Board Nominations are Closed; One Seat Requires Election

Cecily Hodges, President

As you know, nominations have been open for one-half the APEA Board of Director seats this past month. Nominations are now closed. Of the 9 BOD seats up for election, only one actual election will be necessary.

In the Supervisory Southeast Seat, Ann McPherson and Jeff Kasper were both nominated, and will vie for the seat. All the other seats had only one nomination each, so no election is necessary – if there is no opposition for a seat, the sole nominee is deemed elected and no actual balloting is required. That is a nice financial saving for APEA, although contested elections are also healthy and sometimes even desirable.

Congratulations to the successful candidates in the uncontested seats! Your interest and willingness to serve both your local union and your State Federation is sincerely appreciated.

We have a nice cross-section of incumbents returning to their seats and new Board Members assuming seats for the first time. That will insure a good degree of stability and consistency, while also bringing to the Board new members, new ideas and new perceptions regarding the needs of the organization.

A good balance of new and old, history and future, perspective and prospective – a good equation for a strong, vital, effective organization.

If you are a Southeast SU member, please be sure to vote when you receive your ballot in a few weeks.

Please stay engaged and involved – we all know that these are challenging times for Alaska public employees, and the more solidly we stand together, the better we will all weather this “storm”.

April 2017
News from NASHTU

by Gene Christian, Southeast Field Associate

Lund, an SU member, also serves as the SU Northern Supervisory Chapter Chair and the APEA Board of Directors Executive Vice President; Northern Supervisory

Through APEA’s affiliation with AFT, our SU transportation engineers have become involved and active in the National Association of State Highway and Transportation Unions. Formed in 1999, NASHTU, has now grown into a coalition of 38 unions and affiliates from 20 states and the District of Columbia representing hundreds of thousands of state and locally employed public transportation workers throughout the United States.

This year, SU/APEA’s participation was especially important because of our recent successful action against total privatization of DOT’s Design Section function. SU delegates, Mike Lund and Liam Carnahan, made a presentation at the conference regarding that effort.

In addition, Alaska Congressman Don Young was a featured speaker at the conference, and was introduced by delegate Mike Lund.

USESE, Local 4688 negotiates new contract

by Jenn Madsen, Southeast Field Representative

United Special Education Service Employees, Local 4688 Negotiators Samantha Cowper and Lyon Johnson successfully negotiated a successor agreement with the Special Education Service Agency.

The new Agreement included wage increases, new language addressing bullying in the workplace and a working from home agreement. They did a great job.
New Union Member Labor Class

On Monday May 8th The Alaska Professional Fire Fighters (AKPFFA) will be hosting John Kretzschmar from the University of Omaha, William Brennan Institute on Labor Studies in Anchorage.

Some of you may remember John from several years back when he first presented this training. John puts on a great class (5 to 6 hours) that covers labor history, how to talk union and why we need unions. He provides a point of view on labor that many of our young members have never heard. We usually gear this toward our new members but it is educational for everyone. Our current Commissioner of Labor attended the class last time John was in town. The response from those who attend is very positive and an added bonus is that the class usually produces a new wave of motivated members. John does this all over the country with all types of union members.

This training is open to all our Brothers and Sisters in the labor movement in Alaska. Site selection will depend on what kind of interest is generated. Training will begin at 9:30 on the 8th of May. The cost is $25 dollars per attendee to help provide lunch.

If you are interested in attending or sending members to attend please e-mail Tom at the address below: tomwescott@gmail.com.

If you will definitely attend, contact the APEA Anchorage Field Office and APEA will cover the class fee for attending APEA members.


MSBEA Honors Activist Frankie Barker

By Jenn Madsen, Southeast Field Representative

The Matanuska Susitna Borough Employees Association, Local 6136 honored Frankie Barker for her years of service to MSBEA and APEA/AFT.

Pam Graham presented Frankie Barker with a certificate of appreciation and a gift card at the annual membership meeting held on April 12, 2017.

Frankie has given countless hours representing MSBEA members. She served on the MSBEA Board and on the APEA/AFT Employee Political Information Committee.
High-Deductible Health Plans

By Brian Penner, South Central Regional Manager

With many employers moving toward high-deductible health plans (HDHP) for their employees, it is critical for employees to have access to health provider information that can inform their choices.

HDHP plans have lower premiums but higher deductibles than a traditional health plan. The assumption behind these plans is that because the employee is spending more of their own money, they take more control over their medical choices.

One resource that can be helpful in making these choices is Consumer Reports (CR). At a recent health conference in Anchorage, a representative from CR informed the participants of the extensive research and reports available through their organization and their commitment to providing consumers informed choices for their health care.

While not all online content for CR is available for free, they do provide some articles free of charge. The current issue is about heart health and heart disease, the nation’s leading killer. http://www.consumerreports.org/heart-disease/take-charge-of-your-heart-health

News from Petersburg, PMEA, Local 6132

By Gabe Hargrove, Southeast Field Representative

The Petersburg Municipal Employees Association (PMEA), Local 6132 negotiating team met with APEA Field Representatives Gabe Hargrove and Joel Hill in Petersburg on April 3rd & 4th.

The current contract between PMEA and the borough of Petersburg is set to expire July 1 and we’re in the process of getting prepared to negotiate the next contract. Health care, compensation and working conditions are among the top issues/concerns with the membership and all will be addressed as we begin negotiations with the borough.

Our first round of negotiations is set for May 1, 2017. The bargaining team is feeling optimistic as we move forward.

From left to right: President Justin Haley, Joe Bertagnoli, APEA Southeast Field Representative Joel Hill, Blake Buotte and Kalin Pitta-Rosse
The APEA/AFT Supervisory Unit Executive Board met in Anchorage on March 28, 2017. The agenda was packed with hot topics such as the legislative session, the establishment of a Health Committee and a By-law Committee, the South Central Vice Chair vacancy and the upcoming negotiations.

During the meeting, the topic of establishing the two new committees was determined to be a priority. The Health Committee will look at options for the SU members to bring forward during the next round of negotiations, which will start up again this coming fall.

The Bylaw Committee will review and bring forth recommended updates to the existing SU Bylaws. It is the hope of the Executive Board to establish the Bylaw Committee by early Fall. If you are interested in participating in this committee, please contact John White, with a copy to Pete Ford at: john.white@alaska.gov and pford@apea-aft.org.

The Executive Board intends to fill the vacant South Central Vice Chair position by mid April. Thank you to those of you who responded to the March 16, 2017 email.
Local 6070 Reaches a Tentative Agreement with the University of Alaska
By Jason Roach, Northern Field Representative

Economic times are tough in Alaska but the 6070 Negotiators led by Michael Koskie dug in and secured some outstanding and creative contract improvements.

The team was able to reinstate Legal Trust and bargain for a Me-Too clause that will insure our members will receive any increase the non-represented staff gets.

Health benefits will stay the same for the duration of the contract and an unfunded Step 17 was added to the grid. Utility employees will see an increase of 12% to help with retention and staffing of the new power plant. The team also negotiated a paid two hour Union orientation for all new members. The orientation will give us the opportunity to meet our new members, go over the contract and build solidarity.

The tentative agreement will now go to the members for a vote and if ratified it will go to the Board of Regents for final approval. The team agreed to a two year term and will be prepared to head back to the table when economic times improve.
Some Important Facts About Real ID

By Cindy Spanyers, Legislative Liaison

Congress passed the REAL ID Act in 2005. The intent was to establish another tool to combat terrorism by creating a national database of identification through drivers’ licenses in each state. Since that time, several states – including Alaska – have not complied with the congressional act but have received waivers. The waivers end within the next year and, in some cases, this coming June.

How does this impact you and your job?

If you work on base – for the school district or the state or another entity – you must have a REAL ID by June 7 to access military bases including Ft. Wainwright and JBER.

If you need to fly for your job or any reason, you will need a REAL ID by January 22, 2018.

How do you obtain one?

At this time, you cannot. Alaska Statutes prohibit the Division of Motor Vehicles from spending state funds on this requirement. This law passed not long after Congress enacted Real ID as the legislature at that time thought it was an unfunded mandate and federal over-reach.

But the federal act still stands. Homeland Security warns that Alaskans as well as the citizens in more than a dozen other states will not be able to gain access to military bases or fly on domestic flights without a Real ID (but a passport will suffice).

In response, Governor Walker sponsored HB 74 and its companion, SB 34, which will bring the state into compliance and allow Alaskans to travel. If passed, the legislation would upgrade systems, equipment and processes for a REAL ID/ID card. The administration seeks to address privacy concerns by directing DMV to destroy scanned documents and restricting data sharing. It also allows DMV to charge an additional $20 fee to cover the increased cost.

To qualify for REAL ID, DMV will require a primary document, a secondary document and proof of Alaska residency. Examples of primary documents include an original or certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate; a passport or passport card issued by the United States or U.S. Territory; or a U.S. military identification for active duty, retiree or reservist. A secondary document includes all primary documents; a license from another state or Alaska; an employee photo or school ID; voter registration card; or a health insurance card. In addition, there is a requirement to show proof of the applicant’s principal residence and proof of your social security number.

As of this writing – April 26th – HB 74 is in House Finance where public testimony was taken early this week. SB 34 is in Senate Finance.

The session must finish its work by May 17th, the 121st day mandated by the constitution.

For now, if you travel - and at one time or another virtually every Alaskan wants or needs to fly - gather documentation to establish you are who you say you are for a REAL ID (if it passes) or for a passport. For more information, go to https://www.dhs.gov/real-id-public-faqs
APEA staff along with their colleagues from AFT presented training once again this year at Alyeska.

Members from around the state gathered in Girdwood for the five day annual event, during which staff presented training on a variety of topics including the popular Union 101 and Employee Rep Training.

Evan Sutton (AFT) presents Digital Organizing

Tami Brown (CEA)

Gabe Hargrove, Chris Pearson (JMHP), and Lila Searer (JMHP)

Jeff Warner (SU), Roy Robertson (SU), Steve Yarnot (SU), Deb Wetherhorn (SU), Robin Rettig (JESS), and Jane Erickson (AaNA)
Highlights from the Employee Rep live evaluation underscores the class thoughts. Namely, five stars for no PowerPoint!

Igor Kagan (AFT) and the group from Strategic Leadership
ANNOUNCEMENT OF NOMINATIONS FOR 2017 APEA BOARD OF DIRECTOR ELECTION

Nominations are now closed for the 2017 APEA Board of Director election. Please be advised of the following nominations and upcoming election schedule:

**ACE/AEI0U**
Primary: Dane Sutterfield  Alternate: Stephanie Voorhees

**AHECTE/AHMC**
Primary: Harold “Hap” Pierce  Alternate: Charles Silva

**Northern Region**
Primary: Rita Heselton  Alternate: Deborah Koons

**South Central Region**
Primary: Randy Jones  Alternate: Sara Clemons

**Southeast SU**
Primary: Ann McPherson  Alternate: John White
Primary: Jeff Kasper

**TOTEM “A”**
Primary: Sharon Baker  Alternate: Sandy Thompson

**TOTEM “B”**
Primary: Amey Tamagni  Alternate: Alicia Woods

**United Academics “A”**
Primary: Abel Bult-Ito  Alternate: Anthony “Tony” Rickard

**United Academics “B”**
Primary: Tim Hinterberger  Alternate: Nelta Edwards

In accordance with Section V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Paragraph 7 – Selection, Item E: If a candidate is unopposed at the close of nominations, a mail ballot will not be required and the candidate shall assume office on July 1 or after completion of the balloting process. All nominees, except the SE SU Primary Chair candidates, are unopposed and are declared elected and will assume office on 1 July 2017.

In accordance with Section V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Paragraph 7 – Selection, Item A, ballots will be prepared for the SE SU Primary Seat and distributed to eligible SE SU voters not later than 1 June 2017. A follow-up announcement will be made when the ballots are distributed.

Thank you, all, for your participation in the nomination process. Congratulations to those candidates who are deemed elected. Good luck to those candidates with an election; please remember to vote, those members whose BOD representative(s) are to be elected.

Fraternally,

Michael Lund, Exec. Vice President
APEA/AFT
LOOSE ENDS & POTPOURRI THOUGHTS

Seems like there are some loose ends and random thoughts that need follow-up – hope I can remember most of them!

The APEA Board of Directors did meet this month, and did adopt its budget for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning 1 July 2017. Looks like we will remain in business and continue to work on behalf of our members. And given the state of Alaska's revenue, I think we can expect ample work!

In addition, the Board did discuss the Budget Survey, and agreed that response was interesting, useful, but insufficient to be the basis of organizational priorities or a defined position. The survey is linked to APEA's website; please click [here](#) and review the survey/responses for yourself.

Although the survey results are not definitive, I think we can agree that our state's fiscal situation needs to be stabilized and made as predictable as possible. While I think most of us share some apprehension about what the final product will be or look like, at least the Administration and the House Majority are trying to establish an organized plan for the state's financial future – if you get a chance, please thank a House Majority member for their efforts.

Thanks to a great deal of dedication and hard work from staff – especially Anchorage Manager Brian Penner, Anch Reps Jenn Madsen, Annie Knight, Gene Christian, Anch AAs, Jackie Bennet and Emily Astrande and Juneau Reps Joel Hill and Gabe Hargrove – we just completed another highly successful member training program at Alyeska. This event has become a great APEA annual tradition, and the member response, appreciation and compliments to event staff (those above) are overwhelming and sincerely appreciated.

Meanwhile, we continue to work to persuade the legislature to craft a strong, effective financial plan that will fund the state and allow state workers to implement the programs the legislature and the Administration wish to continue to provide, and to do so with competence and quality. This primarily involves the Operating Budget, but also involves a variety of other legislative proposals, such as an Early Retirement bill (HB 11), which will allow senior personnel to retire, if they wish, and help protect the careers of less senior employees while allowing the state to have immediate salary savings; the Pension Choice bill (HB 83), which will allow employees to individually select whether they wish to belong to a defined benefit or a defined contribution retirement plan, and save the state money while allowing that choice; and advocating against “bad ideas”, such as freezing employees' salaries (SB 31) to a dollar figure and spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to decide whether to contract out services already being efficiently provided by state employees and generally diminishing Alaska state service.

Thank you, all, for your support and for your vigilance – for alerting us to workplace problems and issues, and helping us respond timely, pertinently and effectively to your workplace issues. Let's keep our partnership strong, vital and dynamic!