

An Open Letter to State Employees

The year 1968 marks the Silver Anniversary of the Oregon State Employees Association. We are proud of OSEA's accomplishments in behalf of state employees during its 25 years of existence. It is well that this year we pay homage to the dedicated people who founded OSEA in 1943 and those who led it to its present state of effectiveness. It has been said, however, that the past is prelude to the future. As we look back at what has been done, we must also be looking at the years and the job ahead.

Still Much To Be Done

We feel you will agree that there is still much to be done. State salaries must be made fully competitive with private industry and other governmental employment; fringe benefits enjoyed by others must be made available to state employees; working

conditions need further improvement; job security and protection of employee rights require constant attention. We cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

Membership Is Voluntary

OSEA has grown to its present size of 15,672 members solely by voluntary membership. It might be simpler if there were some device such as the "union shop" in private industry to require all who benefit from association activity to contribute to its support, so that so much time and effort would not need to be expended on building and maintaining membership. But perhaps part of our strength lies in the showing of individual member participation and support that this task provides.

1968 Goal Is 17,500

The association has set 17,500 members as its goal for this anniversary year. It intends to meet

this goal without contests or gimmicks, but on the basis of OSEA's record of accomplishment. The goal can be met, and exceeded, with your help. It must be reached if we are to maintain our effectiveness in the next session of the legislature.

Won't You Help?

You can support the association in its efforts to improve salaries, fringe benefits, working conditions and job security and protection for state employees by joining with 15,672 of your fellow workers as a member of OSEA. It will cost you only \$1.50 a month. Won't you help? Simply complete the membership enrollment form on the bottom of page 8 and mail it to the Oregon State Employees Association, 1515 State Street, Salem, Oregon, 97301. Thank you.

The OSEA Story: Why Every State Employee Should Support His Organization

Legislative Representation

The association maintains three registered lobbyists at each session of the Oregon Legislature. Neither pay raises nor increased fringe benefits for state employees are given automatically. Someone must fight for them, and OSEA has been most successful in this effort. In the 1965 session, 16 bills supported by OSEA passed, while nine bills it opposed failed. Due primarily to the association, the 1967 session adopted a record-breaking salary plan and overhauled the Public Employees Retirement System to provide substantial increases in retirement benefits. OSEA is now busy developing its 1969 legislative program which will include, among other things, salary increases and a state contribution to employee medical-hospital insurance premiums.

Collective Bargaining

OSEA has been elected the exclusive collective bargaining representative in 46 state agencies. It has bargaining contracts with 30 of them. It is continuing to petition for elections in the remainder of the state's agencies and, in addition, is negotiating more contracts each month. The association is negotiating contracts with agency heads on all matters affecting working conditions. These include seniority, vacation time scheduling, assignment of employees to work shifts, payment of overtime, uniform grievance procedures, merit ratings, and so forth. As collective bargaining representative, OSEA will continue to represent employees at civil service hearings and agency grievance hearings.

Fringe Benefit Research

The OSEA staff conducts surveys and studies of state employee salaries, fringe benefits and working conditions. In the surveys, the position of Oregon's employees is compared to those of other states, private industry and the federal government. The surveys are used by the association in representing employees in the legislature, agency and civil service hearings and collective bargaining sessions. They are also used by many local chapters to formulate resolutions which are used to bring about a change in laws affecting state employees. OSEA gets many requests for its surveys from other state employee organizations throughout the nation.

Grievance Representation

One of the most important functions fulfilled by the association is representing employees who file a grievance. Through the years OSEA has represented thousands of employees from every state agency with every type of grievance. The representation has ranged all the way from informal talks with supervisors to circuit court action. Over the years innumerable improvements in working conditions have been brought about by OSEA's aggressive and forceful representation of aggrieved employees. Successful grievance handling requires manpower and knowledge of government. OSEA has both. Most employees never have a grievance, but when they do OSEA is there to fight for them.

Membership Dues

It costs state employees only \$1.50 per month to belong to the association. Of this amount, 25¢ is returned to the chapters for their operation. Dues are normally withheld on a payroll deduction basis. They may, however, be paid on an alternate annual or semi-annual cash basis if preferred. Since the association is an independent organization, every cent of its money stays in Oregon and is used to benefit its members. For \$1.50 per month, OSEA members have at their disposal an attorney, an accountant, a wage and salary analyst, an insurance expert and five skilled personnelists—all knowledgeable in the operation of state government.

Major Programs

Many major programs are conducted by the association for the benefit of its membership. For example, OSEA sponsors candidate forums during election years. They give state employees the chance to meet and discuss issues with candidates for the legislature and major state offices such as governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. OSEA's scholarship program, which was started in 1958, has awarded nearly \$23,000 in financial aid to students of OSEA families. The OSEA retirement conference, established shortly after the 1965 Legislature adjourned, drafted the retirement overhaul bill passed by the 1967 Legislature which made substantial increases in retirement benefits. It will work toward improving pensions paid to presently retired persons in the 1969 Legislature.

Communications

Keeping state employees informed about the many things which affect their jobs has been the task of the association since it was founded 25 years ago. Over 800 group representatives located in every area of the state are the foundation of OSEA's communication network. Their duties include using every means of communication to pass on news received from chapters or headquarters. The OREGON STATE EMPLOYEE NEWS, published by the association, is mailed monthly to every member. During each session of the legislature frequent legislative news bulletins are sent to association officers and group representatives to help keep the membership informed of bill progress.

Self-Governing

The association is an independent labor organization wholly owned and governed by its 15,672 members. It has 79 local chapters throughout the state. Each elects its own officers and is self-supporting. OSEA is divided into nine districts, each with its own director. The policy-making body of the association is its annual General Council. Chapter and district delegates, elected by the membership, act upon the resolutions submitted by the chapters and thereby set the association's working policies and goals from year to year. The Board of Directors, also elected by the membership, administers the association between its annual conventions.

Insurance Services

Members of the association make substantial savings in insurance costs by belonging to OSEA. It offers its members three group insurance plans: medical-hospital, major-medical and life and income protection insurance. In addition, state employees may obtain automobile and fire insurance at low rates through the association. A full-time insurance manager on the headquarters staff is available to attend chapter meetings to outline the benefits paid by the various group plans. In addition, 60 chapter insurance representatives throughout the state are available to assist members with their insurance programs.