

From The Mailbox



State Employees Praised

To the Editor:

A little over four years ago I entered state service from a private background with all the preconceived notions that many in the private sector hold about government employees. Now that I have left the official state family, I would like to say that I have never worked with a finer group of people. Time after time, in literally every agency, state employees went substantially above and beyond any normal call of duty to get the job done. Evenings and weekends held no barriers.

Oregon is very fortunate to have the caliber of state employees and the mix of private sector commissioners and full time departmental administrators that it has. I have had occasion to review similar circumstances in a number of other states and Oregon ranks head and shoulders above any other.

It was a personal pleasure for me to work with all of you in state service and I am appreciative of the many assists that were provided in helping me learn a new job in a hurry.

Edward G. Westerdahl II
General Manager
The Port of Portland

Few Can Stand Alone

To the Editor:

I would like to use the OSEA News to publicly express my appreciation to staff attorney John S. Irvin for his efforts in my behalf during a recent crisis in my employment.

I contacted Mr. Irvin because I felt I was becoming embroiled in a situation that would require legal action to resolve. In addition to giving me considerable legal advice, he wrote two formal grievance letters in my behalf. One of the letters caused the correction of a matter that had cost me several dollars in salary.

After it became necessary for a formal hearing to be held for me to be restored to my former position, I decided to place the matter in the hands of a private attorney. But I continued to depend upon Mr. Irvin for any assistance he was able to give. I know he was working on a number of other cases at the time. But in spite of that he filed various papers concerned with my case and gave my attorney the benefit of his knowledge of state procedures, which is considerable. I have no doubt that the various suggestions he gave my attorney influenced the final result of my case.

The case was unpleasant, as such things often are. I was at first somewhat hurt and surprised at how quickly some persons opposed me, despite the fact that they had no reason to do so. Later I found that many persons were very willing to come to my assistance, and many of them did so. All of them did so without any reward whatsoever, and at their own free will.

It has been a powerful lesson to me in terms of human nature, and shows very well that few of us can stand alone.

R.A. Bennett, Jr.
Agriculture Chapter 26
Salem

Director Resigns

To the Editor:

Due to personal reasons which have come upon me in recent months, I am unable to devote the necessary time required for the office of director of OSEA's District Two.

In view of that fact and for the good of the Oregon State Employees Association, I have submitted my resignation to President Chalmers Jones effective immediately.

It is my feeling that Ralph Jackson, assistant director of District Two, is a very capable person and in a position to fill the vacancy immediately.

William J. LaClair
Capitol Chapter 19
Salem

Saddened at News

To the Editor:

On reading the December issue of the OSEA News, I was deeply saddened to read of the death of your fellow employee, Donald A. Beninger.

Don and I had several occasions to meet in the past three years and I had a great deal of respect for his ability and dedication to our cause. I know he will be a great loss to the Oregon State Employees Association as well as to the independent employee movement throughout the country.

On behalf of the National Board of Directors of the Assembly of Governmental Employees, I respectfully request that you convey our deepest sympathies to Donald's family on this sad occasion.

James F. Marshall
President, AGE
Columbus, Ohio

He Got Overtime Pay

To the Editor:

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to thank the OSEA staff, and particularly Jack Schoonover, for getting all of my back overtime pay. It totaled over \$3,230 and dated back through 1967.

I really don't think I would have gotten the money had it not been for Jack Schoonover. His knowledge of Personnel Division rules and the Fair Labor Standards Act, combined with the perseverance with which he pursued the overtime claim really paid off for me. And I'm grateful, both to Jack and to OSEA.

James F. Waldrop
Astoria Chapter 8
Salem

Student Appreciates Help

To the Editor:

At the half-way mark of the 1970-71 school year I would like to thank the OSEA for the \$300 grant-in-aid it awarded me last fall. The award is being applied to my senior year at Willamette University in Salem, where I am majoring in German.

As a senior, I am especially appreciative of this award. Outside scholarships available to college upperclassmen are considerably fewer than those available to sophomores and incoming freshmen. As the academic load increases, financial possibilities seem to decrease, putting additional strain on usually already working students. Outside grants such as OSEA's which are available to upperclassmen as well as underclassmen, are very welcome, indeed.

An especially severe blow has been struck education at the university level with the federal government's elimination of National Defense Education Act loans. In the coming year Oregon students—underclassmen, upperclassmen, graduate and undergraduate alike—are going to need special help in the forms of loans, work, and grants. I am awfully glad OSEA has been progressive enough to have been offering this help for several years. Its grants are very much appreciated and I hope OSEA and other groups see the serious need for expanded aid programs.

Again, I thank the Oregon State Employees Association. I will owe Oregon state employees an even larger thank you when the second half of this year is over and I walk across that stage in May.

Celia J. Smith
Willamette University
Salem

Inquiring Photographer

What Should State Employees Expect From the 1971 Legislature?

(Asked at Chapter Officer Workshop in Klamath Falls)

HARRY J. MARSHALL, Forester
Department of Forestry, Klamath Falls

It is apparent that this is going to be a "tight money" session. But I think we deserve and should expect the pay raises proposed by Gov. McCall in his budget. I think the \$61.8 million he recommended for classified and academic employees is a minimum. I also think the proposals made by OSEA's General Council and the Citizens' Fringe Benefit Committee warrant legislative support.



CHARLES R. ROSS, Highway Engineer
Highway Division, Bend

I don't expect too much in light of the state's financial condition. I think we will get a salary adjustment, but it probably will be less than we expect or deserve. I think there's a good chance to get a medical contribution; perhaps not \$10 a month that's been proposed, but at least something. The retirement system could also be improved without great cost to the state.



NOLA BELL, Cook
Oregon Technical Institute, Klamath Falls

I think most state employees expect a pay raise and the medical-hospital contribution that was recommended by Gov. Tom McCall in his budget. I personally would like to see the legislature authorize twice-a-month pay. That would be something the legislature could do that wouldn't cost much but yet would be a benefit to all state employees.



DARRELL T. JOHNS, Custodial Supervisor
Oregon Technical Institute, Klamath Falls

I think we should expect pay and fringe benefits comparable to private industry and other governmental jurisdictions in Oregon. However, I don't think we will reach comparability this session. Probably the thing that will hurt us most is Oregon's grim fiscal picture. I do think we can realistically expect a medical contribution, retirement improvements and a five per cent pay raise.



EDYTHE ROSS, Clerk
Highway Division, Bend

I think the least the legislature should do is to provide a minimum \$10 monthly medical-hospital contribution. That is one area where the state lags private industry and other governmental units badly. It would be an excellent fringe benefit because it would, in effect, give every employee a \$10 tax free pay raise. I also think state employees should expect a moderate salary increase.



BOB ALDRICH, Highway Engineer
Highway Division, Klamath Falls

That's a hard question to answer. Oregon's fiscal condition will undoubtedly hurt state employees. I feel we will get fringe benefits rather than pay raises. Those benefits will probably be a \$10 monthly medical-hospital contribution or an improved retirement system. If a pay raise is given it probably will be small. I think most employees are aware of the fiscal pinch and will roll with the punch.

