

mar 2004

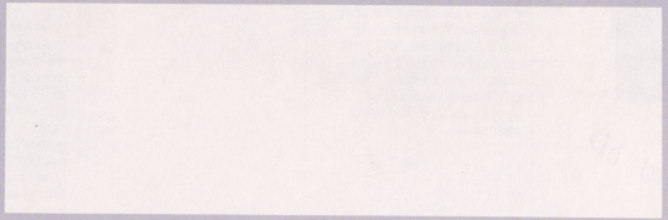
# The 503 VOICE

## Vision to Action!

SEIU Local 503, OPEU  
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Bargaining Team members from Evergreen nursing homes begin historic first contract negotiations.

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## 503 Welcomes Nursing Home Workers

In union elections late last year, 800 workers in fourteen nursing homes from Ashland to Milton-Freewater have joined SEIU Local 503, OPEU. Our newest members work for nursing homes owned by the four leading nursing home chains in Oregon - Avamere, Evergreen, Marquis and Prestige. We expect to have elections at eighteen more nursing homes in the coming year.

### An Unusual Process

Workers in these facilities joined our union through an unusual process. For the first time in our history, we convinced private sector employers to stay neutral when workers began to organize. The employers agreed to let the workers make up their own minds about unionization without a lot of pressure and intimidation coming from management.

In exchange for neutrality, SEIU Local 503, OPEU provided the political strength to do what the industry had been unable to do alone: pass a "provider tax" through the Legislature that will bring more federal Medicaid money into Oregon nursing homes, without requiring any additional state funds.

The Bush administration is currently withholding support for provider taxes, which would give a lot of money back to the states for senior care. If Bush refuses to approve this badly needed funding for seniors in nursing homes, SEIU nursing home members throughout the country will take action.

Local 503 nursing home members are currently sending postcards to the Governor, urging him to work with the federal government to move the process forward as quickly as possible, so that the dollars begin to flow to provide better patient care.

**"The union will make a big difference on wages, health insurance and the way we feel about our jobs. By belonging to the union, we're stronger because we stand together."**

**Marilyn Willard**  
Certified Nursing Assistant, Prestige Porthaven, Portland

### Quality Care for Residents

Contract negotiations for our first group of nursing home members began February 19. The members' proposals address our need for respect and dignity at work, as well as basic union rights like seniority and a grievance procedure. The members also expressed determination to make our facilities better homes for the residents who live there.

If you have friends or family members who work at an Oregon nursing home and are interested in forming a union, have them call Steven Ward at 1-800-527-9374 ext 114.

**"Our staff to resident ratio is almost double the norm. At our bargaining session we presented a petition to management. We need to bring this ratio down to provide quality care to residents."**

**Angela Simon**  
Certified Nursing Assistant, Evergreen, Milton-Freewater

## SEIU International Convention

June 19-23, 2004  
San Francisco, California

### NOTICE OF DELEGATE NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS

The SEIU International Convention is held every four years.

SEIU Local 503, OPEU is entitled to 28 delegates. The four elected statewide officers are automatic delegates by virtue of their office.

Nominations for the additional 24 slots open March 8, 2004 and close March 30, 2004. Voting will take place at SEIU Local 503, OPEU Headquarters in Salem on Saturday, April 10, 2004 (11:00 a.m. - noon) during the Executive Committee meeting.

Members wishing to vote, but who are unable to attend the April 10 meeting in person, can vote absentee. For nomination forms, or to request an absentee ballot, contact Karrie Layne at SEIU Local 503, OPEU Headquarters in Salem at 503-581-1505 or 1-800-452-2146 (outlying areas).

Absentee ballot requests must be received by 5:00 p.m. March 30, 2004 and the ballots will be mailed on April 1, 2004. Absentee ballots are due by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, April 15, 2004 and will be counted Friday, April 16, 2004.

## BOARD ELECTIONS

### DISTRICT DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Ballots will be mailed on March 15, 2004 and must be received at Headquarters by 5:00 p.m. April 5, 2004. Ballots will be counted at Salem HQ on April 6, 2004. Election results will be on the SEIU hotline 503-581-OPEU (6738) or 1-800-473-6738, posted on the web site, and published in the 503 Voice.

Candidate statements are printed exactly as submitted by the candidate. All photos are used as supplied by the candidates.

Members may run for District Director and Assistant District Director as a write-in on the ballot. Ballots will accommodate write-in candidates.