

To know Officer Huff, was simply to talk to him. He was nick-named "Bear" years ago by staff who respected him and admired the way he dealt with the issues of working in a jail. Todd was a classification officer for his last eight years of service with our department. That meant he knew almost every inmate who came to the jail. That also meant he could tell you a story or two about most of those inmates. Storytelling was Todd's specialty. People were his specialty. He had a way of making anyone feel comfortable enough to just open up and share.

Todd was a wonderful dad, who would do anything for his girls. He camped out in the back yard with Brianna and Katlyn when there wasn't enough time to load up the camper and leave town for a few days.

Todd was a strong supporter of education and the importance of continuing to grow through further education after high school. He spoke often about his plans for his daughters when they were ready to graduate from school and go on to college.

Shawn Valdez was an active participant in Local 1122, City of Yakima, and served as Local 1122's representative on the City's Insurance Board until her death.

Shawn worked hard to preserve employees' benefits and to enhance the insurance program. She preferred to work behind the scenes, getting things accomplished without calling attention to herself.

Shawn was dedicated to her family as well as to her employment. She left two sons, aged 15 and 10.

Tuan Nguyen worked for the City of Kent from 1986 until he passed away from leukemia near Christmas 2002. During his time at the City and as a member of Local 2617 from its inception there, customers and co-workers knew him for his hard work and cheerfulness.

Tuan's life was full of challenges. As a single young man, he left Vietnam, traveled as a "boat person" through perilous waters to China and eventually made his way to the United States and freedom. He had to leave his family behind to do this. In America he had to learn a new language, and a trade to support him. He eventually

graduated from Highline Community College with a certificate as a press operator and came to work for the City of Kent.

One of the proudest moments in his life was when he became a U.S. citizen. He was so proud of his new country that it was best not to mention communists in front of him if you didn't want to hear a lot of muttering.

Through hard work he helped the print shop grow and improve. Tuan's work ethic was demonstrated by actions such as showing up for work at 7:30 when his shift began at 8:00. To accommodate this, his shift was changed to 7:30, so he showed up at 7:00. He was always there.

Tuan eventually found a lovely woman to share his life with and at the time he passed away he had two small children, and her parents, whom he also supported. Friends and co-workers truly miss him. They admired his cheerfulness, determination and hard work. He would be both surprised and delighted at receiving this honor.



## The Summer School for Women Scholarship is named in honor of Pam Dittloff

Pam Dittloff joined Local 618 in 1979. Since 1984, she has held the positions of President, Chapter Chair, Vice President, Secretary, Local E-Board and Council 2 E-Board. She attended the Summer School for Women on a Council 2 Scholarship in 1995.

Pam promoted the Summer School for Women and the Council 2 Scholarship program, which provided the opportunity for her to attend. She used this valuable opportunity to represent members at all levels. At the time, she was a single parent who devoted her time to her job, the Union and a variety of Special Olympics coaching assignments.

Although she has been promoted to a management position in Thurston County, she continues to be a strong advocate for labor issues and opportunities for women in labor. Naming this scholarship for Pam (Swenson) Dittloff is a fitting thank you for her years of service.



## \$500 Continuing Education Scholarships are named in honor of Mark and Toni Kirschenmann, Linda McGovern and Alpha O'Laughlin

Mark Kirschenmann, who started working with Yakima County in 1972, and Toni Kirschenmann, who started working with the County in 1974, have been extremely active with this union since Yakima County Juvenile Court employees Local 87-P joined Council 2.

Both Mark and Toni have held the offices (some positions several times) of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, E-Board member, and also have served on our negotiating team.

"I do not know what our Union would have done without their leadership skills, knowledge and expertise," says Local president Ruthanne Cortez. "They have been tremendous assets to our union."

Linda McGovern, was active both as a Yakima County Local 87 member and as a member of Local 87-H, Yakima County Health District at the time of her death. She was well thought of by her co-workers and was always available to them for support and genuine caring.

Alpha O'Laughlin was president of Local 1191-W, City of Walla Walla, for about 15 years and, when not president, held other offices. She was a delegate to National Convention several times and a member of the Women's Action Committee for about 20 years. She is currently a staff representative for Council 2.

Alpha has also been an Organized Labor Representative on the Vocational Grant Board for the local school district in Walla Walla.

"Alpha has looked upon every convention and every seminar as a learning experience. She impressed upon our membership that you always come away with added knowledge and always encouraged involvement through her example and knowledge of the union," says Judy Talbot, Local president.

The members of Local 1191-W say they were reluctant to let Alpha retire because she was such a strong support for the local but they were pleased when she was appointed as their new Staff Representative.

### COUNCIL 2 EXECUTIVE BOARD

#### OFFICERS

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

<b>DISTRICT ONE</b> 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)	<b>DISTRICT TWO</b> Doug Peterson, Local 21 (City of Seattle) Diane Barden Prenguber, Local 2084-SC (King County Superior Court). Kathleen Seneca, Local 2617 (City of Kent)	<b>DISTRICT THREE</b> Patti Cox, Local 3787 (Pierce County Library) Conni Uhinck, Local 1308 (Kitsap County) John Ohlsen, Local 120 (City of Tacoma)
<b>DISTRICT FOUR</b> Kevin James, Local 275 (Grays Harbor County) Sandy Griffin, Local 618 (Thurston County)	<b>DISTRICT FIVE</b> Tracy Arney, Local 2699 (Columbia River Mental Health) Bill McEntire, Local 307-CO (Clark County)	<b>DISTRICT SIX</b> Carol Travis, Local 874-HC (Prosser Memorial Hospital/Benton County) Yvette Lewis, Local 1122 (City of Yakima)
<b>DISTRICT SEVEN</b> Chris Wood, Local 1476-AC (Asotin County) Pam Fitzgerald, Local 1191-W (City of Walla Walla)	<b>DISTRICT EIGHT</b> Ken Thomas, Local 492 (Spokane County) Dave Hanshaw, Local 270 (City of Spokane) Amie Swenson, Local 1553 (Spokane County)	<b>DISTRICT NINE</b> Paula Laws, Local 433 (City of Coeur d'Alene)

# Library workers oppose new law

## USA Patriot Act seen as curbing freedom to obtain information

Library workers at the Seattle Public Library are united in their opposition to provisions of the USA Patriot Act that give government agents the right to check their computers and files to find out what patrons have been reading.

"We regard it as a serious compromise to people who use the library facilities," says John Sheets, vice president for librarians in Local 2083.

"What you read and what Internet sites you visit are your own business.

"Library workers all over the country are concerned about the new legislation."

The library workers expressed their concern in a resolution approved at Council 2's biennial convention held in Tacoma in June. The resolution reads, "That we as library workers, public employees, union members and concerned citizens affirm our



opposition to the USA Patriot Act as destructive of libraries; and that information on this resolution be widely distributed to inspire similar action by our fellow union members and citizens."

Librarians see a major part of their professional responsibility as allowing patrons to obtain any information they wish without records being kept of their activities.

Yet the new antiterrorism law gives government agencies broad access to the

records of library patrons who are not suspected of any crime.

"There is always a balance between the need for privacy and government's need to know what is going on," Sheets says. "But in this legislation we see the balance being tipped against the rights of citizens to freely obtain information.

"If someone suspects you are an agent of a foreign power the government can conduct surveillance. And the law prevents the library staff from telling individuals they are being watched," he adds.

"The new law makes people think twice about whether they want to use the library.

"American democracy cannot operate unless there is freedom to obtain information — and the library is one of the places people obtain that information," Sheets says.

### AFSCME, from Page 1

mobilize the largest and most aggressive grassroots campaign this nation has ever seen. Together with Governor Dean, America's working families will take back the White House in 2004."

During June and September Council 2 President and Executive Director Chris Dugovich sat through presentations by eight of the 10 Democratic candidates for president. (With the withdrawal of Sen. Bob Graham of Florida from the race, that number was later reduced to nine.)

President George Bush was invited to give a presentation at the events, but declined.

Dugovich outlined the two meetings in his Northwest Regional newsletter. He said it was extremely difficult to pick one of the candidates over the others. All were close on the issues and any one would be an excellent choice.

The newsletter is available in full on the Council 2 Web site by clicking on the link to Northwest Regional News on the home page.

Dugovich attended the International Executive Board meeting on November 12 at which the board voted unanimously to endorse Governor Dean.

He says he would like to thank all those who wrote or emailed their comments and opinions on Council 2's presidential poll.

"The clear choice of our members in Council 2, the Northwest Region and around the nation was Howard Dean for president."

### REARDON, from Page 1

lison Warner and Kathryn Watanabe.

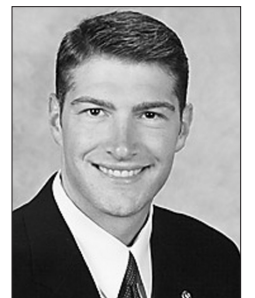
Among the reasons Council 2 leaders welcomed Reardon's election is that Snohomish County is one of the largest jurisdictions in Council 2.

"It's important to have someone in that office who knows labor's issues on such aspects as health care and contracting out," says Pat Thompson, Director of Legislation/Political Action for Council 2.

Also, during these tough budgeting times it helps to have someone with a good financial background in state budget priorities, Thompson says.

Reardon, he adds, has all those attributes.

In Spokane, the candidate endorsed by Council 2, Sen. Jim West, who is the current Republican majority leader in the Senate, was successful in his bid for Mayor of Spokane.



Aaron Reardon

"City employees were relieved to see the former mayor, John Powers, go," Thompson adds. Powers, who was not regarded as a friend of Labor, lost in the primary.

Overall, although the elections produced a few disappointments, the Labor cause fared better this year in most races, Thompson says.

The balance of power in the Legislature has not changed and the losses that were suffered in some races are unlikely to have a serious impact on our union's agenda, he adds.

## Local reaches into community

If you drive along Valley Westside Road in Stevens County, you may come across the road sign pictured on the right.

It's a testimony to an effort by members of Local 1135 at the Stevens County Courthouse to reach out into their community by adopting a 3-mile stretch of road, which they regularly keep clean.

Twice a year, Local members, usually numbering from six to 10, work their way up and down the stretch of road. The cleanup usually takes about an hour, says Julie Brown, president of the Local.

Members of the cleanup crew enjoy two rewards. One is to help the local community.



The other is to enjoy pizza together once the job is done.

## Special rate on VISA cards

All purchases and balance transfers on your Council 2 Visa credit card made before Jan. 31, 2004 will enjoy a special rate of 6.9 percent a year. The rate will be valid for payments made until May 31, 2004.

From June 1, 2004 all balances will return to the regular rate of 12 percent a year.

Those members who do not have Council 2 credit cards and would like to apply for a card should call the union's head office at 1-800-775-6418 or e-mail the union at c2everett@council2.com requesting that an application be mailed to you.

# Corrections officers swap ideas with colleagues in other states

Five corrections officers from Council 2 joined colleagues in Columbus, Ohio in September to discuss issues that concern them, to check out new legislation and to learn how they could be more effective in their jobs.

The officers — three from Spokane County Jail Local 492 and two from Pierce County Jail Local 3752 — attended a 500-strong conference staged by AFSCME's Corrections United, which represents more than 80,000 corrections professionals in AFSCME.

The three-day corrections conference was followed by a two-day meeting of the Corrections and Criminal Justice Coalition, which consists of members of unions,



guilds and associations from all over the United States.

Spokane Staff Representative Mike Smith, who sits on the ACU and CCJC standing committees, said aspects of corrections work such as gang recogni-

tion, stress management, staffing shortages, and workplace safety and standards were discussed.

The group also conferred on how they could lobby the federal government for improvements in the law relating to their work and changes in the standards that are applied.

"It is useful for people to get out and interact and see what happens in other parts of the country and to learn what solutions they come up with," Smith says.

"They get the opportunity to look at whether others have procedures and policies that are more effective or easier to use."

The ACU Corrections conferences are held every two years.

### County and City Employee

Official publication of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Published quarterly



President/Executive Director.....Chris Dugovich  
Address .....P.O. Box 750, Everett, WA 98206-0750

Council 2 campaigners pictured on Page 1 are: Back, from left, Chris Dugovich, President/Executive Director, Cori Corcoran, Staff Member, and Pat Thompson, Director of Legislation/Political Action; front, from left: Terry VanWyck, Local 1811-CA, and Laura Wentworth, Staff Representative.

# SNAPSHOTS

from the

2003 Northwest Regional Conference



**Top: Workshop attendees**

**Above: Attendees from Council 75 Local 88, Multnomah County**

**Below: From left, Nancy Baker, Mark Bronson and Joey Garcia**

**Bottom: Women's caucus members. From left, Alpha O'Laughlin, and Lois Clement (Council 2) and Liz Larsen (Council 28)**

**Right, top: Anita Teague (Council 2), left, and Kandy Kraig (Council 28)**

**Right, bottom: Howard Ocobock (Council 28)**



*The seventh Northwest Regional Conference, held in Olympia in late October, was attended by 240 people from Council 2, Council 28, Council 75 and Local 52 from Alaska.*

## Board seeks to lower pension age

Most public employees receive less pension income when they retire before age 65 than they would were they to work to the normal retirement age. But some employees, such as those who work in corrections, find it almost impossible to continue to work until they are 65.

"Can you imagine a 65-year-old corrections officer wrestling with an inmate?" asks Pat Thompson, Council 2's Director of Legislation/Political Action.

Now the recently appointed Select Committee on Pension Policy — on which Thompson serves — is hoping to change all that.

The retirement age will be one of the issues in the bills the committee plans to forward to legislators for consideration during the short legislative session, which starts in January.

The committee will consider the bills during its December meeting.

The current "one size fits all" age-65 system does not work for a lot of employees, particularly for those who are expected to perform physically demanding and dangerous jobs. "We want to create a better option for all employees," Thompson says.

The good news about the state's retirement system is that it is fiscally stable, Thompson adds. Many states, including Oregon and Montana, are running millions in the red in their pension plans, he says.

"Through our due diligence, Washington avoided the temptation for the state to rob the fund," Thompson adds.

### ENDORSEMENT, from Page 1

stand together in our decision on who the next labor-endorsed gubernatorial candidate should be," says Council 2 President and Executive Director Chris Dugovich. "We will have almost twice the clout as any other union."

The present governor, Gary Locke, said earlier this year that he will not stand for re-election to a third term next year. Since then a number of candidates from the Democratic and Republican parties have announced their intention to run as candidates for the office.

All the major candidates will be invited to attend the forum. Among those who have already said they will attend are the three leading Democratic contenders — King County Executive Ron Sims, Attorney General Christine Gregoire and former state Supreme Court Justice Phil Talmadge.

Dugovich says it is more important than ever that the two councils should join forces,

"In my better-than 20-year career representing public employees, I don't think I have seen a more difficult time for our members," he says. "Both Council 2 and Council 28 need to start working closer together so we can have a larger impact on issues such as who will be the state's next governor."

"We hope that this is just the start of many joint events in the future."

Dugovich adds that Council 2 and Council 28 are even closer together now following the successful passage of the new state pension legislation.

"It is important that both of us start to exchange notes on our successes and our defeats as we pursue better wages, benefits and working conditions at the bargaining table," he says.

