



# JAILHOUSE JOURNAL

An Electronic Newsletter For AFSCME-Represented Corrections Employees Vol. II, No. 2 Aug. 2002

## Annual Public Safety Employees Conference

# Conference agenda is announced

PORTLAND — The agenda is set for the second annual Oregon AFSCME Council 75 Public Safety Employees Conference, scheduled for Oct. 12-13 at the Radisson Hotel in Portland.

Council 75, in conjunction with the Corrections and Criminal Justice Coalition, will host this conference to provide training and workshops specifically targeted for AFSCME locals in Oregon with public safety members.

The 2002 conference follows last November's initial event in Bend. At that meeting, a committee was established which meets regularly to address the special needs of our public safety members.

The Saturday (Oct. 12)



*Photo by Don Loving*

**LEGAL POINT — Monica Smith (center), an attorney with AFSCME's legal firm of Smith, Gamson, Diamond & Olney, makes a point during last year's conference in Bend. Looking on are Council 75 staff rep Frank Vehafric and Oregon AFSCME legal counsel Allison Hassler.**

session will focus on three "hot topics" that will be of interest to all members: the current situation with PERS, "Exploring Mental Health in Public Safety" and a presentation on current privatization efforts in the public safety

field. A dinner and reception will follow.

The Oct. 13 agenda includes legislative news plus an open forum.

There is a \$25 registration fee for this conference. In addition, this conference is eligible for Council 75 Travel Fund reimbursement for one member per local. If you wish to stay at the Radisson and take advantage of the AFSCME group rate on rooms, the cut-off date for reservations is Sept. 18.

Any questions regarding the conference can be addressed to Stephanie Swan in the Portland AFSCME office; (503) 239-9858, (800) 792-0045 or [sswan@afscmecn75.com](mailto:sswan@afscmecn75.com).

## *SecurityPlus wins TRCI travel grievance*

UMATILLA — A grievance filed on behalf of several ISSD employees at Two Rivers Correctional Institution has been settled in the employees' favor.

Those involved were all members of the statewide Local 2376 (SecurityPlus). The issue revolved around ISSD employees being temporarily assigned to work at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution in Pendleton.

"We had a couple of ISSD people a week being sent over to EOCI to work there," said **Roger Bouch**, Oregon AFSCME staff representative and the Council 75 Corrections Coordinator.

"The Department can do that, but they were requiring the workers to drive over there in their own vehicles, and they were to arrive there and start their work day at EOCI at 8 a.m. That was the problem."

Bouch and Local 2376 maintained that the employees were TRCI employees, and that they needed to be treated like any other DOC employees doing temporary work at another site.

"We said they needed to report to work at their own institution, TRCI, at 8 a.m., and that they be given a state vehicle to drive over to EOCI in," said Bouch. "DOC seemed to be saying, or at

least implying, that because the two institutions are so close, it could assign them to either one. But that's clearly not what the contract says, plus we were very concerned about what precedent this could have set."

The end result? Without having to advance too far through the grievance process, the employees are now reporting to TRCI at 8 a.m. and driving a state car to EOCI.

"Score one for the good guys," says Bouch with a laugh. "But seriously, I thought this one was kind of silly. They (DOC) should have known better. But we got the result we wanted."

# Heed the warnings of hepatitis exposure

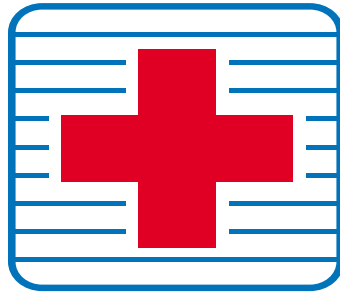
By **SCOTT CAMPBELL**  
Local 3941 President (CRCI)

Add this to your “Did you know?” file: hepatitis A vaccinations are covered under your 2002 PEBB insurance plan under *Preventive Care* as a routine immunization. There is no deductible for routine immunizations.

Corrections employees have a high risk of being exposed to hepatitis. AFSCME recommends you consider contacting your physician and taking preventive precautions against contracting the hepatitis virus.

The Department of Corrections views the hepatitis A vaccination as voluntary. Oregon AFSCME Corrections believes the vaccination

should be provided as a safety precaution under Article 29 of the collective bargaining agreement. To wit:



**Section 5.** It is agreed that if, in the conduct of official duties, an employee is exposed to serious communicable diseases which would require immunization or testing, as determined by the Institution Chief Medical Officer or Public Health Officer in charge, the employee shall

be provided immunization against or testing for such communicable disease, without cost to the employee, where immunization will prevent such disease from occurring. The employee shall be granted required time off with pay for the immunization or testing, at a medical facility of the Agency’s choosing.

If you are unfamiliar with hepatitis, here is a medical definition:

*Hepatitis A: hepatitis A is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). HAV is found in the stool of persons with hepatitis A. It is usually spread by close personal contact and sometimes by eating food or drinking water containing*

*HAV. People with hepatitis A infection often have to be hospitalized. In rare cases, hepatitis A causes death. A person who has hepatitis A can easily pass the disease to others within the same household.*

*Hepatitis A vaccine can prevent hepatitis A.*

*At-risk persons include those who live in communities with high rates of hepatitis A, men who have sex with men, persons who use street liver disease and persons who receive clotting factor concentrates.*

Sounds like we work among all the prerequisites of the at-risk criteria. Take precautions and be aware of the risk of hepatitis.

## Time for action on PERS actuarial table proposals

You’ve heard about the proposed PERS actuarial changes. Here’s what you need to do:

- Send the PERS Board an e-mail, letter or phone call protesting the current rule change proposal. Write: 11410 SW 68th Parkway, Tigard

97223. Call: (888) 320-7377 or (503) 598-7377. E-mail: [Customer-Service.PERS@state.or.us](mailto:Customer-Service.PERS@state.or.us).

- If you are near retirement, contact PERS and get a benefit estimate – one for both BEFORE and AFTER the proposed rule change.

- Watch the PERS web site at [www.pers.state.or.us](http://www.pers.state.or.us) for the regional hearing schedule and make plans to attend the one in your area.

For information, contact Mary Botkin at (503) 239-9858, (800) 792-0045 or at [botkin@afscmecn75.com](mailto:botkin@afscmecn75.com).

## D.C. lawyers take over SRCI harassment cases

ONTARIO — Union officials remain cautiously optimistic that a settlement can be reached in the multiple cases of gender discrimination and sexual harassment reported earlier at Snake River Correctional Institution. However, the cases continue to move toward possible trial later this year.

In the past month, a team of lawyers from AFSCME International in Washington, D.C. — headed by noted

union attorney **Jack Dempsey** — came to Eastern Oregon and met with the 16 SRCI employees involved in the cases.

AFSCME and the DOC are currently attempting to reach a mediated settlement. Dempsey and the other AFSCME attorneys are working that process now; their first step was to interview the women directly.

If a settlement is not reached soon, the process al-



lows AFSCME to sue the DOC and the State of Oregon in federal court. What’s key there, according to legal experts, is that the complainants

already have the force of the EEOC findings behind them in court — federal findings in a federal court.

“That’s why we’re hopeful for a settlement,” says Oregon AFSCME Executive Director **Ken Allen**. “If the DOC and the state are smart, they’ll realize they don’t want these suits in federal court.

“Right now, although it is difficult, we just have to be patient and let our attorneys do their job.”