



**National Federation of Federal Employees**

**NFFE - IAM**

Pride - Unity - Strength

**Federal District 1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO**



# Forest Service Council (FSC) Voice

## SPECIAL ISSUE: 2007 A Year in Review

Issue 11 Vol. 1 February 2008

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### What My Union Has Done For Me-- 10 Tips:

- Pay raises
- Job classification
- Retirement benefits
- An 8 hour day
- Weekends
- Paid vacations
- Sick leave
- Decent working conditions
- Improvements in our standard of living
- The right to be treated with dignity and respect

*More next issue!*

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### Your Dedicated 2004-2008 Forest Service Council Committees and Chairpersons

#### Forest Service Partnership Council

Dan Duefrene      Melissa Baumann  
Betsy Evans      Ron Thatcher

#### Auditing Committee

Barry McDonald      Lillian Altman  
Mary Coughlin

#### Budget and Finance

Barry McDonald

#### Bylaws

Eric Plimmer

#### Civil Rights

Bernie Robertson

#### Communications

Jennifer Hickenbottom

#### Competitive Sourcing

Mark Davis

#### Downsizing

Eric Plimmer

#### Grievance

Lonnie Lewis

#### Health and Safety Workgroup

David Ensign

#### Law Enforcement and Investigation

Brian Webb

#### Legislative

Ron Thatcher/Mark Davis

#### Negotiations

Eric Plimmer (acting)

#### Recruitment

Joe Drozdowski

#### Resolution

Gilda Dixon

#### Temporary Employment

Dan Duefrene

#### Training

Melissa Baumann

#### Veterans

David Chevalier

*For more information about any of these committees, please contact the listed chairpersons.*

## 2007 A Year In Review



*Forest Service Council  
President Ron Thatcher.*

**As we begin this New Year, we have so many 2007 accomplishments to be proud of!**

We also need to pay tribute and give our thanks to some of our brothers and sisters who have begun a new chapter in their lives, by retiring or moving on to other

positions in our agency

This past year, we saw both Region 8 Vice President **Joyce Sizemore** and Job Corps President **Michael Krueger** retire. I thank these two for their tireless commitment and sacrifices that make a difference in working conditions for all of our Region 8 and Job Corps bargaining unit employees.

We also saw long time Region 6 Vice President **Dennis Reichelt** take a new position as the Labor Management Relations Specialist for Region 6.

I thank Dennis for all of the great work he accomplished for us and look forward to working with him in his new position. Even though he now has a management position, I can think of no one better than a former Union official to become a management representative of management in resolving labor and-management issues.

Just this month, Region 1 Vice President **Doug Law** announced he is stepping down—and up. In case you didn't hear, Doug has been detailed to the Washington Office/Regional Office Transformation team—and from what I've been hearing he's doing a wonderful job.

Here again—a former Union official engaged in shaping the workforce for the WO and ROs. I do believe this is a good thing. Thank you, Doug, for all of the great work for not only your

contributions towards making Region 1 the labor relations success it is,, but also for all your work on National issues over the years as well.

I also want to recognize **Chris Feutrier** for his excellent work and for stepping up and acting as President in Doug place—we wish him well in his detail to Job Corps.

**Betsy Evans** is now serving as the acting Region 1 Vice President and has decided to step down as Forest Service Council Secretary-Treasurer. We owe her thanks for all she has done for us as Secretary-Treasurer and for her stepping up as Region 1 acting Vice President.

This last year we also had the retirement of the good **Bill Dougan**. Words alone cannot do justice to the Bill's accomplishments—not only you and me, but for our Union and the Forest Service as well. Bill has left us better, stronger, and bigger than ever before. Best of all he is our newly elected NFFE National Secretary-Treasurer and continues to provide advice to our Council, for which we are very grateful.

With these retirements, we need to recognize those who have filled in behind these folks as newly elected Regional Vice Presidents:

Region 8: **Dave Stamey**;

Region 6: **Jim Campbell**;

Region 4: **Bill Self**;

Region 1: **Betsy Evans** (acting);

Region 3: **Randy Gonzalez** (newly elected);

Job Corps: **Larry King**.

I'd also like to thank **Lisa Wolfe** for her answering the call to be acting Council Secretary-Treasurer for Betsy. I know these individuals will successfully improve Labor/Management relations for their Regions as well as taking on National issues for our Union.

This past year we have seen successes that are a true credit of our Union—*working to fight for what's right*.

Our Legislative Team Leader **Mark Davis** has secured competitive sourcing moratorium.

Mark instrumentally devised the very language incorporated in the FY 08 appropriations bill, halting Forest Service competitive sourcing in 2008. Mark and his team also pursued and acquired firefighter personal liability insurance. The Legislative Committee is also working to ensure safety investigations information remains *privileged information*. Without Mark, none of these tremendous accomplishments would be possible. He is truly one of the most talented, dedicated, and remarkable people I know! We're extremely lucky to have him working for all of us and we can not thank him enough for everything he is doing.

As your Council President, I look forward to helping you—helping all of us—by building a stronger Union, by having a stronger presence, and by setting new goals for our future. We, together, must insure that all aspects of the Union are fully functioning and able to engage the many challenges that are before us.

My New Year's goals include:

- Building up our membership;
- Organizing those units without representation;
- Ensuring we are providing the training we all need to be successful; and
- Keeping our legislative agenda working to make our Union and our Bargaining Unit Members the model of Government Unions.

We must never forget that this Union belongs to its membership. It is my promise to you that as your Council President, I will always work to ensure that our Union is a Union that you can be proud of and one that is meeting the needs of our membership and answering their concerns.

In Solidarity,

*Ron Thatcher*

## Regional Vice Presidents Reporting In

### Region 1

Region 1 has had an eventful year. With a new Chief of the Forest Service and a new Forest Service Council President—both from our Region, we can stand back and applaud the advances these individuals have made toward developing partnership and collaborative labor relationship in the Forest Service.

Last May, Region 1 sent many members to our Legislative Conference where we were successful in shutting down competitive sourcing and getting our fire liability insurance covered for our lower-paid fire employees.

Region 1 hosted a National Basic Steward Training and Mediation Training in Missoula, MT, equipping many of our up-and-comers with the very tools they need to succeed as a Forest Service unionists.

Our Regional Partnership Council launched a new and improved Positive Work Environment policy and ADR toolkit. We are breaking new ground with management, who has given us free reign to go into work units, and fix the organization and bargain on operating procedures on behalf of the bargaining unit. This cooperation is a tremendous benefit to taxpayers, our employees— and, also to management.

We've had great success by modeling and fostering a positive work environment in our region. This, with out legislative success, has led to an increase in membership, with our most active locals in the Helena, Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, and Lolo National Forests.

*Even our own Deputy Regional Forester has signed up as an honorary union member!!*

Reorganizations continue to be the name of the game, taking up a lot of our union official's time on multiple Forests. Fortunately, we have a lot of new officers, **John Olson** has taken a lead on fire issues such as IFPM and 401, we have 6 newly elected members from across the region—now members of our Regional Partnership Council; **Kim Beaver, John Olson, Christy**

**Ferruzzi, Clint Van Blaricom, Dave Ensign, and Brian Webber.**

We have a whole new suite of officers working in the Helena, and Kootenai National Forests. **Ellen Sullivan** has taken over the Kootenai's local from Ron Thatcher. All of our new officers are doing excellent work for the employees they represent.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our new stewards and officers for the hard work that they do, their commitment, excellence, and courage to be important players in their workforce.

Albuquerque issues continue to frustrate and try our patience. I'm hoping—as all of you—that the tide will soon change on that front.

I've had a great year working as the Acting Regional Vice President and am looking forward to some new challenges as I move into Job Corps.

**Betsy Evans** is taking over my role until there's an election kicks off and you won't miss a beat with her incredible skills, compassion, and ability.

I wish you all the best in your future endeavors and please keep in touch.

In solidarity,

*Chris Featrier*

## Region 6

There was a lot of activity in Region 6 this year. Nearly all of it is what I call the "meat and potatoes" of labor management relations. Meat and potatoes representation requires adequate staffing on each Local Lodge. Unfortunately, not all Locals in the Region have adequate staffing. Locals on the Ochoco, Deschutes, Wenatchee, Olympic, Siuslaw, Wenatchee Forests, and the Regional Office do not have functioning Locals with officers.

NFFE's number one priority for 2008 is recruitment. Our business representative, Steve Flory, members from other Locals in the Region,

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and I will be tackling this situation head on this year. In the mean time, Local officers and I have been engaged in providing what assistance we can to these struggling Locals and their bargaining unit employees while simultaneously covering the home fronts. We've been covering formal meetings best we can, filing actions, negotiating small and large changes to organizations, and riding herd on pre-wraps plans. Mere words cannot begin to convey the superlative effort all the Locals across this Region have mustered to provide representation to our bargaining unit.

As proud as I am of our effort to provide representation across the Region, I look forward to the day when each of our Locals can stand on their own, freeing up our experienced ranks to step up and provide talent for the larger issues confronting us on an increasingly frequent basis. Regionally, we've experienced the reorganization of engineering and lands service from individual Forests in to sub-regional zones. AQM, purchasing, and quarters management has completed it's make-over into a Region-wide organization. We've helped as best with the transition from Forest Human Resource service to Albuquerque Service Center when the best laid managerial expectations did not materialize.

This year, our Regional Partnership Committee identified serious safety program delivery shortfalls to our bargaining unit. This situation occurred as a result of regionalization of Forest services resulting in employees being stationed at field units who were not affiliated nor supervised by their host units. We now have a Regional MOU which should result in a much safer working conditions for these detached bargaining unit employees.

*Jim Campbell*

## Region 8

May 2007, I became acting Region 8 Vice President. Since that time, we have moved forward with an election. In the last news letter, I stated my belief in building partnerships with other Union officers, the employees we

represent, and management—we're working hard on this principle.

In working with Local Presidents, we have developed a communication plan where each month, we meet via conference call to update each other on regional and national issues and events. This call has been a key advantage in identifying and responding to issues and events.

In order to advance our region's skills, we have scheduled members to attend an officers and stewards training in Asheville, North Carolina. The class is filled to overflowing with participants from all across the country.

In February 2007, Local 1563 launched a brand new website. We posted a wealth of information for all levels of the organization. The Local is constantly looking for ways to improve the site's information and use. Check it out at <http://www.nffelocal1563.org/>.

We continue to reach out to new members by building partnership with our employees. We find employees are not only interested in just a job—they want a say in their own future. As an example, the Savannah River Site in South Carolina has existed for more than 50 years, yet it has never organized. The Local President of #379, Larue Bryant, worked with the employees of the Savannah River Site, achieving organization in the early fall of 2007.

In November, we were invited to present a joint Master Agreement and interest based bargaining training to Savannah River leadership team and the Local 379 officers. We welcome the Savannah River employees and look forward to working with them.

The Regional Partnership has taken on a new life. We now have new management representatives from the National Forest in North Carolina, as well as the Deputy Regional Forester for Operations, the Presidents of Local 1329, and Local 379. As a welcome addition, the regional budget officer has recently joined the council.

We have reinvigorated the Local Presidents rotation. So far, the Presidents of Local 1850 and Local 523 have seen the council at work and added to the deliberations.

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Brian Webb— Chair of Region 8 Law Enforcement and Investigation (LE&I) Committee—is our one and only LE&I representative on the Partnership Council. Brian has worked on many of the issues for the council helping us to reach agreement in several discussions with management.

We continue to face challenges. We need to encourage Local growth in places like the Ozark – St. Francis, Cherokee, and the Regional Office. All of these Locals need officers and we will be looking to the Council and NFFE National to assist and promote these Locals to grow.

*Dave Stamey*

## Region 9

Region 9, operations are normal. The folks at Grey Towers became the first State and Private unit to be organized, and are being served by Local 1919, which also serves Washington Office members in Washington, DC.

Last December, Region 9 recognized the Chequamegon-Nicolet Partnership Council with the Labor-Management Partnership Award at the Honor Award Ceremony in Milwaukee.

In February, NFFE National President, **Rick Brown** will be a guest speaker at the Huron-Manistee National Forest All Employee Conference. The unrepresented Regional LE&I employees are looking forward to securing Union representation. In March, **Ron Thatcher** will attend the Eastern/Southern Region new employee orientation at the University in Columbus, Ohio.

And, all of us are looking forward to continuing our newly forged partnership with **Kent Connaughton**—our new Regional Forester. Together, we will identify problems and craft solutions to better accomplish our Forest Service mission and serve the best interest of the public and the employees we represent.

*Józef Drozdowski*

## Region 10

Greetings from the cold north -- Region 10! Looking back on the past year, I am thankful to all our brothers and sisters who helped steer Local 251 through some tough transitional times. We sent **Bill** and **Libby Dougan** off to the big city—in this case, our loss is everyone’s gain.

As Bill’s replacement as R10 Vice President to the Forest Service Council, I will continue to attempt to fill Bill’s shoes in a professional manner. So far, I have done so with varying degrees of success.

Yet another Local 251 event is the retirement of our long time president **Mike White**. We will miss his good judgment and polished people skills, but wish him well, as he enjoys his retirement in Sitka with his wife, children, and grandkids.

I am thankful we have had a few individuals who have assume these vacant officer roles. **Ken Dinsmore** is our acting President together with **Nancy Soriano** and **Dede Srb**, the group will steer Local 251 until we hold elections later this year.

In addition to our elected board, I’d like to thank all our other members who gave their time and energy to represent NFFE/IAM as stewards, on leadership teams, and on national/local committees such as negotiating fire, safety, and numerous workforce analysis groups.

I am optimistic for the coming year.

We hope to see the Regional Partnership Councils with new energy, we’ll champion the seamless implementation of a new regional wellness policy, and we’ll maintain support to our employees as we continue to bear the effects of major downsizing at all levels.

I’d also like to recognize and thank my fellow Forest Service Council members for their never ending dedication and hard work. Local 251 truly appreciates their assistance with such issues as wellness, payroll—*how hard can it be for a business to pay their employees on time?*—and background investigations.

Alaska seems to be the breeding ground for these investigations; the National Memorandum of Understanding will help protect the rights of all agency workers.

Special thanks go out to **Mark Davis** and his legislative committee folks for their ongoing drafting efforts that convinced our U.S. Congress to pass a bill that prohibits Forest Service funds from being used for competitive sourcing; and, for their efforts in making firefighter liability insurance available.

As a member of the Council’s training committee, I have assisted with Basic Steward/Officer classes last year. I’ve been also asked to help teach more sessions this winter and look forward to meeting new folks and providing them with the tools and support needed to be good Union representatives.

It seems like only yesterday that our Local reinvented itself from a dozen members to more than a hundred this last year!

If we could do it up here—any Local can grow—you do it one employee at a time (with a little help by **Rick Brown** and **Bill Dougan** speaking at pizza lunches). Speak to each employee about the issues that concern them, and remember: “YOUR UNION IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS MEMBER’S WANT IT TO BE.”

We always welcome and need new volunteers to pitch in and help at all levels—if we all contribute a little, it will make a difference in the end. Let’s have a safe and productive year!

In solidarity,

*Barney Freedman*

## Research

Well, my title is Regional Vice-President for Research, but I’m beginning to think that’s going to have to change: First of all, I don’t have a “Region,” and second, I now am working with considerably more than “Research.” With all of the reorganization and centralization of the Agency, it is inevitable that there are new organizations that do not fit the structure of our

Council. Thus, Local 1919 (representing the Washington Office), and Local 2196 (representing the ISO employees) have been added to the “area” of the RVP for Research. And, to add further to the confusion, Local 1919 also now represents employees at Grey Towers, who recently organized to be represented by NFFE.

These changes in the Locals covered by this RVP area have meant a significant change in my workload and focus. The recent Union victory with respect to competitive sourcing is going to result in significant changes for employees in the IT organization, both in the ISO and those who are outside the ISO.

Because adequate IT services are important to all employees in the Forest Service, the Council has proposed to use a process involving significant employee involvement in the design of the new CIO organization. We will propose that the team tasked to work on this project solicit employee comments on CIO operations, barriers to success, process, and/or organizational changes for improvement, etc. and subject them to formal content analysis.

As I write this article, I don’t know if management will accept such a process.

*But if they do*, the Union will be looking for help from members in the CIO to provide their knowledge about what is broken in the current system and how best to fix it.

In addition to assisting Locals in my area of responsibility, I continue to serve on the Forest Service Partnership Council, the Council’s Training Committee, and the Grievance Committee.

In the last capacity, I recently had the pleasure of being reminded why I do this work. The case involved a good employee who made a single bad mistake. The Agency fired the employee, and would not even discuss other settlement options with us. Upon going to arbitration, the arbitrator agreed with the Union: The employee should not have been fired. Instead, the arbitrator reduced the penalty to a two-week suspension and ordered the employee back to work with approximately 8 months of back pay. The Union

works hard to ensure justice for all employees we represent—sometimes we even get it!

*Melissa Bauman*

## Committee Reports

### 2008 Union Official Training

*“As Forest Service Union officials, I think many times we take our marvelous contract for granted, and do not necessarily put to use many of the provisions within it. One strong provision is having Union-sponsored training covered by the contract. Each Local has a minimum of 120 hours that can be used each year for union official training because well-trained union officials are to the benefit of both the Agency and the Union”—Melissa*

### Council Training

The Council has been working to ensure that there is a variety of training opportunities available to Union officials in the Forest Service. As I write this report, approximately 30 union officials are in Asheville, NC participating in the 10<sup>th</sup> Basic Steward Training Course that the Council has sponsored since June 2005.

This training provides an intense, but broad, overview of the various topics that a steward needs to know to get started, including the labor statute, unfair labor practices, grievances, negotiations, and the Master Agreement provisions.

For union officials who would still like to get in on this training this year, there will be two more sessions this spring.

### Master Agreement Training

March 11-13, in Bend, OR  
April 15-17, in Worland, WY

My next goal is to start putting together training modules for advanced steward training, including advanced grievance handling, mediation, safety, negotiations practice, and other topics that will give officials an opportunity to have in depth exposure to specific topics.

Finally, there is always a need to have special or “hot” topics training for officials, and the training put on by Region 5 and Local 1771 in Reno each year is a great opportunity for officials to get caught up on the up and coming issues. The 2008 Reno training will be held October 28-30.

### **IAM Training**

In addition to the Council training, Local officials should be aware that there is training provided by the IAM at the William W. Winpisinger Center in Maryland. The full list of courses can be found at <http://winpisinger.iamaw.org/courselist/2008.cfm>, and courses that may be of particular interest to you and your Local this year include:

#### **Federal Employees Program**

March 9-14

#### **Federal Employees Collective Bargaining**

June 8-13

#### **Federal Employees MSPB Program**

June 15-20

#### **Federal Employees Seminar II**

December 7-12

#### **Leadership I**

April 27-May 2

July 6-11

August 10-15

September 28-October 3

October 19-24

#### **Leadership II**

May 4-9

July 20-25

October 5-10

Please keep in mind that any time your Local sends you to training, they are making an investment in you and the Local. They will expect you to come home and put the training to use, representing Local and Regional employees.

*Melissa*

### **Legislative Committee**

This year has been long, hard, and exhausting, but we are energized by our successes. By now, I’m pretty sure everyone knows that your Union’s hard work has finally stopped the Bush Administration’s competitive sourcing initiative dead in its tracks—at least in the Forest Service.

We have fought a good fight for years, and for years we have slowed this insidious outsourcing program—a program that’s been rotting the agency from within, even destroying the lives of good men and women who have dedicated their lives to public service.

Our efforts have slowed the bleeding throughout the years, but I can’t even begin to convey how much better it feels to completely shut the darn thing down.

Our legislative success, authorizing 50 percent insurance reimbursement for temporary fireline managers is less well-known. As originally approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee, this benefit would have only exclude positions with liability exposure, such as squad bosses, safety officers, and initial attack dispatchers.

We worked with agency officials, Congress, and even OMB to broaden the scope of the benefit.

For more information on these achievements, you can check out the Council competitive sourcing Web page at <http://www.nffe-fsc.org/Documents/CSIndex/CSIndex.html>.

If you’d like to show your gratitude to the 110th Congress for this legislation, start by calling your representative let him/her know about it—contact information and links are at the bottom of the Web page. As always, you should do this on your own time, and using your personal equipment.

There are many of us who could use a good, long rest. However, we cannot give in. Competitive sourcing is not dead; it has only been stopped for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008. It’s crucial that we build on our success. First, we need to work to ensure the ban remains in effect in FY 2009.

Government Accounting Office (GAO) report

speaks to Forest Service competitive sourcing, and will be released in February.

We are confident it will be scathing.

However, we will argue that the ban should be continued until the Agency's shortcomings are addressed. A permanent ban on all outsourcing is not politically feasible. Long-term, we need to work on fundamental reform of outsourcing rules and regulations.

Even following the departure of the privatization zealot currently residing in the White House, his policies and procedures, are like loaded guns, neglectfully left, collecting dust.

For example, A-76 privatization rules were re-written by Bush's corporate cronies. The skids will still be greased for future outsourcing orgies. Since these are government-wide regulations, this will be a continuous uphill battle—but it is one we must take on.

Currently, we are ambitiously working on several legislative agendas, including one for firefighters and a number of others. If you have an issue you believe we should be working on, please email me a summary of the issue and your suggested legislative remedy ([mwdavis01@fs.fed.us](mailto:mwdavis01@fs.fed.us)).

*Mark Davis*



*Ron Thatcher (left) and Mark Davis on Friday afternoon (and yes, we were off the clock) following a long week's work on the Hill at last year's Legislative Conference. It's clear by this photo that we gave it all we had.*

## **Competitive Sourcing**

You may think the work of this committee is over, but apparently, reorganization fever still rages.

The agency has renamed its Competitive Sourcing Office to Strategic Planning and Performance Accountability. We haven't gotten around to changing the name of the Council Committee yet—but our work continues.

For example, the government is now contemplating a major reorganization of the roughly 8,000 agency employees performing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Your Union's response to the NEPA Report is a good example of how a collaborative approach can work to the benefit of both employees and the agency.

The NEPA Feasibility Report recommended downsizing the workforce by 620 employees and reassigning some 1,800 employees from field units to centralized Service Centers.

The Union suggested that agency leadership slow down and get input from field employees on the report, including alternatives to its recommendation. They agreed.

The Union and agency are now jointly using the formal content analysis process to analyze nearly 1,000 comments from employees at all levels of the organization. More information on this project is also posted on the competitive sourcing Web page (see link above).

Appropriately enough, the idea of performing content analysis did not come from me. It came from concerned employees who contacted me: collective wisdom in action—and the idea became reality only because rank-and-file members came to serve: **Adam Shaw, Anne M Fuller, Claudia Narcisco, Dianne A Berry, Gilda J Dixon, Jerry T Wolf, Jill J Cobb, Karen Compton, Sandy M Powers, and Todd D Buchholz.**

So many members of this team have made special contributions, I hesitate to single anyone out for special mention, but I would be remiss not to acknowledge the key role played by **Claudia Narcisco**, she who strongly advocated for the content analysis approach from the

beginning, and did much of the logistical work getting it off the ground and moving it forward.

I thank **Anne Fuller** for jumping in with both feet when we had an unanticipated emergency staffing shortage she really saved the day.

All team members are yeoman in their efforts and deserve as much gratitude and thanks as their brothers and sisters can spare.

I should also acknowledge the nonmembers who have been assigned to this task by management:

**Cynthia P Keller, Jody H Sutton, Julie Hopkins, Karl C. Vester, and Marcy DeMillion.** I also need to thank Deputy Chief Hank Kashdan for supporting the project—not just with words, but also with funding.

It seems obvious to me that on-the-ground knowledge is essential to the success of any re-engineering effort.

Who better to identify barriers to efficiency and suggest how to overcome them than the employees performing the work?

The question is how to collect and compile this collective wisdom. I hope this content analysis project can serve as a model for using the agency's greatest resource—its employees, as we work together for greater effectiveness and efficiency in caring for the land and serving people.

### **A Final Word**

I sent out an update on your Union's NEPA work a short time ago, and received this response: "Great info! Now, how about taking on the Human Resources move to Albuquerque?" Well, I looked it up and it turns out this person's not even a member. I have to admit this rubbed me the wrong way.

Too many employees think the Union is a knight in shining armor, riding in on the proverbial white horse to save the day. It ain't so.

The Union *is* the horse. Want the day saved? Better saddle up.

All the Council's work is achieved by employees who have joined the Union, and aren't afraid to get involved. We have conquered, but there is so

much more to do. How much we get done depends on how many saddle up.

*Mark Davis*

### **Law Enforcement and Investigations**

The LE&I Committee has had a busy year. The big news for the year is that we have gathered petitions and forwarded them to the FLRA in order to have NFFE represent all Law Enforcement employees in the Forest Service. It looks like election will happen soon and when we win, Law Enforcement Officers will be able to benefit from NFFE representation regardless of the union status of their Forest.

Also, this year we have had our back pay for our paid lunches paid after almost 18 months of waiting. We have worked with management on most of the proposed policy changes, actively providing pre-decisional input into the process.

In the coming year we expect to be dealing with the implementation of physical standards, the development of medical standards, and the actual implementation of the paid lunches. It really looks like we have our work cut out for us. The committee would like to thank the Forest Service Council for all their support and assistance, especially with the petition, and remind all those that have questions and concerns about LE&I that we are at their service.

*Brian Webb*

### **The Eastern Front—A Few Thoughts While Organizing at Grey Towers**

*By Józef J. Drozdowski*

While at Grey Towers, I made myself available to employee inquiries about the value of Union representation in the workplace. I couldn't help but wonder what Gifford Pinchot would think about employees organizing in his summer home. I was delighted to discover that such an eventuality would not cause our beloved Gifford the least bit of discomfort—let alone be a cause for him to turn in his grave.

## Gifford Pinchot's Family

Pinchot was born into a prosperous family, shortly following the Civil War. The family's summer home in Simbury, Connecticut, where he was born was once owned by Gifford's great grandfather, Elisha Phelps, a distinguished politician who served as the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives during the 1820s.

Gifford grew up spending his early summers with relatives in Connecticut and the rest of his time in New York City. Because of his father's business interests abroad, his family traveled extensively during Gifford's childhood.

Gifford's father, James Wallace Pinchot, believed he had gained his wealth without having created slums, fouled rivers, corrupted politicians, wasted valuable resources, or enslaved workers.

James embraced the utilitarian philosophy of John Stuart Mill, which defined social good as "the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people."

He had a keen interest in public affairs and strong notions about right and wrong in public life.

Gifford chose to earn his ample inheritance by working for the betterment of society. Following his graduation from Yale University, he went to France to study forestry, where he learned the value of selective rather than unrestrained harvesting of forests. Cutting his studies short, he returned to prove that forestry could produce



*Grey Towers, home of Forest Service Chief Gifford Pinchot.*

timber for harvest and maintain the forest for future generations.

## Pinchot Hits His Stride

Rather than taking an assistant position in the Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division, Gifford built a thriving consulting practice in New York City, working for the Phelps-Dodge Company, George Vanderbilt, and the state of New Jersey. Experiencing considerable success, he employed Harry Graves, a Yale schoolmate, to assist him in his practice.

In 1897, having served on the National Academy of Sciences' Forest Commission, Pinchot accepted an appointment as a Confidential Forest Agent to examine the some 21 million acres set aside by President Grover Cleveland in thirteen new Forest Reserves in the western states, as recommended by the Commission.

*So, you might say, Gifford, like many of us, started his Federal career as a temporary employee. His job ended when he reported his findings to Cornelius Bliss—the Secretary of Interior.*

Pinchot's work on the Forest Commission and as a Confidential Forest Agent gave Gifford a liberal education in the powers and principalities, which controlled the politics and the people of the West.

He became familiar with the Homestake Mine in the Black Hills, the Anaconda Mine in the Rockies, Marcus Daly's feudal overlordship of the Bitterroot Valley, and Miller and Lux's vast holding of flocks and herds and control of grazing lands on the Pacific Slope.

He acquainted himself with the might of the Northern and Southern Pacific and the Great Northern Railroads, the irrigation interests in California, and the great cattle and sheep stock growers' associations.

His contact with newspapers like the St. Paul Dispatch, the Spokane Spokesman-Review, the Seattle Post Intelligencer, the Portland Oregonian, the San Francisco Chronicle, and the Los Angeles Times, gave Gifford some inkling of how public opinion is created or directed.

## Gifford Goes to Washington

In Washington DC, he met two Presidents on a working basis; became acquainted with the leaders of both the House and Senate; learned something about how legislation come to pass, the bearing of public sentiment upon it, and the jargon in which it is written; and began drawing bills himself.

He got to know essential facts about the administration of the public land laws; had the devastating effect of the spoils system rubbed into his hair; thatbullying things through may cost more than it is worth. He learned to keep his temper and be thankful for a half of a loaf. He was forced to form opinions and express them on nationwide questions of real importance—and he had to make plans for handling millions of acres of public forest—and to defend them when made.

In 1898, Bernard Fernow resigned as Chief of the Forestry Division to take charge of Cornell University's new forestry school. The Secretary of Agriculture, James Wilson, along with others, persuaded Gifford to become the new Chief. His outstanding ability as an administrator generated strong loyalty from the small staff. He flooded the press with the nation's need for forestry and began to influence public opinion.

In 1905, he succeeded in getting all of the country's federal forest reserves transferred to his agency—transforming it into the Forest Service.

Gifford shared his money, possessions, and intellect to further the causes of the common good. Like his pal, Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford was a progressive Republican who firmly believed the resources of the American people should benefit the greatest good.

He firmly believed that the earth and its resources belonged of right to its people. He defined conservation as “the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men—the foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, and minerals, for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time.” He believed that should apply to human resources as well as

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*The imposing Grey Tower today.*

natural resources.

It was Roosevelt and Pinchot who gave the name “conservation” to the movement for the preservation and wise use of all natural resources. They observed what they considered as reckless exploitation of these resources for private profit, and they predicted that unless scientific management of resources was required, America would fail to meet its future needs. Under Pinchot, the Forest Service added millions of acres to the national forests, controlled their use, and regulated their harvest.

*“...the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men—the foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, and minerals, for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time.” —Gifford Pinchot*

Gifford's devotion to serving the public good led to his removal from federal service by President William Taft in 1910. Taft's Secretary of the Interior, Richard Ballinger, wanted to hand over coal fields on the Chugach NF to the Morgan-Guggenheim Syndicate. Following a long battle, the indignant Pinchot, through Senator Jonathon Dolliver, Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, lambasted both Ballinger and Taft on the floors of Congress, and asked for Congressional hearing into the propriety of Ballinger's dealings.

## Pinchot Fired

The nation's first Chief of the Forest Service was fired the next day. I have no doubt Gifford would have similarly fought against the current Administration's wholesale contracting out of Forest Service jobs to serve private profit instead of the public interest—but I digress.

Gifford's brother, Amos Pinchot, assisted in having Ballinger investigated. He prepared briefs, marshaled evidence and witnesses, and kept the press glued to the issues. In true Pinchot fashion,

Amos concluded that great economic interests were bent on dominating public lands, resources, and political institutions to serve their own selfish interests. To him, the controversy revolved around political ethics and served to enlighten the public to the threat posed by unregulated and irresponsible wielders of financial power.

The Pinchot-Ballinger controversy was a turning point for Amos Pinchot and brought him fully into political activity. In the course of the controversy, Amos established a number of important and enduring friendships with leading progressive politicians, including Louis Brandeis, Senator Dolliver, Albert Beveridge, A.B. Cummins, and M.E. Clapp. Most important among his new and close friends was Senator Robert LaFollette, whose liberal philosophies and uncompromising principles were very much in accord with his own.

Pinchot's firing alienated many progressives within the Republican Party and led Amos and Gifford to help form the progressive wing of the Republican Party.

Amos was the centerpoint of what he called the party's "radical nucleus." Teddy Roosevelt preferred to call it the "lunatic fringe." Philosophically, Gifford stood with Amos but exercised some political distancing from his brother for maneuvering purposes.

When Roosevelt failed to win the Republican presidential nomination from Taft in 1912, Pinchot took an active role in founding the new Progressive Party, commonly known as the Bull Moose Party. The forester represented the more radical wing of the party's politics and made strong statements on the need for stricter antitrust laws and innovative social reforms. As a politician, he fought for wiser use of natural resources and for fuller justice for the average citizen. His struggle for reform, particularly with

leaders in his own party, made him a center of continual controversy.

### **Pinchot makes a Political Run**

In 1914, Pinchot ran for the United States Senate as a Progressive against the incumbent, Bois Penrose, who managed the Republican organization in Pennsylvania. Pinchot campaigned for women's right to vote; prohibition of the sale and use of alcoholic beverages; a graduated income tax—a tax to be determined by the ability to pay; workers' compensation for injuries on the job; recognition of labor unions for collective bargaining; and other radical-for-the-time reforms. He lost.

### **Gifford Meets His Match**

That same year, at forty-nine years of age, Gifford married Cornelia Bryce, great-granddaughter of industrialist Peter Cooper and daughter of Lloyd Bryce, the distinguished publisher of *North American Review*, U.S. minister to the Netherlands, congressman, and novelist.

A wealthy woman in her early thirties, Cornelia had already begun an independent political life as a champion of working woman and an advocate of women's suffrage. Roosevelt considered her to have one of the best political minds he had ever known. They had met while campaigning for Roosevelt's third party bid for the Presidency. Mrs. Pinchot's boundless energy and crusading spirit matched her husband's.

She addressed housewives demanding the vote and factory workers and miners seeking justice; she marched in picket lines; and she presided as hostess at frequent receptions. Mrs. Pinchot not only campaigned for her husband but unsuccessfully sought election three times to Congress, and once to the governorship. According to one of the brochures at Grey Towers: "Someone commented that she 'was equally at home on the picket line with striking workers as she was a gracious hostess at a formal reception.'"

In 1920, Pennsylvania's Governor, William Sproul, appointed Gifford as Commissioner of Forestry, in which position he initiated

administrative changes and refused to grant political patronage. His goal, however, was the governorship, where he believed he would have greater opportunity to bring about the reforms he proposed. His campaign for that office, in 1922, concentrated on reforms that could arouse the greatest popular support—government reorganization and economy, enforcement of prohibition, and regulation of public utilities.

To achieve a broader electoral base and gain the support of Joseph Grundy, president of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association and a political power in the State, he played down some of his earlier proposals for reform. Aiding him too, was the fact that Republican leaders were divided over a party chief replacement for Bois Penrose, who had recently died.



*Gifford Pinchot*

### **Governor Pinchot**

Pinchot won a close election. The new Governor, however, had no intention of being absorbed by the bosses, through what he termed the “amoeba treatment,” and stubbornly

persisted with his reforms, often annoying

his supporters as well as hardening his opponents.

He began his administration by tightening State spending. Typically, he took but a portion of his salary. He persuaded the Assembly to pass an administrative code. This standardized salaries and gave the Governor power to reorganize the executive branch of government and reduce duplication by combining 139 agencies into fifteen departments and three commissions. A pension system was also introduced, to be financed by the employees and the State.

Gathering public support through the adoption of these measures, the Governor made further proposals. He asked the Assembly to pass legislation to enforce the federal prohibition of alcoholic beverages. Only one bill passed, however, and money for enforcement had to be obtained from the Women's Christian

Temperance Union, since the Legislature would not appropriate the funds.

Always a strong adversary of the public utilities, he proposed now that the Assembly connect electric companies into a tightly regulated statewide system with combined facilities. This would forestall the creation of private monopolies, lessen the cost of electricity for the user, and extend service to all, particularly to farmers. The Governor's plans were dashed when utility lobbyists defeated nineteen of his bills in Assembly.

The miners of anthracite coal struck twice during his first term of office. The first strike, in 1923, lasted only a week due to Pinchot's decisive arbitration. The strike of 1925 continued for six months and again Pinchot's forceful mediation was necessary.

President Coolidge, cautious about government intervention in such a matter, and remained aloof. Annoyed by the inactivity of the President, Pinchot called both sides for daily meetings, finally achieving a compromise. The Governor retired from office at the end of his term, having improved the efficiency and economy of State government. His enthusiasm had affected his subordinates, creating an *esprit de corps* among them. Unable to serve a second consecutive term as governor because of state law, Gifford again sought a Senate seat but did not succeed.

Gifford entered the governor's race again in 1930, and won a second term. There he battled for the regulation of public utilities, relief for the unemployed, and construction of paved roads to “get the farmers out of the mud.” For two years, he and the Assembly fought over the utilities issue. The Governor went straight to the people through the newspapers, radio, and the mail. Although the House passed three bills to regulate rates, the Senate sided with the utilities and the proposals were defeated. He also placed his own men on the Public Service Commission, which he then sought to control, and through it, the utilities. Pinchot believed in “the principle of Theodore Roosevelt that it is the duty of a public servant to do whatever the public good requires unless it is directly forbidden by Law.”

The Depression hit Pennsylvania severely, and by 1931 there were almost a million unemployed. The Governor took a personal concern for the needy. Before taking office he founded a committee on unemployment. He gave more immediate assistance also, such as to a woman who was jailed and fined \$17.90 for killing a woodpecker to feed her children.

Realizing that State aid would not suffice in curbing the effects of the Depression, he was one of the first of the governors to decide that federal aid was needed. Pinchot gave a moralistic tone to the relief effort as he continually urged State and federal governments to aid the deprived. In response, President Hoover and the Congress established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to assist banks and businesses, and eventually extended direct aid to the states. State and federal funds for the unemployed were distributed on a non-partisan basis by the Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Board.

Governor Pinchot recognized other neglected groups in Pennsylvania. Women, Jews, and blacks were included in his administration. "Pinchot Roads" were promoted for the benefit of the farmer to transport his product to the consumer. Economical, but adequate, means were devised to pave twenty thousand miles of road. A limited amount of machinery was used so that more work could be given to the unemployed. This was probably the accomplishment for which Pinchot was best remembered in Pennsylvania.

In 1933, the bituminous coal miners at U.S. Steel's "captive mines" struck. The mine owners refused to recognize the United Mine Workers union, despite federal law requiring collective bargaining. The National Guard was called in but admonished by Pinchot to remain neutral. Pressure exerted by Pinchot and President Franklin D. Roosevelt caused the company to recognize the union.

With Pinchot's approval, a special session of the Assembly ratified the Twenty-first Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which repealed the prohibition amendment. The Assembly also

established the Liquor Control Board, a State monopoly for the sale of liquor.

During his last year as governor, Pinchot, once again sought a U.S. Senate seat. The third time wasn't a charm.

As usual, he received little assistance from the leaders of his party, whom he had greatly annoyed by supporting the economic recovery programs of Democrat Franklin Roosevelt.

During the last three months of his term, the Governor was confined to a New York City hospital and Mrs. Pinchot in effect became the acting governor. In 1938, he bid again for the nomination for governor, but the Republican voters overwhelmingly defeated him. He was seventy-two.

So, the concept of union representation would not be alien to good Gifford; and no, I don't think the thought of workers organizing in his summer home would disturb him in the least. I believe he is resting as peacefully in the Milford Cemetery now as he was before Forest Service workers at Grey Towers elected to be represented by NFFE, if not more so.

For more information about Grey Towers, go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/na/gt/>

### **Yippee!**

The Communications Committee wants to extend a great big "howdy" to Kathy Bowman, who just joined our committee. Kathy is the writer-editor (she likes to say "writer-therapist") with the public affairs office in Region 6. She also does internal communications for the Region and writes two regional newsletters (that are really fun to read!). She telecommutes from the EXTREME northeast Oregon (Joseph), living 400 miles from her office. However, she does travel around the Region teaching writing to employees. Welcome, Kathy!

*If you want to ask her why she was in juvenile hall in Hawaii when she was five years old, see below for her email address...! (Yes, she dared me to put that in.... cjh)*

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## News You Can Use!

As most of us transition to the new HCM system, we have been advised to keep track of when we are due for a step increase, and check with our supervisors as the increase date approaches and make sure they have the paperwork taken care of. But some folks don't know when they are due... and finding out may take a bit of work.

**First**, you need to know what step you are currently at. This can be found on your Earnings and Leave statement (pay stub) from NFC. In the upper right corner, there are boxes indicating Pay Plan, Grade (Gr) and Step (St). **Second**, you need to find out when you last got a step increase. I found mine by going to the Employee Personal Page (<https://www.nfc.usda.gov/personal/>) and clicking on the Personal Info tab at the top, and then expanding the "Miscellaneous" link. Under this link, the date of your last WGI (within grade increase, also known as step increase) is listed.

Now that you know what step you are at, and when you last got a WGI, you can figure out when your next increase is due:

<b>Advancement from...</b>	<b>Requires...</b>
Step 1 to Step 2	52 weeks of creditable service at Step 1
Step 2 to Step 3	52 weeks of creditable service at Step 2
Step 3 to Step 4	52 weeks of creditable service in Step 3
Step 4 to Step 5	104 weeks of creditable service in Step 4
Step 5 to Step 6	104 weeks of creditable service in Step 5
Step 6 to Step 7	104 weeks of creditable service in Step 6
Step 7 to Step 8	156 weeks of creditable service in Step 7
Step 8 to Step 9	156 weeks of creditable service in Step 8
Step 9 to Step 10	156 weeks of creditable service in Step 9

*(Thanks to Melissa Baumann)*

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

**Quarterly Newsletter of the Forest Service Council**

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**Questions, comments, or newsletter submissions**

**Please contact the Communications Committee:**

**Jennifer A. S. Hickenbottom, Chair, [jhickenbottom@fs.fed.us](mailto:jhickenbottom@fs.fed.us) (509) 738-7718**

***Other Committee Members***

**Constance Hendryx, Writer-Editor, [chendryx@fs.fed.us](mailto:chendryx@fs.fed.us) (530) 468-1281**

**Lisa Wolfe, Web Master, [ljwolfe@fs.fed.us](mailto:ljwolfe@fs.fed.us)**

**Cindy White, Writer-Editor, [cwhite@fs.fed.us](mailto:cwhite@fs.fed.us) (360) 436-1155**

**Kathy Bowman, Writer-Editor [kbowman@fs.fed.us](mailto:kbowman@fs.fed.us) (541) 432-3600**