



INFORMER

NOVEMBER 2007

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

As we come to the end of another year, Local 71 is in for some very exciting changes some of which are already in affect. I want to share this good news with all of you.

As most of you already know, the recent ratification for the contract covering our members working for the State of Alaska was a huge success. Not only was the number of members who took the time to vote the highest in memory, the margin of acceptance was also the largest. This was a very clear message that our membership is happy with the direction their Union is heading. Your negotiating team was able to negotiate the best Public Employee agreement put before the legislature and approved for funding this year. This was done through a long process of cultivating a very positive working relationship with Governor Palin and her administration, having a long established history of negotiations with the State of Alaska as well as knowing the issues, concerns and ramifications of contractual changes. This is only the beginning of the constructive advances and goals your union is working on.

Our membership performs with a high level of professionalism and efficiency, because of this we have been able assume some of the work that was once performed by non-union contractors and turn them into Local 71 positions. We were able to achieve this, in large part, because the administration has been pleased with the level of service our members provide as well as the quick and professional response they receive when working with your Union leadership in resolving issues and disagreements. Our record for success in arbitrations is impressive and garners a large degree of respect from the administration. So, when your Union is discussing or defending an issue, the Administration takes notice.

As many of you know, your Union also signed an agreement to enter into an apprenticeship program with the State of Alaska. This is a very positive and progressive move. It will go a long ways towards assuring a quality workforce with an ever increasing level of training and advancement opportunities for our membership. I strongly encourage you to keep an eye on this program as it develops and expands. We have already had a few meetings with the State of Alaska and with the Attorneys to set up the trust and establish the program. With the combined efforts of the State of Alaska and Local 71 and our International Union (LIUNA) it is coming together smoothly and will be available in the near future.



Jim Ashton
Business Manager
Secretary-Treasurer

We have also begun assuming the representation of employees maintaining some of the remote airports. These positions were originally filled with contract employees but your Union has negotiated with the State of Alaska to begin providing the operators for these positions. This approach has given the State more control of the maintenance of the airport and reduced the cost to the employer for these services while increasing the hourly compensation that the employees were receiving for performing these duties and providing them with some training.

Additionally, we are in the process of designing, writing and producing a "new member orientation" package that we can give to new members. It will explain what programs the Union provides to its members as well as information on your health trust, and where information can be obtained if a member has any questions. This policy is long overdue and we are excited to see its advent in the near future.

These are just a few of the exciting changes and advancements currently going on within your Union. I encourage you all to take the time to stop in at any of our offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks or Juneau to say "hi" and have a cup of coffee. You can talk with your Business Representative or me about these exciting programs and you can hear about more of the progress and improvements your Union is working on.

And as always, your comments and suggestions are encouraged and welcomed.

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Public Relations Campaign Update ~Dennis Moen

Our second commercial has been completed with excellent results! This commercial, like the first, showcases Local 71 brothers and sisters and the valuable contribution they bring to the traveling public. The commercial features power sweepers performing snow removal at Fairbanks International Airport and CAT 14 graders removing snow from the access roads; traffic light maintenance and repairs to the Fairbanks Airport Road intersections are also a focal point.

For our upcoming commercial we will be featuring facilities maintenance, Crash, Fire and Rescue workers, our heavy and light duty mechanics, workers in the Pioneer's Homes, Department of Natural Resources and the Correctional institutions.

This spring the Fairbanks Daily News Miner printed a large captioned, front page photograph of our Local 71 crews doing snow removal at Creamers Field in anticipation of the arriving migratory birds. This annual effort is aimed at enticing the birds away from air traffic at Fairbanks International Airport in support of air traveler safety.

During our last contract negotiations we focused our viewing air time in Anchorage and Juneau in an effort to enlighten state law makers on the importance of Local 71 and its contributions. We also sent letters to the editor to emphasize the dedication of Local 71 brothers and sisters to our great state, garnering support from

elected officials.

Additionally, during this past legislative session we aired extensively on Gavel to Gavel, a program covering day to day operations of the State Legislature and a primary viewing target for elected officials. Almost every office in the Capitol keeps a television tuned to this show for constant updates on current proceedings while they are not in session. The decision was made to become a sponsor of Gavel to Gavel, providing our Union the unique opportunity for commercials and "voice-overs"; bringing recognition and support for Local 71 from our Alaskan lawmakers. I can't begin to explain the satisfaction felt when we heard our motto repeated in the Capital hallways "LOCAL 71 WORKING HARD FOR ALASKA."

We are printing our brochure and would like to create a slide show presentation to illustrate the challenges we face in our work. If you have any digital photographs to contribute, unique working condition, encounters with wildlife or construction challenges in Alaska or the like please send them to me. Dennis@local71.com

Again, we would like to thank the Local 71 men and women for their contributions to our public relations campaign; your continued support makes this program a success.

~ our motto
repeated in the
Capital hallways
"LOCAL 71
WORKING
HARD FOR
ALASKA."



Thanks goes out to our brothers and sisters in the Haines Borough who unanimously ratified their contract this summer. This is the first renegotiation since the city and borough merged. The team was made up of Sue Nelson, Cathy Keller, John Wahl, and Scott Bradford. They dedicated a tremendous amount of time and effort reviewing questionnaires and discussing the various proposals that membership wanted to see implemented. A special point needs to be made on the work that Sue Nelson has put in on behalf of the Haines Borough Employees. While Sue is very modest of her contributions to her fellow

employees and unassuming in acknowledging her impact on negotiations, the Haines unit would be nowhere near where it is if she hadn't shown the dedication she has over the years. In speaking with Don Etheridge, my predecessor, he remembers her being on all negotiating teams during his tenure and that she was involved before he started. Sue, on behalf of Local 71, and the Haines Borough Employees, Thank you. ~Tom Brice

Recognition ~Ralph Maston

Jim Ashton, Dennis Moen and I, attended this year's LIUNA Northwest Regional Conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. LIUNA's Northwest Region consists of nine western states and four Canadian provinces. This was a time to network with our sister unions across the region and gather information regarding any new programs or innovative ideas on various subjects such as; use of technology to enhance member participation, ideas on contract language, legislative lobbying and affecting elections, ideas on how to organize, etc... In attendance was Terry O'Sullivan our LIUNA General President, Mano Frey our Northwest Regional Vice-President among others. On two separate occasions Local 71 was singled out for recognition. The first was when Mano Frey was addressing the assembled representatives from the various unions throughout the region. He held us up as an example of what can be accomplished with regard to legislative action, use of technology, contract

negotiations and gathering new members. This was a proud moment for us and an endorsement of what we are trying to accomplish here at Local 71. Toward the end of the conference Mano was again addressing the assembled representatives and he pointed out the fact that Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA) has **NEVER** been closed down because of snow removal and that this was accomplished by the members of Local 71. The response on this was a little overwhelming, the place practically exploded in applause for the excellent job done by the combined membership at TSAIA. We here at Local 71 would like to add our own standing ovation to the men and women of this Union for the great work you do on a daily basis and say a heartfelt Thank You for continuing to make us a standard for other unions to strive for.

Travel Pay ~Tom Brice

Do you travel for your state job? If you do, do you understand how you are supposed to be compensated for that time? If you answered yes to the first question and no to the second, don't feel too bad. If you work for the state, travel compensation is one of the most complicated aspects of your contract. It seems that when there is a change in personnel in the travel office or tech services, our contract gets reinterpreted.

Here is some advice that could cover the cost of your dues for a year if you travel. Say you work Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when you travel between those hours, weekends included, it is to be counted as time worked. On weekends you will be compensated at the appropriate overtime rates. If you have to overnight and travel outside of your normal work hours, 8:30-5:00, you are eligible for up to 2 hours of straight travel time, regardless if it is weekend or week-day travel. If you travel and return home on the same day, all your time while in travel status is considered time worked. While there are a few exceptions for special circumstances, in general terms travel time is com-

pensable in one form or another.

Local 71 is aware of and appreciates the frustrations members face filling out the travel questionnaires that are being required in many departments. Management, i.e. the State of Alaska, gets to require as much paperwork as they want to back up and verify its spending, not that it couldn't be done more efficiently. That being said, it is always a good idea to keep copies of all documents that relate to your travel pay.

Along the travel lines, I have been contacted a couple of times by members who are on per diem, or not receiving it as the case may be. If you are supposed to be receiving per diem and it isn't coming as quickly as it is supposed to, I urge you to contact your local Union office. Sometimes we are able to get things moving along a bit quicker or at least get an answer for you as to when you are supposed to get a check.



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Stay Informed ~Ralph Maston

We are always looking for new and innovative ways to better serve our membership's needs and get information out. Several of our members have suggested ways to cut our costs and to distribute information in a more efficient and timely manner through the use of available technology, i.e. the internet. It has been suggested that we develop a data base of email addresses and use those to send out updates and even to distribute our newsletter. We are asking for email addresses from our membership, it must not be your state, municipality, school district or borough email. We will only use private emails due to the many restrictions imposed on your work email systems and in some cases, ethics rules. At the same time we are asking that our members supply us with correct phone numbers and addresses. We will use this information to update our internal data base. You may rest assured that this information will never be available to anyone outside our offices. We welcome any and all

suggestions, so stop by your nearest office or call us and let us know if you have any. Please fill out this form and mail it in to the Anchorage office. Our address is: Public Employees Local 71 2510 Arctic Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99503 Thank you.

Membership Email Contact List

Name _____

Member Number _____

Phone _____

email _____