



KCLS VOICE

The newsletter of Local 1857

May 2014

News & Events:

May 9th

E-Board Meeting
KCLS Service Center
7:00 PM Business (with food)

May 18th

Shop Steward Meeting
KCLS Service Center
7:00 PM Business (with food)

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Contact Info:

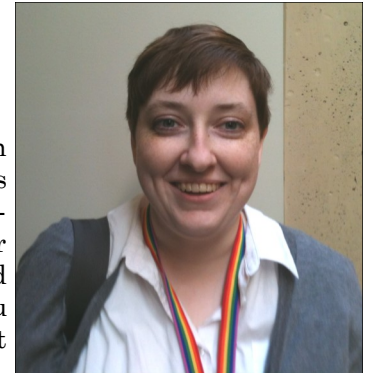
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President's Podium

Carrie Rolph, President, Local 1857



Patron behavior, staff safety, and security have been important issues so far in 2014. A rise in incidents involving criminal behavior and drug use in the library spurred the formation of a committee to gather information and documentation about incidents and make recommendations on possible solutions. You can read more about the committee and how to get involved on page two of this issue.

Local 1857 continues to advocate for driving Library2Go and Mobile Learning Labs to be voluntary. It's good that KCLS has budgeted for additional training for drivers if they need it, but a few extra hours is not enough to make everyone capable of safely driving an oversized vehicle. The following is an excerpt from a letter our staff representative recently sent to KCLS:

"We continue to object to making driving mandatory for any of our members except those hired specifically as a professional driver. This is a safety issue which affects our members and the public. In addition, it puts our members in a potential financial adversity should their driving an unfamiliar, oversized vehicle result in a driving infraction that is a result of their inability to professionally drive these vehicles."

One final note on staff safety: Local 1857 has three representatives on the Safety Committee, one for each of our bargaining units. Union representatives are appointed by the Local 1857 executive board after the safety committee elections. Representatives serve for one year and attend safety committee meetings on work time. If you're interested in being a union rep on the committee, contact me or your shop steward.



Chief Steward's Corner

Rosalie Olds

A union is only as strong as how effectively it communicates with its members. Our executive board has been focusing on improving communication with members over the last couple years. When we have important issues and need to take action we want to be able to get a hold of members as quickly as possible. One way we would like to accomplish this is by building a Member Action Team or MAT. These are groups of people in every cluster who agree to pass important union news on to ten other people. So if we were going to do some kind of rally or take an important vote, they would let at least ten people in their cluster know about that. Stewards already work hard to do this, but the MAT would give us more people on the ground willing to help.

For those who would like to support the union, but don't want a big involvement, being a member of the MAT is a great way to help.



For those who would like to support the union, but don't want a big involvement being a member of the MAT is a great way to help. Of course if you're interested in being a shop steward that's great too. Shop stewards attend at least four meetings a year to learn about what's going on

and are then available to assist members with questions, discipline, and grievances.

If you are willing to be involved in either way please contact me at rolsus@yahoo.com. We'll take more members being involved from any location and are particularly interested in having more members involved in the Covington, Kent, and Federal Way clusters. Union meetings are a great way to network with other library workers and gain leadership skills.

Safety & Security at KCLS Libraries

Karen Kresh

Staff in many KCLS branches have noticed a recent rise in incidents that threaten library safety and security. Working in an environment where drug use, criminal activity, and verbal abuse is increasingly common takes a heavy toll on staff. As KCLS staff and members of our communities, we are standing up to say that we deserve a safe workplace, and our communities deserve welcoming libraries.

Local 1857 has formed a committee to gather data on library incidents and develop a proposed plan of action, with the goal of presenting our plan to the KCLS Board of Directors in May. Committee members are: Karen Kresh, Carrie Rolph, Esperanza Stewart, Laura Ritter, Don Isaacs, Susan Allen, Stan Brooks, and Carol Ferguson. If you have questions or suggestions, please use your personal email account to send them to: safe.kcls.libraries@gmail.com.

What To Do When...

Advice from our Staff Representative, Diana Prenguber



KCLS is a great library system because of our members who make it work. However, just because it is a great system, doesn't mean that it is always a great place to work. The Union is helping our members make it a better and safer place. As most of you know, patrons seem to have less and less regard for the library rules. This has caused our members to be uncomfortable at work and sometimes fear going to work. There is a Union Safety and Security committee hard at work to highlight these issues and to work for a change in this working condition.

On March 7, 2014, I gave a short training to some members of this committee and the Stewards group. The information for the training came from an AFSCME publication, "Preventing Workplace Violence – a Union Representative's Guidebook." Workplace violence is not limited to assaults but also includes near misses, verbal abuse, vandalism, and disregard for the rules. Some of the risk factors include low staffing levels, working alone, long waits for service or lack of available services. Management can mitigate or help prevent violence by adding staff; banning working alone; and recording accidents, verbal abuse and near misses. They can also provide training in diffusing violent situations or in self defense.

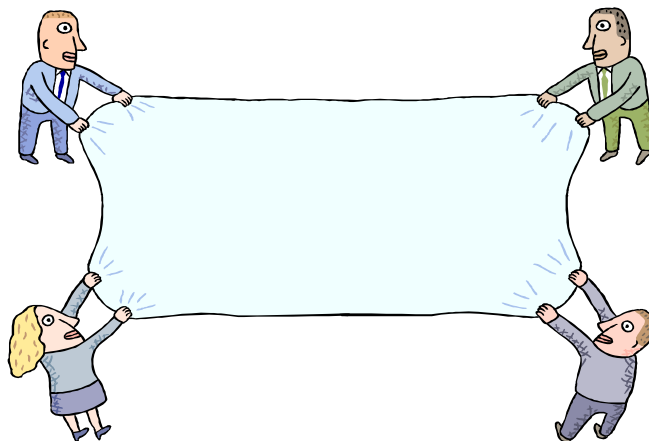
Unfortunately, training as the sole element in a safety program can create an impossible responsibility on the employee. Other programs must accompany training.

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Union action: Talk to co-workers, conduct a survey. Urge members to document all incidents, close calls and all verbal abuse. This data should be reviewed on a regular basis and discussed with management.

The Safety and Security committee has already started documenting and soliciting someone from each branch to help document. We have been working with management for over a year to develop a program that provides for more security for our members. We will continue to do so but we may take more action and we are developing an action plan. Ultimately, we may have to file grievances, develop contract language, and build coalitions (the Supervisor Union is interested in partnering with us on this important topic). For more information on what the committee is doing, see related article by Karen Kresh on Page 2 of this newsletter.

I also want to remind you that you have a right to have a Union Representative with you when you are called to a meeting with management. Ask if this meeting could lead to discipline, and if so, you would like to assert your Weingarten right to have a Union Representative at the meeting. "Never attend a potential disciplinary meeting without a Union Representative!"



How to Find Information & Assistance

Susan Manning

To find out what the union is doing for you:

- Attend meetings
- Read meeting minutes
- Read the newsletter, KCLSVoice
- Check our website: kclsvoice.org

To be informed of your rights, workplace rules, and union rules:

- Ask your stewards, officers, and the union representative
- Look at:
 - The labor contracts (click on “2013-2015 Contracts” in kclsvoice.org)
 - The Human Resources Manual (on the Intranet)
 - The Public Services Manual; the chapter on “Staff Operations” is especially useful (on the Intranet)
 - Our local’s constitution (on kclsvoice.org)

To get advice:

- Ask stewards, officers, and the union representative
- Pay special attention to Diana Prenguber’s column in the newsletter: “What To Do When...”

To voice ideas and concerns:

- Attend meetings
- Talk with stewards, officers, and the union representative
- Join and participate on the Watercooler

To find out when the next meeting will be:

- Check the bulletin board in your staff room
- Check kclsvoice.org
- Ask stewards

If you aren’t getting mailings (email or postal), such as meeting minutes:

Does the union have the correct addresses (email and home) for you? If they need updating, give the updated information to a steward or call the union office: Council 2 at 1-800-775-6418.

If you believe the union has the most up-to-date contact information for you and you’re still not receiving mailings, ask your steward to look into this for you or call the union office: Council2 at 1-800-775-6418.

Wondering who Stacy Hulse is and why union members get emails from her?

Stacy Hulse is the Staff Assistant at our union office; she takes care of us in many ways, such as sending out the mailings (meeting minutes, alerts, etc.) to members, either by email or postal mail, and printing the newsletter.

Wondering who “C2 Olympia” is and why union members get emails from them?

Emails from “C2 Olympia” are from Council 2 (Stacy Hulse, as Staff Assistant at the Council 2 office, of ten sends emails under this name). “C2” stands for “Council 2” (aka: Washington State Council of City and County Employees). Our local, Local 1857, belongs to Council 2.

A List of Communication Methods

Susan Manning

Bulletin Boards – A “union” space on the employees’ bulletin board in the staff room of every location. It is set aside for union postings of announcements, upcoming meetings, etc.

KCLS Voice: The Newsletter for Local 1857 – A quarterly newsletter created, published, and distributed by Local 1857 members. Sent by email to all members that have provided email addresses to the union; also placed in staff rooms by stewards.

Meeting Minutes – These are the primary means of communication in the union; as the official minutes of union meetings they provide lots of information about what is going on in the union and in our work place and how that will affect union members. These are sent by email to all Local 1857 members (for those who haven’t provided email addresses, the minutes are sent through the US Postal Service).

Meetings – All meetings are open to all Local 1857 members. These are great places to develop an awareness of important workplace issues and union activities. There are three types of meetings:

- a) Executive Board Meetings (aka “E-Board Meetings”)
- b) General Membership Meetings – Primary place for members to discuss workplace issues, vote on union actions, and hear official reports from the leadership and committees.
- c) Stewards’ Meetings – For training, updating, and enabling discussions between stewards.

Officers List – This list is available on the kclsvoice.org website.

Stewards Network – Union stewards throughout KCLS form a key, person-to-person network of 2-way communication between the union leadership and all of the other members of the union. If you have a question about a workplace issue or union activities, your local union steward is a great place to start! A list of stewards is on the kclsvoice.org website.

Watercooler – An email group for all Local 1857 members. Join in the discussions (or start one!). To sign-up, go to www.kclsvoice.org and click on “Communication and Mailing Lists.”

www.kclsvoice.org - A website created and maintained by Local 1857 members. Provides lots of basic information about our local: the constitution, list of leaders and stewards, meeting dates and locations, announcements, helpful links, etc.

Minutes Megaphone

Susan Manning

Union meeting minutes contain lots of information about Union actions and discussions that affect our work lives. For answers to this issue of the “Minutes Megaphone,” check the Dec. 13th Executive Board Minutes and the Jan. 14th General Membership Minutes.

Didn't receive the minutes? Please contact Susan Manning smanning209@yahoo.com.

1. Who elects the Chief Steward?
2. What level of pay will PSAs get when they work out of class as an LA?
3. When a position opens mid-year, will it be offered to staff of the same classification and hours in the cluster?
4. Who will receive training on how to assist union members to request the best schedule possible?
5. Is the union concerned about the possibility of age discrimination at KCLS?
6. Are our janitors receiving a living wage?
7. Is it allowable for LAS to supervise volunteers?

Please Donate Leave Time to Help Your Officers and Stewards Advocate for You!

Susan Manning

Please consider donating a small amount of your vacation time to the Union Leave Bank. The hours in the Union Leave Bank are used for official union business and offset vacation time that our union stewards and officers must often take to conduct contract negotiations, help members in disciplinary meetings, etc. The open period for transferring leave time is April/May of each year. The bank is currently at 207 hours – the maximum allowed is 250 hours. If just 43 people donate 1 hour each we'd be at our maximum! The form is on our website, kclsvoice.org (click on “Union Resources” on the right side of the page) and must be signed and returned to the address on the form.

Comments or Questions?

Email smanning209@yahoo.com.

www.kclsvoice.org