

IN NSO CONTACT



Newsletter of the National Staff Organization

June 2003

Once again, record attendance...

‘Solidarity’ Key to NSO, Agerstrand Tells RA



Citing NSO’s venerable and now retired labor relations consultant Emil Oxfield, NSO President Chuck Agerstrand (MI) challenged 2003 NSO Representative Assembly delegates to keep “solidarity” as the union’s core

value – along with the need to “lead, promote, secure and defend.” The union’s annual meeting took place June 13-14, 2003 in Denver, CO. Agerstrand reported Oxfield could not attend the RA because of bad health. “He’d challenge us that it is ‘solidarity forever.’ Roll-backs have no place in NSO.”

A record 405 delegates, alternates and guests attended the RA. Agerstrand was pleased to report the National Coordinated Bargaining Conference in September was a “great success.” He also emphasized the effort to build an NSO-National Education Association Partnership has begun to bear fruit. “NEA has heard our message about the importance of organizing.” NEA is sponsoring a new “Organizing Institute” to take place in December.

Agerstrand went on to stress the need for pension funding assistance at the national level. “With defined benefit pensions under fire, we urge support for legislation spon-

sored by Congressmen Rob Portman (OH) and Ben Cardin (MD) which will provide some relief to employers with those plans.” NSO affiliates also feel the health insurance squeeze. Some smaller NSO affiliates find it difficult to get bids on health coverage. “To meet that challenge, the NSO Executive Committee has formed a Health Insurance Task Force to develop strategies and recommendations for both NSO and our affiliates.” The committee is expected to provide interim direction to the NSO Executive Committee and a special report to the 2004 NSO Representative Assembly. “By working together,” Agerstrand said, “we can help our colleagues across the country. We will



Over 400 delegates, alternates and guests attended the 2003-2004 NSO Representative Assembly in Denver, Colorado.

put our resources together and work to build strong coalitions, recruit and train a whole new generation of unionists and energize ourselves. We're a union that can do."

'Do Unto Others' Weaver Theme

In his passionate presentation to the RA, NEA President Reg Weaver told delegates, "I believe we must treat each other the way we would want to be treated." He urged members to work together to improve the lives of Association members as well as "work to strengthen public education." Weaver reviewed how the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – popularly known as "No Child Left Behind" – is being used to punish public education. "We should promote public education. That's why NEA has launched Great Public Schools [known as GPS] for Every Child."



Brown Honored with 'Emil Oxfeld' Award

NSO-R Member Dean Brown is the third recipient of the "Emil Oxfeld Advocacy Award" which was presented toward the close of the NSO RA on June 14. The award is presented to an NSO member who has shown leadership and dedication to the union and to employee advocacy in general over a career. Brown was a founding member of NSO in 1973 and was its vice president until 1986. He was a UniServ staff member with the Indiana State Teachers Association for over 20 years. "This is the 31st NSO RA," Brown said upon receiving the award, "and it still remains a unique organization. We are the only union that has no hired staff. That's because we found out from the beginning that we have such great expertise among our members."



Dean Brown (left), Ginnie Ross (NSO-OR) - 2002 Oxfeld Recipient, and Chuck Agerstrand.

Finance Committee Hears Good News



Akshay Javeri, Senior Vice President and Financial Advisor with Morgan Stanley, reviewed the status of NSO's investments during an NSO Finance Committee meeting that took place during the RA. Despite a poor stock market, NSO was able to realize a return of over 6 percent by the end of May.

Membership Growth Continues

NSO Executive Committee member Barry Tusin (IL) was pleased to report that NSO membership continues to grow. For 2002-2003, associate staff number 2,440 (full time equivalent) and professional staff number 2,404 (fte) for a total of 4,982 [actual] or a growth of 1.2 percent over 2001-2002.

Elections Completed for 2003-2004

NSO delegates elected Cheryl Singleton (MA) to Region 1, Emmitt Jimmar (AL) to Region 3, Ed Helvey (OH) to Region 5, Rosemary Wolf (WA) to Region 7, Pat Chavez (NM) to At Large A, and Robert Blackwell (NC) to At Large B seats on the NSO Executive Committee. Bernadette Lange (NSO-R, NJ), Diane Thompson (NE) and Barry Tusin (IL) were recognized for their service on the NSO Executive Committee.



Tusin (2nd from left), Thompson (center) and Lange (right) stand with Vera Stafford (left) and Rosemary Wolf (second from right).

Be sure to check the NSO Web Page for a detailed report about the 2003 NSO Representative Assembly.

Thanks Go to the Volunteers that Makes NSO Work

In her report to the Representative Assembly NSO Vice President for Program Lynn Adler (IL) thanked the great number of NSO members and retirees who help members across the country. As part of the NSO-NEA Partnership, NSO was responsible for assessing the training needs for associate staff. Surveys and focus groups took place during the 2002 NSO Representative Assembly. The NSO Cadre is: Mary Ann Jandoli (NJ), Maureen Keating (CA), Bernadette Lange (NSO-R, FL), Pat Richey (MI), Bob Willoughby (NJ) and Adler. They met with NEA manager Bill Raabe, “to discuss the findings of both the associate and professional (UniServ) surveys and make recommendations.” Adler reported that NEA will provide training for associate staff during the NSO Winter Advocacy Retreat in January. The session is titled “Presentation Skills for Associate Staff.” NEA is also making its affiliates aware of the UniServ Professional Development Program (UPDP) which is available to associate staff interested in UniServ work. With apologies to anybody missed, Adler provided the names of those who provided field assistance and worked the WAR College: Marc Abramson (NJ), Marilyn Aden (CA), Chuck Agerstrand (MI), Marius Ambrose (MD), Renita Bates (FL), Cindi Bellamy (IL), Robert Blackwell (NC), Dave Bowman (MI), Patty Brown (IL), Pat

Chavez (NM), Peggy Chavez (OH), Michael Coleman (AR), Rob Day (MI), Terry DiGruttolo (PA), Joe DiVincenzo (NY), Craig Farrell (MI), Len Feldman (CA), Don Frattini (PA), Ron Goldenstein (NE), Tom Greene (MI), Margaret Harrod-Wardell (OH), Mary Henson (MI), Hike Horner (WA), Mary Ann Jandoli (NJ), Emmitt Jimmar (AL), Maureen Keating (CA), Guy Kendall-Freas (NEASO), Dennis Krueger (IA), Bernadette Lange (NSO-R, FL), Gerald Lange (NSO-R, FL), Arch Lewis (MI), Judy Leonard (IL), Will Locke (TN), Cheryl McLeod (MD), Audrey Mellon (NSO-R, MI), Dave Moracco (MN), Bob Mullins (NSO-R, OH), Ken Parker (NSO-R, CA), Stacy Paul (MN), Ralph Perillo (IL), Joyce Puckett (MI), Steve Pulkinen (WA), Dave Rathke (IL), John Reilly (NSO-R, MA), Mort Reinhart (NSO-R, NJ), Mary Reiter (MN), Jackie Rhodes (MI), Pat Richey (MI), Kay Robinson (MI), Grace Romzik (MI), Jeff Rosenberg (CT), Ginnie Ross (NSO-R, OR), Dan Saling (NSO-R), Butch Santicola (PA), Charlie Shaffer (CE), Jack Schamel (NY), Mark Sheehan (CT), Pat Shipley (IA), Nancy Schemanski (MI), Eva Schleigh (NH), Cheryl Singleton (MA), Vera Stafford (MI), John Stephens (CA), Sharon Sutherland (NSO-R, OH), Tom Suhrbur (IL), Barb Suhrbur (IL), Diane Thompson (NE), Barry Tusin (IL), Sue Vento (MN), Jeff

‘NSO-The Union’ - Part 2

Steve Pulkinen (WA), seated left, interviews Chuck Agerstrand in preparation for an update of NSO’s video, ‘NSO-The Union.’ Eddie Westerman (WA) handles the video recorder while NSO Executive Committee member and Merger/Organizing Committee Chair John Stephens (CA) looks on. The video should be ready by September.



Wahlquist (WA), John Warms (NSO-R, NJ), Eddie Westerman (WA), Bob Willoughby (NJ), Stephanie Wolkin (MN), Rosemary Wolf (WA), Mary Ann Zimmerman (NSO-R), Wally Zukas (IL). Adler also reminded delegates about suggestions for WAR College programs. (See the NSO Web page for details.)

RA Passes Four NBI's...

Delegates passed four new business items: 1) The NSO Executive Committee is charged with collecting information about NEA affiliates in financial trouble and reporting that information to NSO affiliates as soon as possible. 2) NSO is to schedule the January Winter Advocacy Retreat on alternate coasts, beginning 2006, as long as hotel costs are comparable. 3) The NSO Executive Committee is to study the feasibility of increasing member strike benefits under the NSO Crisis Fund and report to the 2004 NSO RA. 4) NSO delegates and affiliates contact the Colorado Education Association and NEA to ask intervention in Spanish Peaks UniServ's "outrageous attacks on a fellow NSO sister, Donna Raught." If the unit fires Raught, NSO is to impose sanctions. NSO members were asked to send cards and e-mails of support to Raught.

Delegates in the News!



Phadra Williams

Two NSO RA delegates recently made good news! Phadra Williams (AL), shown left, was featured in the July issue of *Ebony* magazine as one of the "Super Single Sisters of 2003." She was identified as, "...a union representative

for the city's [Birmingham] teachers and support staff and is a former U.S. Army soldier." Cindi Bellamy (IL), right, was recently elected Commander of Crispus Attucks Post 1268 of the American Legion. Cindi is the first African American female elected commander of an American Legion Post in the state of Illinois.



Cindi Bellamy

Charlie Love Crisis Fund Tops \$2,000,000

NSO Treasurer Vera Stafford (MI) reported the Charlie Love Crisis Fund balance as of June 10, 2003, was \$2,103,821.30. During the RA, delegates heard auditor Robert Bublitz of Bublitz & Associates

report about the financial health of NSO. With two of a three year audits complete, Bublitz said both the operating budget and Charlie Love Crisis Fund were in good financial shape.

Delegates approved, without change, the proposed budget for the 2003-2004 year. The budget sets a dues increase of \$7 for professional and \$5 for associate staff. Two new line items were created – "Technology Services" (\$24,000) and "National CBC/Pension Trustee Conference" (\$25,000). The total budget was set at \$819,502.

President Agerstrand reported that Lloyds of London has been secured to provide "error of commission or omission" liability insurance for NSO. The same coverage will be available to NSO affiliates for a modest premium. Affiliates will need to complete an application to receive the coverage. Details are still being worked out.

Web Research Grows

Microsearch President Susan Kelly was pleased to report 75 staff contracts are on the NSO Research Website along with 485 arbitration awards. NSO Vice President for Defense Marius Ambrose (MD) reported a management trend to "wrap" grievance arbitrations into contract settlements. NSO Attorney Rob Day cautioned against the practice citing duty of fair representation. Work continues to expand the NSO membership database. The site is password protected. NSO Executive Committee member Robert Blackwell (NC) says all passwords are cleared each year to ensure security.

Be Sure To Check the NSO Web Page
www.nationalstaff.org

NSO Contact is edited by Bob Mullins.



Comments and suggestions are welcome, and should be sent to Mullins at: 525 Meadoway Park, Worthington, OH 43085

Phone: 614-436-3398

NSO Contact FAX: 614-436-3570.

Internet: RobertM109@aol.com.

NSO Web Page

<http://www.nationalstaff.org>

President: Chuck Agerstrand, (517) 332-6551

Vice President for Defense: Marius Ambrose, (410) 997-3440

Vice President for Program: Lynn Adler, (312) 494-0607

Secretary: Mary Henson, (800) 292-1934 x 6215 (O), (517) 622-1985 (H), FAX (secure) (517) 622-1892

Treasurer: Vera Stafford, (269) 521-4341

Region 1: Cheryl Singleton, (617) 878-8657

Region 2: Butch Santicola (724) 457-0670

Region 3: Emmitt Jimmar, (205) 446-8117

Region 4: John Stephens, (209) 478-6091

Region 5: Ed Helvey, (614) 895-1041

Region 6: Dennis Krueger, (515) 471-8000

Region 7: Rosemary Wolf, (253) 765-7082

At-Large: Pat Chavez, (505) 982-1916

At-Large: Robert Blackwell, (910) 347-7623