

Operating Engineers tap Wilson business manager

Nelda Wilson has been elected business manager/financial secretary of Gladstone-based Operating Engineers Local 701. She defeated Jim Anderson, the local's president, 531 to 514.

Wilson has been serving as business manager/financial secretary for about a year. She was appointed to the post following the retirement of longtime business manager Mark Holliday.



NELDA WILSON

Anderson did not seek re-election as president of the 4,000-member local, opting instead to run for business manager.

In the race for the open seat for president, Robin Wicklander outpolled Larry Lovelady 530 to 496.

In other contested election results, Bo Ellis defeated Carren Glebe for treasurer, 564 to 465. Ellis was running as the incumbent, having been appointed to the post last year to succeed Wilson, who vacated to become business manager.

Robert Crane defeated Craig Lundgren for guard. The vote was 559 to 439.

In uncontested races, incumbents re-elected were Vice President Kevin Miller; Recording Corresponding Secretary Steve Bradley; Conductor Dave Carter; District 1 Representative Mike Thun; District 2 Representative Harold Chevrier; District 4 Representative Ray Akers; and District 5 Representative Richard Lauderback.

Clifton G. Smith was elected District 3 rep, and Dylan McComiskey was elected District 5 at-large rep. Both

men ran unopposed and are serving first terms.

Local 701 represents operating and maintenance engineers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Those are the folks who work as heavy equipment operators, mechanics, and surveyors in the construction industry, and as stationary engineers maintaining building and industrial complexes — ranging from community hospitals to the Umatilla Chemical Depot in Hermiston. The union also represents some public employees.

Wilson, 52, has been a member of the union for 33 years, having started in the apprenticeship program in 1980 shortly after graduating from Waldport High School on the central Oregon coast.

After obtaining her journey-level card, Wilson spent more than a decade working mostly as a crane operator on heavy and highway and marine construction projects, including Terminal 2 at the Port of Portland, the railroad bridge in St. Johns, the navigation locks at Bonneville Dam, and at the Oregon Zoo.

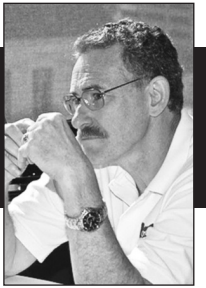
She left the field in 1995 after Holliday was elected business manager and hired her for a staff position.

Wilson currently sits on the governor-appointed State Apprenticeship and Training Council, where she is vice chair. In addition, she chairs the South Waterfront Oversight Committee. The committee makes sure that a certain percentage of apprentices, minorities and women are utilized on construction projects on the Portland waterfront.

All officers and board members will be installed at the next union meeting Aug. 30. Terms are for three years.

Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



The history of the labor movement is wrought with the corpses of failed organizations.

We can trace our roots back to colonial guilds and lodges, and our nation's first strike may well have been a Maine fisherman strike in 1636. But the groups were uncoordinated and lacked power.

A coordinated workers' movement began with the formation of the National Labor Union in 1866. It was disbanded in 1873.

About that time, the Knights of Labor formed. The Knights of Labor allowed anyone to join, reaching its peak membership of 750,000 — including over 60,000 Black Americans — before it disbanded in the late-1880s. The Knights were a community-based organization that flourished for almost two decades, but they failed to adapt to the economic changes of the industrial age.

At the time the Knights of Labor was in decline, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was founded, focusing on organizing workers according to craft or trade by class or skill level, instead of relying on community support and haphazard power.

By 1920, the AFL reached a membership of 4 million workers. But its inability to adapt to the Great Depression drove membership down to almost 3 million.

The success of a workers' movement historically has hinged on its ability to adapt to changing social,

political, and economic factors.

With a drop of 25 percent of its membership in the 1930s, most economists predicted the demise of the AFL. In-fighting of top leadership could have proven them right. But, instead, one group's insistence on change saved the movement.

That change wasn't easy.

There were those within the AFL who believed it should continue to limit itself to representing workers by craft. Others favored implementing strategies to organize by industry, opening up new ways to represent workers in the steel and auto industries. This philosophical difference resulted in 10 unions forming the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935.

To compete with the CIO, the AFL was forced to engage in industrial organizing. By 1955, with three out of 10 American workers represented by a union, the AFL and CIO merged.

Survival requires the union movement to continue to represent the best interests of workers — and as those interests change it requires us to change.

In 1980, two out of 10 workers belonged to a union. Today, one in 10 workers belong to a union.

As we approach a national AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles the first week of September, the American union movement is poised to make significant changes. We are

challenged to transform from a union movement that is perceived as only speaking for union workers, to a workers' movement that engages and speaks for all workers.

Such a transformation will not be painless. It will require union leaders to get out of their comfort zones and examine structures established in the 1950s to determine what it will take to meet the challenges of the 21st century. It will require that we are open to all workers and their issues. Our aggressive support of marriage equality and comprehensive immigration reform are steps in the right direction.

Today's efforts must be the beginning of a new movement — growing coalition partners and working to advance a workers' agenda. Just as the CIO changed the face of our workers movement in the 1930s, we need to develop new types of membership for sectors of our economy where it is almost impossible to organize by traditional means.

Our leaders need to be bold, fearless and unselfish if we are to succeed. Those who are willing to take that step are on our side. They recognize that the very future of the American worker is at stake.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

Labor-management group LERA to discuss Obamacare Sept. 10

"The Affordable Care Act — on the Dawn of Implementation," will be the subject of discussion at the Oregon Chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations breakfast, Tuesday, Sept. 10, at 7:30 a.m., at PGE 2 World Trade Center, 121 SW Salmon, Portland (Mezzanine level).

Leading legal experts representing both labor and management will provide an update on the changing health

care landscape. Federal agencies continue to issue regulations and interpretations of the various aspects of the Affordable Care Act, all of which can have a dramatic impact at the bargaining table as union and employers struggle to understand the best course of action.

Panelists will include Tom Doyle of Bennett, Hartmann, Morris and Kaplan, LLP, and Iris Tilley of Barran

Liebman, LLP.

Cost is \$25 for LERA members and \$35 for non-LERA members.

Register and pay online at www.oregonlera.org, by mail to: Oregon LERA, P.O. Box 230028, Tigard, OR 97281, or you can pay at the door. Annual membership dues are \$40 for the year.

For more information, contact Philip Johnson at philip.johnson@state.or.us.

Have a Great Labor Day Weekend!

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from



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