



KCLS VOICE

The newsletter of Local 1857

August 2012

This issue's theme is "With a Little Help From My Friends"

News & Events:

9/3 MLK County Labor Council
Labor Day Celebration,
11:00am-3:00pm, Woodland
Park, Seattle

9/14 Executive Board Meeting,
7:00pm, Service Center,
Issaquah

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Inserts Help Wanted, Bonus
Benefits & A Report from the
Convention

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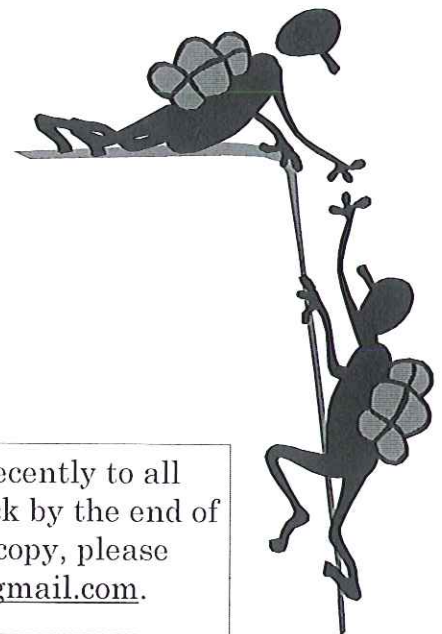
President's Podium

Susan Veltfort, President, Local 1857

In reality, we have bunches of help from our Union and in this issue of the newsletter you will read about the broad range of union support available. As a member of Local 1857 you belong to a community of KCLS library workers and a community of public employees through AFSCME, our parent union organization. There is strength in numbers and do we ever have numbers! There are 1.6 million members in AFSCME and we, as library workers, can boast our own "Jobs We Do" section on their website (go to: <http://www.afscme.org/union/jobs-we-do/library-workers>).

Speaking of help, our Union needs you: be sure to read the "Help Wanted" section in this newsletter which describes several union committees to join. Most importantly, please complete the **contract negotiation survey** and encourage others to do so, too. You will be providing your Contract Negotiation Team with valuable information so they can help you; also, the more people who complete the survey, the more credibility (translation: strength!) your negotiation team will have at the contract negotiation table.

Susan Veltfort,
Local 1857 President



The contract survey was sent out recently to all members of Local 1857 and is due back by the end of August. If you haven't received a copy, please contact Carrie Rolph: kikiduck@gmail.com.

What is a Steward?

A steward is well-versed in the contract and policies that affect wages, hours and working conditions. She learns as much as she can about the policies and rules that apply to our Union members and our workplace.

A steward is the eyes and ears of the Union. He brings important information from our day-to-day work to the Union leadership so the Union can be what our members need.

A steward speaks up for the Union and the membership. She promotes what the Union can do for the members and will give firm reminders about our contract's requirements to management if they are needed.

A steward is an equal to the boss when he represents the Union, even when in meetings with supervisors.

A steward cares for the membership. The Union is on the side of the members and a steward will take the extra steps needed to help a member using whatever tools the Union has. Sometimes this will mean guiding a member through the process of filing a grievance or assisting them during the discipline process.

A steward is a confidential confidante. He will keep the details of members' problems private and will respect their decisions on what steps to take on their behalf.

A steward makes sacrifices of her spare time so that the union as a whole is stronger and the members get the most they can.

“A Steward is an equal to the Boss when he represents the Union...”

The Voice Profile

Every issue will present an interview with one of the nearly 900 individuals in Local 1857.



Name: Jennie Westlund

Dossier: Public Services Librarian I—Adult Services. Employed at KCLS 20 years in September

Hometown: Marysville

Hobbies: Travel, Reading, Gardening and more Travel!

Union Activities: Union Steward, past Librarian-At-Large, Chair WLA-IGLU Interest Group

Favorite Book/Move: Three books: The Mists of Avalon, The Thorn Birds, The Cider House Rules. Movie: Ben-Hur

Quote: I've been pro-union most of my adult life and concerned about people's workplace rights. I got involved with the union because it gave me an opportunity to represent my co-workers and learn how the union works.

Hopes and Dreams for the Library: I'd like KCLS to be a supportive atmosphere in which staff is encouraged to excel and feel physically safe along with a sense of freedom to fully express themselves. An open, collaborative workplace with both management and the work force focusing on the important goals of excellent library service/customer service would be ideal.

What To Do When...

This is a monthly feature in which our Staff Representative will provide advice to all union members.

Diana Prenguber, Staff Representative
Washington State Council for County and City Employees, AFSCME

A fairly new buzz phrase in Human Resources is "subject matter experts." For Union members who want to talk to someone in the Union, it could help answer the question, "Who should I ask about this (problem/issue/concern)?"

If you have a question specific to your community library (examples: Are you performing out of class work? Is this a safety violation? Is this the proper procedure for performing this task?) your shop steward will be the best starting place. If you have a question about an HR message, a hiring practice, or something that is specific to the entire King County Library System (examples: Is this KCLS policy on use of sick leave or travel time?), an Executive Board Member or the President, Vice President or Chief Shop Steward would be the people to ask. As your Staff Representative, I am your labor rules and regulations expert. Questions like, "King County policy is (xyz) -- is that legal?" or "Our contract says...but my manager said...Are they interpreting the contract correctly?" are questions that are appropriate for the staff rep.

*"Who should I ask about
this (problem/issue/
concern)?"*

I am proud to say that Local 1857 leaders and stewards are learning more and more about negotiating contracts, representing members in grievances, labor management meetings, and all things affecting your work place. Our Steward program has made tremendous strides in the past year and the Executive Board is active and involved. You can't go wrong contacting any of these members for any issue concerning wages, hours and working conditions.

In Solidarity, Diana Prenguber, Staff Representative, 206-919-7903, Dianap@council2.com

Minutes Megaphone

Union meeting minutes contain lots of information about Union actions and discussions that affect our work lives. For answers to this issue of the "Minutes Megaphone," read the May 18 and June 8 E-Board Minutes. Didn't receive the minutes? Please contact Susan Manning smanning209@yahoo.com (253) 879-1176.

1. Who is our new Union representative to the KCLS Tuition Assistance Committee?
 2. What classification will no longer be allowed to sub as a PSA?
 3. Who did the Union recently question about outsourcing activities? (and what were the responses)?
 4. What did the Union representatives on the KCLS Safety Committee report to the E-Board concerning the Pages?
 5. What are the "Member Action Teams" and what might they do in our Union?
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Newsletter Staff: Rosalie Olds, Susan Manning, Janelle Sluyter

Comments or Questions?

Email smanning209@yahoo.com or roldsus@yahoo.com

Special thanks to:

Jennie Westlund

Help Wanted:

Newsletter staff – artists, cartoonists, crossword (or other puzzle) makers, photographers, newshounds, researchers, writers, willing all-around volunteers. Please contact Susan Manning or Rosalie Olds (emails above).



The Quotable Voice:

“My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there.”

Charles Kettering, inventor

Puzzle of the Month

(There’s no actual puzzle for our puzzle because our crossword puzzler, Gerry Jones, has three broken wrist bones! We hope you’ll feel better soon, Gerry!)

Answers can be found in the newsletter; the answer key is at www.kclsvoice.org – under “Newsletters”.

1. Event at Crossroads International Park
2. Important membership input for contract negotiations
3. New AFSCME President
4. Mauer’s book is for union _____
5. Type of insurance for special members of the union families
6. Newsletter need
7. Speaks up for union and membership
8. One of two people to send comments to about the newsletter
9. Person to go to with questions about labor rules and regs.

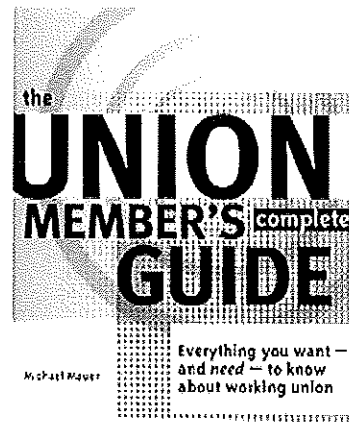
The Voice Review

In each issue we’ll review a book, movie, or website having to do with unions.

The Union Member’s Complete Guide

by Michael Mauer; Union Communications Services (2001)

The “Joy of Cooking” for union members, this is the basic book on how unions work and what each member can do to shape their union. Includes information on how to get help with workplace issues, what happens during contract negotiations, what a union’s responsibility is to its members, grievance strategies and procedures, how to have an impact on how the union operates, and how to educate yourself about your union and the issues it’s dealing with on behalf of members. Also contains a glossary and a list of “helpful contacts.” Every union member needs this basic survival guide (only one copy in KCLS!).



Do you have a book, movie or website review you would like to share? Please send it to smanning209@yahoo.com.

AFSCME Has Our Backs: Report From the Convention

In June, I had the exciting opportunity to attend the 40th International Convention for AFSCME, along with fellow Local 1857 members, Susan Veltfort, Carrie Rolph, Cindy Richardson, Diana Prenguber, and two alternates Stan Brooks and Karen Russell. At the Local 1857 General Membership meeting in April we were all voted in to represent Local 1857.

What I got really excited about were the resolutions. These resolutions were goals/values that AFSCME chose to put its resources toward in the next several years. A lot of these resolutions involved protecting our pensions, keeping healthcare affordable and available to everyone, equal rights for women in the workplace, government work place job security and more. All of the Local 1857 representatives voted "yes" to all of the resolutions. Watch this link for a full listing soon: <http://www.afscme.org/members/conventions/resolutions-and-amendments>. In some years the representatives at the convention are asked to vote on whether or not to raise union dues, but that was not on the ballot this year and so union dues will not be raised. All of the Local 1857 representatives also voted for Lee Saunders for President and Laura Reyes for Vice-President Secretary (and they won!).

I also went to a workshop about keeping respect in the workplace and what really constitutes harassment in the workplace. Being in a protected class and/or financially vulnerable to the one harassing you can be fought on a legal basis. AFSCME puts resources into educating its members about how to stand up against harassment including having legal staff available to help. We have a working group in our union right now looking at ways to deal with bullying and harassment in the workplace.

We had the opportunity to hear speeches from Vice-President Biden, who spoke on the vital work that government employees do, as well as Nancy Pelosi and Kamala Harris (attorney general of California).

It was only through the convention that I could see how large our numbers are and realize what kind of political power we represent.

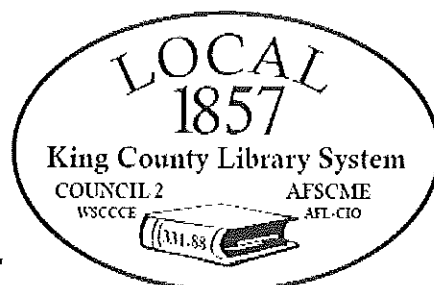
Submitted by Rosalie Olds

From a Los Angeles Times article (June 22, 2012) reporting on the AFSCME convention: For Lee Saunders, the newly elected president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, defeat does not mean retreat. Mr. Saunders is vowing to increase efforts to battle policies his union detests, including efforts to privatize government services.

For the full article go to

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/23/business/saunders-new-afscme-leader-vows-tougher-fight-for-rights.html?](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/23/business/saunders-new-afscme-leader-vows-tougher-fight-for-rights.html?src=recg)

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Bonus Benefits

Did you know about the “bonus benefits” you receive as a Union member (in addition to the all-important workplace protections)?

Discounts:

Flower service, Goodyear tires and service, “Save My Home” Hotline, health clubs, AT&T Wireless, legal service, moving companies, TurboTax, Powell’s Bookstore, car and truck rentals, resort condo rentals, movie theaters, theme parks, sporting events, Broadway shows, museums, aquariums, travel packages and tours.
For more details go to: <http://www.afscme.org/members/advantage>

Education & Scholarships:

Online Leadership Academy www.afscme.org/members/education-and-trainings/online-learning
Investor Education for Working Families www.afscmeinvestoreducation.org/
Many scholarships for Union members and their children; for details go to:
<http://www.afscme.org/members/scholarships>
<http://www2.council2.com/scholarships/index.html>

Businesses with Programs/Plans for Union Members:

Mortgage company, Mortgage Assistance Program, “Save My Home” Hotline, Auto Insurance, Pet Insurance (!), Pet Savings Program, Life Insurance, Accident Protection Insurance, Credit Counseling.
For more details go to: <http://www.afscme.org/members/advantage>

Help Wanted: Members for the Union’s “KCLS Policies Committee”

Goal of the committee: To be a watchdog, in the interests of staff, of policies set by KCLS.

Tasks: Read any draft policy changes that occur and provide comment to the union leadership.

Who is needed: Local 1857 members from varied classifications and locations.

Time commitment: Unknown (this is a new committee). We currently have 5 members and this seems to be a good size; with more people we can rotate members so everyone gets breaks.

Meetings: All work is currently by email.

Success story from this new committee: “We were able to get KCLS to remove a section saying that a PIC would have to fill out an accident insurance form in the absence of a Manager (we felt that was managerial in nature).”

Many hands make light work! **Contact:** Andy Wickens alwickens@gmail.com.

Help Wanted: Book, Movie, and Website Reviewers for the “KCLS Voice” Newsletter.

Goal: Provide our Local 1857 members with informative and/or entertaining resources about union life.

Tasks: Read or view a book, movie, or website, write a review (we’ll provide guidelines), and send to the newsletter editor.

Who is Needed: Any interested Local 1857 member! Experience reviewing or writing-for-publication not necessary (we’re all just learning!).

Time Commitment: Depends on item reviewed, the reviewer, and the number of reviewers in the group. One reviewer/review needed for each issue.

Meetings: All work is by email.

Misc: A list of suggested books, movies, and websites will be provided, although reviewers are welcome to look for items outside the list.

Contact: Susan Manning mannings@kcls.org or 253-879-1176.

Help Wanted: Members for the Communications Committee

Goal: To develop the Union’s communication network and discussion/problem-solving process and inspire more Union participation.

Tasks: Various; some members choose to work on specific activities (newsletter, website, participation, media, alerts to membership, etc.) either alone or in groups. All participate in meetings and email discussion, offering ideas, insights, opinions, etc.

Who is needed: Anyone interested in participating is welcome.

Time: This is an on-going committee; participants may jump in for as long as they’re interested. Individual time involved is based on how much each person wishes to be involved. Emails might be once or twice a week with expectations of brain-storming, comments, etc.

Meetings: Every few months, otherwise discussion is by email.

Contact: Susan Manning mannings@kcls.org or 253-879-1176.