2018 brings significant challenges to Alaska, APEA and all public sector labor unions in our country. We are all aware of Alaska's budgetary/revenue problems, which have been translating into negotiations and contract problems for state employees and, recently, other public employees, as well. We will no doubt struggle through another legislative session before this fall's gubernatorial and legislative elections provide a possible solution (at least a resolution) of the situation.

Nationally, both labor and anti-labor forces await this spring's anticipated US Supreme Court decision which will either affirm the concept of a fair share fee for bargaining unit members who wish to not join the union or wrought significant disabling changes to the fair share concept and process, which will likely result in the introduction of new challenges and difficulties for unions endeavoring to represent public employees in the United States.

In preparation for such possible change, and because we should always be working to improve our communications with the membership, APEA and AFT will conduct a mobilization of members in the Anchorage Bowl area to raise consciousness regarding the need to protect the right to organize for union representation, to reaffirm a sense of solidarity and engagement between members and their unions and to specifically support the activities of our affiliated Local Unions in the Anchorage Bowl area.

All APEA staff will be involved in the blitz, AFT will be sending about 20 staff and activist members from around the country to participate and we will seek 20 or more APEA activist members to assist and participate in the blitz...in reaching out to fellow union members and urging those members to reach into the membership of their own Local Unions to build, develop and strengthen those Local Unions, and to push that development on up to APEA and AFT, as well.

If you would like to participate as an activist member in the mobilization, please advise your Local President and/or your Field Office staff, and let them know about your interest and your availability. THANK YOU!!! This is important and valuable work, and it truly must be done by all of us, by each individual union member.
Cathy Cotterman began work in the Anchorage School District as a Special Education Teacher Assistant in 1996. She joined the TOTEM Board as Secretary in 2006 where she served until her recent passing. Cathy was loved by her coworkers and her fellow board members. In her workplace, and as a member of the TOTEM Board, she was always willing to help out in any way that she could. Whether showing up bright and early to volunteer at the TOTEM Spring Conference or bringing her delicious fudge to the TOTEM Holiday Special, Cathy could always bring a smile to your face. Her presence in TOTEM will be dearly missed.

Solutions Team! JESS, Local 6096

By Joel Hill, Southeast Field Representative

Rally site Managers from Juneau Educational Support Services (JESS) at a member meeting to discuss issues and formulate solutions.

Do you have an overall philosophy of life, a primary reason you get up every morning? Or are you just pulled along by current events, deadlines, and people asking you to do things? Are you rudderless? Often not miserable, but not bursting with optimism either. If that describes you, consider attending a union meeting and be part of the solution.
HAPPENINGS WITHIN THE NORTHERN REGION

By Michael Koskie, Northern Regional Manager

NORTHERN SUPERVISORY, LOCAL 4900

Tracy Dompeling recently vacated the NR SU Secretary/Treasurer position. A promotion made it impossible for her to continue on as the Sec/Treasurer, but everyone is thankful for her many years of active service and commitment to the SU.

Northern Region Chair Mike Lund has announced that there are vacancies on the Northern Region Grievance Committee, and also vacant spots for SU Representatives. Current SU Rep’s are Mike Lund (DOT), Shelly Showalter (DNR), Walter Evans (HSS), and Tim Viavant (DFG). As we move into negotiations, it will be important for our members to have access to those in the SU that can hear input and capture concerns.

UNITED ACADEMICS ADJUNCTS, LOCAL 6054

The first ever Labor Management Committee took place with representatives of the University on November 1st. This Committee was formatted in this year’s contract negotiations and included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Topics of discussion with representatives from across the state included criteria to be used for the recently negotiated “Regent’s Adjunct” Award as well as an issue at one of the regional campuses where it appeared minimum class size was determined by semester taught (this problem was successfully resolved). In addition, the Merit Bonus system in the contract was discussed (yes, it’s funded), and Management was informed of a desire for greater Professional Development programs for Adjuncts. Adjunct LMC members include President Fran Polumsky, Katie Lubowicki, Ann Spohnholz and APEA staff member Michael Koskie.

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 6125

Negotiation Team Members Cecily Hodges, Tom Steer, Paul Holland, Shawn Fletcher, Jeana Apling and Angela Parker along with APEA staff member Michael Koskie have been meeting diligently with management since the end of September on new contract terms. Members will be notified as developments arise.

CITY OF BETHEL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 6055

Local President Gary Watson and Vice-President Dave Stovner recently had an opportunity to expand their collective bargaining expertise and learned valuable techniques on how to build a stronger union, using the AFT Strategic Bargaining Model when they attended the AFT’s 2017 Collective Bargaining Conference in Chicago. Both Dave and Gary reported it as being a valuable learning experience.
Most of our APEA/AFT brothers and sisters hired into a position that was already union and had a collective bargaining agreement. The members of HOPE, working for a small non-profit in Homer, had to claw and fight for recognition and still do not have a collective bargaining agreement.

Members like HOPE’s first President, Jeannie Anderson, lost her job over the stress caused by Sprout’s pressure. Although we may have been unsuccessful in getting Jeannie what she deserved, along with many members that chose to resign instead of endure the horrible working conditions at Sprout, these members still made a huge difference. Karen Shemet and Colleen James both negotiators and officers of the union, lost their jobs and boldly fought through the system.

When management violates our rights at work, it is important that we stand together and defend ourselves. In the case at Sprout in Homer, management violated the law, and members responded by banding together and speaking out against the abuse. Now, the Homer Organization of Professional Employees (HOPE) is celebrating the settlement of an Unfair Labor Practice charge that it brought to the National Labor Relations Board against Sprout. Karen Shemet and Colleen James showed their courage to act and stand for the rights of their fellow workers, their bravery reinforces our collective rights and builds power in our Union.

We truly thank the members for their patience and hope this brings some peace of mind to their gallant fight.
NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

POSTED PURSUANT TO A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
APPROVED BY A REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD
AN AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

FEDERAL LAW GIVES THE RIGHT TO:
- Form, join, or assist a union;
- Choose a representative to bargain with us on your behalf;
- Act together with other employees for your benefits and protection;
- Choose not to engage in any of these protected activities.

WE WILL NOT do anything to prevent you from exercising the above rights.

WE WILL NOT refuse to meet and bargain in good faith with your Union (Homer Organization of Professional Employees, APEA/AFT, AFL-CIO) as the exclusive collective bargaining representative of our employees in the following appropriate unit at our Homer, Alaska facility:

All full-time, regular part-time and per-diem occupational therapists and physical therapists, intake specialists, rural development specialists, playgroup specialists, family support specialists, outreach specialists, intake specialists, early interventionists, and development specialists.

WE WILL NOT refuse to meet and bargain with the Union over any proposed changes to your wages, hours and working conditions before putting those changes into effect.

WE WILL NOT refuse to bargain with the Union over the decision and effects of our termination of the Families Together Program.

WE WILL, if requested by the Union, rescind any or all changes to your terms and conditions of employment that we made without first bargaining with the Union.

WE WILL meet and bargain over the decision and effects of the termination of the Families Together Program.

WE HAVE offered Karen Shemet and Colleen James full reinstatement to their former positions and they have declined the offers.

WE WILL pay Karen Shemet and Colleen James for the wages and other benefits lost, including consequential damages and search-for-work expenses, because of the changes to terms and conditions of employment that we made without first bargaining with the Union.

WE WILL NOT in any like or related manner interfere with your rights under Section 7 of the Act.

Sprout Family Services
(Employer)

Dated 10/18/17

By [Signature], Interim ED
(Representative)

Title

Case 19-CA-196614

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent Federal agency created in 1935 to enforce the National Labor Relations Act. It conducts secret-ballot elections to determine whether employees want union representation and it investigates and remedies unfair labor practices by employers and unions. To find out more about your rights under the Act and how to file a charge or election petition, you may speak confidentially to any agent with the Board's Regional Office set forth below. You may also obtain information from the Board's website: www.nlrb.gov and the toll-free number (888) 777-NLRB (6572).

THIS IS AN OFFICIAL NOTICE AND MUST NOT BE DEFACED BY ANYONE

This notice must remain posted for 60 consecutive days from the date of posting and must not be altered, defaced, or covered by any other material. Any questions concerning this notice or compliance with its provisions may be directed to the above Regional Office’s Compliance Officer,
Mobilization Blitz 2018

What is a mobilization blitz you ask? A mobilization blitz is often defined as a sudden, energetic, and concerted effort, typically on a specific topic and/or task.

APEA/AFT is hosting a Mobilization Blitz April 7 – 14, 2018! This is a perfect training opportunity for anyone who has wanted to learn what happens on an organizing campaign and receive training on the AFT organizing model. Organizing is a science and we all get better with training and practice! This is an opportunity to be part of building knowledge and solidarity on important issues that can impact members’ lives directly.

This Mobilization Blitz will be unlike any other type of hands-on training APEA/AFT has ever provided. Forty individuals, (20 from Alaska APEA/AFT locals and 20 from the Lower 48, AFT locals) will participate in extensive training before going out to have face-to-face conversations with approximately 1000 APEA/AFT members in Anchorage and the Matsu Valley. These conversations will happen during work-day, work-site visits and by visiting with members in the evening.

If you are interested in joining the 2018 Mobilization Blitz, please contact Annie Knight at aknight@apea-aft.org immediately.

Please note: APEA/AFT Annual Alyeska training is also happening in April. The dates for that training are April 23 – 27, 2017. Additional information regarding this training will be announced soon.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION SUPERVISORY UNIT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Please join us at the: Wildwood Pre-Trial Facility
10 Chugach Avenue, Kenai, AK 99611
in the Security Building – Building 1
(Easy Public Access)
from noon to 1:00 for a discussion on:

Shared Services SU Negotiations Health Insurance Options
Training LMC Update Performance Evaluation LMC Retirement Readiness
The Role of an Employee Representative

By Anne Knight, Southcentral Field Representative

An Employee Representative is a negotiator, leader, educator, communicator, and organizer. Being an Employee Representative is an important job and at times can be very exciting. You are often the first person new employees meet, you are the eyes and ears of your fellow workers and often their direct contact with their union.

In order to be the best Employee Representative possible, you need to know your contract, educate yourself on what is happening in your union, and be involved. Your fellow workers do not expect you to know everything, but they do expect you to know your contact and to keep them informed of what is happening within their union. Your union staff Field Representatives (Joel, Gabe, Gene, Jenn, Jason and Annie) are here to answer your questions, provide education and guidance. Please contact us if there is anything you need to enhance your experience as an Employee Representative.

Anchorage Council on Education, Local 4425, Ratifies Contract!

By Gene Christian, Southcentral Field Representative

On November 17th, and with members coming in until late in the day to cast their votes, the ACE membership voted to approve the tentative agreement presented by its negotiating team. They voted in favor of ratification by an astounding 84 percent!

The new contract takes effect on July 1, 2018.

Many thanks to all who participated in this process!

ACE Members counting ballots. From left to right: Eric Simmons, Joe Callison, Sean Tupper, and Steven McNicholas
SU Ballot Count! Local 4900

By Joel Hill, Southeast Field Representative

The Supervisory Unit (SU) recently elected its 2017 Negotiating Team, which will be working on the new (July 1, 2018) contract. SU President John White and Jeff Kasper were elected to represent Southeast, Bob Murphy and Jay Bryan were elected from Southcentral, and Walter Evans and Sean Martines were elected from Northern Region. Negotiations began December 13 and will be continuing.

Several SU members showed up to perform the official ballot count. Democracy in action! And, they obviously had a good time. One of the many union benefits not only participating in the vote, but actually counting them.

Left to right: Liam Carnahan, Christina Strahm and Ann McPherson.

The Union Plus Scholarship Deadline is Fast Approaching

The 2018 Union Plus Scholarship — Start Your Application Today!

Last year, 106 union members, their spouses and dependent children were awarded $150,000 in Union Plus Scholarships, ranging from $500 to $4,000.

The Union Plus Scholarship Program awards scholarships based on outstanding academic achievement, personal character, financial need and commitment to organized labor's values. Union Plus Scholarship awards are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school or a recognized technical or trade school.

The application deadline for the 2018 Union Plus Scholarship is January 31, 2018.

Register at the scholarship application site and start your online application today. You can return as many times as needed to complete your application, including the required essays and letter of recommendation section.

"Education is a vital building block for success. We're pleased to be helping some of the labor movement's most promising students achieve their college dreams."

- Union Plus President, Mitch Stevens
What does TOTEM do for me?

By Sandy Thompson, TOTEM Vice-President and Employee Rep

This question has been asked of me numerous times, especially over the last several weeks as we held our informational meetings; answered telephone calls and had face-to-face conversations with members during the ratification period for our latest contract.

So much of what TOTEM and your Executive Board do on your behalf is “behind the scenes”. We give countless volunteer hours every year for you - our members. This isn’t meant to be self-serving. We do this for our members and our union because you are important; because the work we do every day for our students, parents and community is important and everyone deserves to be treated with respect whether they are a 3.5-hour a day employee or an 8-hour a day employee. I felt it was important to share just some of what we do:

**Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA):** this is your contract - have you read it? I encourage you to look at it. The CBA contains a lot of important & useful information. Not just your wage scale, range, and what holidays you get paid for, but information on your rights as members of TOTEM; evaluation process; opportunities for additional recognitions, etc. This is one of the most important documents you can have during your professional association with the District.

**Spring Conference:** this takes months of planning & preparation to pull off this two-day professional learning opportunity for members and better yet, you get paid to attend!

**First Aid/CPR/AED training:** offered every other month at the TOTEM office during the school year and at Spring Conference. We have trained hundreds of our members to be better prepared to handle emergency situations.

**Mentoring:** we have TOTEM members that offer their expertise and support for new hires in a variety of positions, mostly clerical.

**Representation:** TOTEM is represented and given a voice by your Board in a myriad of National, State and Local organizations: The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), AFL-CIO, Central Labor Council (CLC), Alaska Public Employees Association, ASD Health Benefits Task Force and many other ASD policy committees. We share our concerns for not only our members, but for educational issues that affect us & our students with the Anchorage School Board, Anchorage Assembly and our elected legislators in Juneau & Washington D.C. regardless of their affiliated political party.

**Extra’s:** The TOTEM board manages the Sick Leave Bank; offers Scholarships for continuing education for members & dependents; gives recognition (KUDO’s) for members who earn their PSP or CAP or any other certifications; offer New Member Orientations every other month; make phone calls to every new member hired to welcome them to ASD & TOTEM, answer their questions and make sure they are off to a good start with us.

So maybe the question should be “What can I do for TOTEM” because TOTEM is not just the Board and the Reps, TOTEM is you and every single one of us.
City of Nome Employees Association, Local 6141, ratifies Contract!

By Jason Roach, Northern Field Representative

The City of Nome Employees Association Local 6141 APEA/AFT held a membership meeting on November 15th, to ratify its proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement. The membership overwhelmingly approved the new agreement and it was brought before City Council for final approval on November 27th.

The negotiation team led by APEA Northern Regional Manager Michael Koskie and Field Rep. Jason Roach, reached a tentative agreement with the City in mid October. Some of the highlights of the new three year agreement include: pay range scale increase of 4.8% starting January 1, 2018; step progression of 3.8% each year; and new entry level employees will begin at range 6 instead of 5 in order to become more competitive hiring locally. To help with the retention of senior members, everyone in the final step will also receive a 4.8% bump. Our members also requested help with rising health care premiums so the City agreed to raise the premium cap they pay from $1750 to $2000. This increase should help keep prices more affordable for the duration of the contract. APEA Staff are thankful for all the input our membership provided and the hard work our negotiation team put into making this a very successful contract!
APEA/AFT presents Public Service Proud, an ongoing series wherein we spotlight a member(s) each month to illuminate the good work they do for the people of the State of Alaska. This month we are pleased to introduce members of the Soldotna Public Safety Call Center. (KBEA)

“I love my job because when I go home, I feel good about what I did.”

Colette St. Clair
Public Safety Communicator
Soldotna Public Safety Communication Center
Kenai Borough Employees Association (KBEA)

The Soldotna Public Safety Communication Center is a backup to any public safety unit whether it’s the Soldotna Police Department, the Fire Department, or a State Park unit. Their job is to keep the public safe while keeping their units safe.

Shift Supervisor Suzanne Hall explained how budget cuts have indirectly made an impact on their operation. An example was when the State cut the Alaska State Troopers’ budget. This resulted in fewer troopers, causing them to take longer when responding to calls. This means dispatchers are on the phones longer with people reporting in-progress events. The longer response times can occasionally tie up dispatch resources.

911 dispatchers Loralee Faucheux and Colette St. Clair, along with the rest of the team of 17, aren’t just skilled Public Safety Communicators, they are the first line of support, the listening ears, and the support persons on the line when their community is in need of help and calls 911.

Support those who work for OUR Alaska.
NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO SOLVE OLD CHALLENGES

Slowly but surely, we are concluding 2017 business and turning our attention to 2018. TOTEM, ACE, KGB, JMHP, Nome and Nome Utilities have all settled negotiations for new agreements which preserve and protect established benefits and conditions and, in some cases, make moderate improvements to some benefits and conditions.

PMEA, FNSBEA and MatSu haven’t yet reached agreement, and will be continuing their negotiations. MatSu and FNSBEA are marching, slowly but systematically, ahead, while Petersburg is seeking the assistance of a Federal Mediator to aid negotiations. City of Bethel has re-worked the previous tentative agreement, which City Council failed to approve, and is mounting a support campaign to secure approval of the new (almost) agreement from Council.

SU opened negotiations on 13 December, and had a second meeting on 20 December. So far, SU’s negotiations are more businesslike and focused than has been “traditional” – we’ve tentatively agreed several “no change”, technical-type items (nothing substantive), but we’re doing so much earlier than we have in previous negotiations…which we hope is a good sign. Given our state’s financial situation, the “zero value” of the current agreement and the need to address both monetary and work environment issues in the state workplace, these negotiations are of crucial importance and will be a defining exercise for both SU and the state, itself.

Negotiations only open the new year – in April, we will have a mobilization effort in Anchorage and MatSu, with staff and members (from APEA and other AFT affiliates, as well) reaching out to members and reminding members of APEA’s service, importance and significance to each member’s working life/goals/career; April will also include another presentation of the Alyeska Training Programs, which are becoming more and more appreciated and attended; June will begin the nomination and election processes for our state offices; July brings the AFT National Convention and the Northwest Forum training programs; October is APEA’s Biennial Caucus; and November brings another general election, during which Alaska will elect a Governor, a State House and one-third of the State Senate.

I look forward to working with our membership on each of these upcoming events. Together, we will continue to improve our jobs, careers and working conditions.

Meanwhile, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!!!