FROM THE PEN OF THE PRESIDENT

As we all refocus to head into another school year, I’d like to share some information over the next few issues about PSE’s goals and their progress. PSE’s Board of Directors established a three-year, strategic goal plan for PSE with frequent reviews to assess their progress. The goal areas include Advocate, Education and Training, Growth, Perception, and Voice. We’ve seen tremendous growth in our union, and are working diligently in each of these goal areas to make our union the best it can be.

In this issue, I’d like to discuss Advocate. PSE empowers its members in the workplace and the community by working to create a better quality of life and increased political influence and power. We are all connected; we pull in the same direction to make our education system stronger.

An important part of the work of this goal is COPE (Committee on Political Empowerment). So far in 2014-15, members donated nearly $25,000 to COPE! Funds contributed to COPE are used to lobby and build political support for better wages, more affordable health insurance benefits, and more adequate funding for classified jobs and services. This goal is an important way that our union is helping to improve the lives of working families.

We are PSE!

Reen Doser
PSE State President
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ON... 2015 CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR LYNN MYERS

At Convention this year, PSE’s highest honors were awarded to deserving classified and higher education employees. PSE’s best and brightest were recognized, but none was more deserving than Mead Paraeducator Lynn Myers, who was named 2015’s PSE Classified Employee of the Year.

“She is such a mentor to other PSE members,” said colleague Yolanda Dooley, who nominated Lynn for this honor. “I don’t think I would be involved in the union as much as I am if it weren’t for her.”

“She is a stable, steady union supporter,” added Zone 2 Director and Awards Committee Chair Charlotte Shindler. “She is able to relay the mission of PSE, the guidelines of PSE, what the members’ benefits are, and then she explains how you have to be a part of the process. She’s activated several members in PSE. She’s made them an advocate for the union.”

An active member for over 20 years, Lynn isn’t just an advocate for her colleagues. Her dedication to her students represents ALL public school employees in this state, “said Darren Nelson, Principal of Mt. Spokane High School. “Her positive attitude, sense of humor, and personality are contagious and prevalent in all of the staff and students she comes into contact with.”

Many of her students lovingly refer to her as “Grandma,” a term she takes great pride in. She touches the lives of around 60 students each day, and makes sure that they are discovering their full potential, even if that can be difficult around 60 students each day, and makes sure that they are discovering their full potential, even if that can be difficult.

“Your work ethic, dedication to excellence in every task, and the positive impact you have on students and the community distinguishes you among all fifty-thousand public school classified support staff across our state,” said Charlotte Shindler at our annual awards banquet before presenting Lynn with her award.

“So many deserving people, and I don’t really feel that I’m more deserving than anyone else. I’m just me.”

THE PULSE

School is starting again soon! Here are some safety tips to remember as our schedules change:

- Did you see the video we shared on Facebook where the SUV almost hit kids boarding a bus? Know when and where to report violators!
- Be proactive: go over emergency plans with your family and the students on your bus or classroom.
- Get involved: If your school has an anti-bullying campaign or the chance to volunteer, consider joining.

Members are Invited to PSE Classy Central Valley Chapter Meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in the Pomeroy Middle School Library.

Hello! After nearly 400 name suggestions and a competitive round of voting, I’d like to introduce myself! With 47% of the vote, you’ve named me Classy! This name beat out the next choice, Ollie, with 27% of the vote. I’m proud to stand for the strength and unity of PSE and for the Pacific Northwest. Send me your questions about PSE, union membership, or your rights in general, and I could answer your letter in a future issue.

Just drop me a line at classy@pseofwa.org.

“Thank you so much! That’s exactly what I needed.”

ACTION CORNER

The 2015 Legislative Session finished after 176 days and 3 special sessions, but the Supreme Court may force lawmakers to come back for a fourth session to address compensation and local levy funding for basic education. We should hear sometime this month if they do.

How did the legislature do on classified employee issues?

GOOD:
1. Salary increases for the first time in six years by funding the PSE Higher Education contracts and K-12 salary increases.
2. Funding and support for higher education employee insurance benefits.
3. They reduced higher education tuition and backfilled the lost revenue with state funding.
4. The $1.3 billion investment in K-12 as a result of McCleary is the most significant new revenue in recent memory.

BAD:
1. The 1.6% insurance premium increase doesn’t come close to funding K-12 inflation. Premiums have gone up 25% the last two years and are going up 7% this year. How can we afford this?
2. The House’s attempt to eliminate the classified employee insurance benefit factor was a slap in the face to 50,000 classified employees. Senate Republican support was critical to turn the tide on this issue.
3. PSE’s paraeducator development program bill, SB 5179, was poised to win approval this year but was blocked by a last minute effort on the House floor.
4. Failure to address the over-reliance upon local levies for basic education. We should hear sometime this month if they do.

BAD:
4. Failure to implement Initiative 1351.
5. Failure to address the over-reliance upon local levies for basic education and K-12 compensation.
6. Failure to implement Initiative 1351.

Win Seahawks vs. Oakland Raiders Tickets! Visit our Facebook page to enter!

Facebook.com/PSEClassified

CONVENTION DEMOGRAPHICS

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MAKING A SPLASH:
WHAT’S TRENDING ONLINE

PSE members get exclusive discount tickets to Wild Waves Theme Park! Head to PSEClassified.org and click on “Membership Benefits.” Enter user name PSEofWA and password summer2015 to get discount tickets.

After giving away a Whale Watching Trip to Tanya Conklin of Central Valley Chapter and LEGOLAND Tickets to Judy Madwell of Moses Lake Chapter, we’re continuing to celebrate union benefits on social media with another contest!

Win Seahawks vs. Oakland Raiders Tickets! Visit our Facebook page to enter!

Facebook.com/PSEClassified

SEIU IS ALL ABOUT YOU!

SEIU (Service Employees International Union) President Mary Kay Henry spoke to membership at our annual convention about the intensifying threats that working families face and our efforts to stand up to those threats by both building our union and building a broader movement of working people. She also spoke individually to delegates and answered their questions.

“I still have faith that together we can make the impossible possible and achieve our vision of a Free and Just Society: where all work is valued and all people are respected; where all families and communities thrive; where we leave a better and more equal world for generations to come,” said President Henry to the PSE delegation.

Head to PSEClassified.org to view her speech in its entirety, as well as pictures from convention weekend. Thank you for attending, President Henry!

WHALE TALES...