LOCAL & DHB ELECTIONS

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STAND TOGETHER FOR COMMUNITY

AROUND THE SAME time as this issue of Working Life arrives in your hands, you’ll also be receiving another more important (though perhaps less well designed) set of documents in the mail.

Across New Zealand, voting papers for the local body and district health board (DHB) elections should be landing in your mailbox from September 16 – 21, and you have until lunchtime on October 8 to get these back.

As PSA members, it’s really important that we have our say, and encourage our friends and whānau to make their voices heard as well.

Who gets elected to represent us on our local councils and district health boards impact on the future of our communities in ways far beyond the typical rubbish and rates (though these are important).

Good local body candidates mean commitments to making our councils Living Wage employers, to keeping libraries and swimming pools open in our suburbs. It means the difference between affordable housing and freezing out first-home buyers, and it means ensuring that the areas we live in have parks, trees, and the other things that make raising our families a little easier.

Likewise, our district health boards help contribute to making our public health system one that respects the staff working in it while ensuring the best possible services for the people who need them. When things go wrong, we put our faith in the nurses, doctors and other hospital staff to ensure our health. That makes it all the more important that we elect good people to district health boards.

It can be hard to judge who to vote for in local elections. Unlike in national elections, most people don’t have a political party affiliation to use as an easy way to figure out their policies. Local media doesn’t have the resources to focus on most of the races, so outside of the biggest centres, it can be hard to find details.

One way to find out more is to attend a local candidates’ meeting. No matter where you are, there will be at least one event nearby where you can attend, hear from candidates and perhaps even ask a question about an issue you care about.

We’ve also tried to make things easier – in this issue of Working Life, there’s plenty more on the importance of the upcoming elections, and a handy pull-out guide to cut through the jargon and work out what candidates really mean.

On our Stand Together campaign Facebook page (facebook.com/standtogetherNZ) we’ve been profiling a number of candidates for a wide range of councils and DHBs, many of whom are proud union members.

There are a number of PSA members standing for office around the country, and I send them my best wishes. I’m also excited to be one of them – I’ve put my name forward to be the next mayor of my hometown, Porirua.

No matter what happens in the elections, this is my last President’s Message column, as a new PSA president will be elected at our Congress in Wellington in late September. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve you for the last four years, and with our hard work I’m sure our union will continue to thrive in the years to come.

Kia kaha
Ngā mihi nui kia koutou katoa
Mike Tana 😊
EVERY SECOND YEAR, more than 100 PSA delegates from across the country gather for our biennial Congress. The highest decision making body in our union, Congress delegates elect our president, decide on major strategy and set the rules by which we all operate.

This year, Congress will be held on 20 and 21 September at Te Papa in Wellington. Four candidates have been nominated for the role of president: Andy Colwell (Auckland DHB), Benedict Ferguson (Auckland Council), Janet Quigley (Canterbury DHB) and Peter Robertshaw (Ministry of Justice).

You can find out more about each of them at psa.org.nz/presidentialcandidates, and we will have an in-depth interview with the successful candidate in the next issue of Working Life.

Congress will also be the launching pad for the next stage of our Stand Together campaign. The campaign will highlight the wonderful work our PSA members do in the build-up to the general election next year, as part of our plan to make sure the next government properly values quality public and community services, and the people who work hard to deliver them.

Attendees will attend two out of four workshops to hear from experts and discuss what the PSA should be doing about each of four topic areas: privatisation, equal pay, building Māori activism and mental health. The results of these workshops will help to inform our campaign for next year’s election, and our ongoing work in these areas.

Delegates at Congress will also discuss and vote on a number of rule changes. Under the PSA rules, proposals at Congress can be made by the executive board, a sector committee, Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina, or one of our clusters or formal networks.

Amongst this year’s proposals is one to make our Deaf and Disabled Members Network our fifth formal network (alongside Women’s, Out@PSA, Youth and Pasefika). This would give the network the right to participate at the next Congress in 2018, and give it a formal role in our union structure.

Another proposal, from the Youth Network, would create a specific youth role on each of our Sector Committees and the Executive Board to ensure the existence of a youth voice in PSA’s leadership structures.

Congress is also a time to socialise, and to build bonds of friendship across the various parts of our union. People working in local government in Northland will talk with public servants from Invercargill and home support workers in Wellington. Connected by our PSA membership and a shared desire to build better working lives for all, Congress is one place where the strength of our 62,000 members is keenly felt.

To keep up with Congress as it happens, keep an eye on our Facebook page, facebook.com/nzpsa for live reporting and photos. The December issue of Working Life will also have a full report from Congress.
NEW MINISTRY ON THE WAY

ANNE TOLLEY, THE minister of social development, has announced that the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki (MVCOT) will come into existence on 1 April 2017.

The Ministry, which will be headed by current Bupa Care Services boss Gráinne Moss, will encompass the staff and functions currently handled by Child Youth and Family and some other Ministry of Social Development (MSD) functions including part of Community Investment.

Our intention is to work constructively with MSD over the transition plan to the new agency, to make sure the move is as simple and straightforward as possible for the 4000 people expected to work at MVCOT.

Massive workloads have been a major issue for many years now that have impacted on the quality of care provided, and it’s crucial that this is addressed as plans are developed for the new ministry.

Our MSD members are passionate about helping whānau to thrive, but they need the time to do their jobs properly.

Another issue we’ll be keeping an eye on is the possible use of contracting out core services as a way of de-skilling the workforce and lowering wages.

We know that the best chance for our whānau is to have qualified social workers working alongside them, and we will make sure that this is heard loud and clear throughout the planning process for the new Ministry.

Read our submission: psa.org.nz/mvcotsubmission

WELLINGTON MAYORAL CANDIDATES’ FORUM

SEVEN OF WELLINGTON’S mayoral hopefuls gathered at PSA House for the first candidates’ meeting of the 2016 local body elections.

Justin Lester, Jo Coughlan, Helene Ritchie, Keith Johnson, Nicola Young, Andy Foster and Nick Leggett each gave a two-minute elevator pitch setting out their election platform - and answered questions from the audience.

Top of the agenda was privatisation, with asset sales a hot topic, along with the candidates’ opinions on the role of the public service in the city.

Mr Lester, Ms Ritchie and Mr Leggett all came out firmly in favour of Wellington becoming an accredited Living Wage employer.

The question-and-answer session was off the record, but you can watch a video of the two-minute elevator pitches at psa.org.nz/mayoralforum.

WINNERS

Congratulations to Louise Ryan, Megan Manson and Lanie Palm, who each won a copy of The Interregnum: Rethinking New Zealand and a PSA tea towel from the June issue.

IN BRIEF

WONDER WHAT?

• OUR SOCIAL WORKERS action network held their conference on 1-2 Sept. Full report in next Working Life.

• WE HELPED REVEAL some state sector retirement funds are investing in weaponry, and called for change: psa.org.nz/ssrssarms

• CHECK OUT PHOTOS from the inaugural Māori language week parade in Wellington: psa.org.nz/maorilanguageweek

• WE JOINED HIGH school students in Wellington calling for equal pay for women: psa.org.nz/equalpayschool

• PSA LIBRARY DELEGATES held their first national conference, focussed on equal pay and the future of libraries.
IN BRIEF

BUMPER BOOK PRIZE PACK GIVEAWAY

THIS ISSUE WE have a bumper book prize pack to give away!


2ND PRIZE: Tragedy at Pike River Mine, White-Collar Radical, The State and The Union, 100 Years Strong, and a PSA tea towel.

3RD PRIZE: White-Collar Radical, The State and The Union, 100 Years Strong, and a PSA tea towel.

4TH PRIZE: The State and The Union, 100 Years Strong, and a PSA tea towel.

To be in to win, take a selfie of yourself reading Working Life and send it to workinglife@psa.org.nz by October 31st. Creativity will be taken into account!


BEYOND HR – NEW BOOKLET LAUNCHED

IN AUGUST, THE PSA hosted David Coats, an English expert in employment and high-engagement, for ten packed days of meetings, seminars and presentations in Auckland and Wellington. While here, David, the former head of economic and social affairs for the UK’s Trade Union Congress, spoke to a number of audiences about the future of work, how to create highly engaged workplaces, and the role of unions.

Accompanying his tour, we’re pleased to launch Beyond Human Resources: Towards the High-Engagement Workplace, a short booklet about the development of human resources and the changes that the HR sector needs to make in order to better foster engagement from people in our workplaces.

David’s support of high-engagement models aligns well with the PSA’s strategic agenda of Transforming Our Workplaces. We are continuing to encourage employers to adopt high-engagement strategies which involve managers working alongside PSA members to improve our working lives, and we have a number of successful pilots and programmes underway.

Read the booklet online – psa.org.nz/hrbook

WELLINGTON KIDS SAY TIME FOR EQUAL PAY

CHILDREN IN WORTH 100% equal pay t-shirts presented the PSA’s petition on Parliament steps to Labour MP Sue Moroney in early September.

The petition, which called on the Government to adopt the equal pay principles negotiated by unions, business and government representatives, was signed by more than 10,400 people from across New Zealand.

Having children hand over the petition symbolised the importance of equal pay for future generations. PSA national secretary Erin Polaczuk said that her hope was that by the time her daughter started her working life, her pay would not be defined by her gender.

Thanks to everyone who had their say by signing and sharing the petition.
Feature

Stand together for community

Illustration by Giselle Clarkson.
WHATEVER YOUR POLITICAL persuasion, as PSA members we believe in good jobs, fair pay and a working life that allows you time to rest with your whānau.

But one size doesn’t fit all – and every community has its own set of issues which play into these values. That’s why we’ve adopted our Stand Together model of campaigning. From a small town fighting to keep its library open, to a big city aiming to protect their assets from privatisation: our members are telling us what matters. And when we stand up to make our voices heard, we know our fellow PSA members are with us.

So far we’ve seen Stand Together work in the industrial context, with excellent results in the Auckland Allied Health bargaining and the Aviation Security dispute. Now we’re taking it to this year’s local government and district health board (DHB) elections. We’re using Stand Together to get people excited about the elections and help them choose candidates that support and promote their values.

WE’RE EXCITED ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The PSA is made up of thousands of members in local government and we see first-hand how hard they work and how much they care. The challenge for this year is making sure we transmit that vision to all our members – and that we all vote accordingly.

First, there’s the question of getting people to fill in their ballot. Turnout’s been declining over the past 25 years, and in 2013 just 41% of enrolled New Zealanders bothered to return their postal vote. That’s down 8% on 2011. In some areas, the figures were even worse: just 1 in 3 Aucklanders voted in 2013.

Local Government New Zealand points at a slide in turnout in general elections too, suggesting Kiwis feel disengaged from democracy generally, and even more so when presented with complicated voting systems like STV. But on a day-to-day basis we have far more contact with local government. We’re talking about the parks we walk our dogs in, the swimming pools we visit on the weekend, the library that serves our kids. So what will it take?

Research conducted by UMR for the PSA confirmed these findings. Research director David Talbot says they start by asking focus groups what they think their rates pay for.

“They start off talking about playgrounds and libraries, and then as we go around the room, people think about more services – and they see the breadth of stuff they do get. Rubbish collection, maintaining pavements, dog control and licensing... they build up a good list. The richer the picture people come up with, the more they see how local government relates to them.”

WHAT’S STAND TOGETHER ALL ABOUT?

It’s easy to point the finger at voters and say they don’t see how their rates are spent and so they don’t vote. But David Talbot suggests seeing it another way: decision makers and institutions don’t take the time to explain where our money goes, and what we get in return.

So if they aren’t doing it, we will. Our plan with Stand Together is simple. We want people to see that local government’s worth getting excited about. We want everyone to see we’re getting value for money. And we want everyone to understand the people behind our local services don’t just do a great job – they’re building great communities.

Our Local Heroes campaign is bringing local government to life.

Union values unite us, and union values drive us. At every level we pursue these values, from bargaining to dispute resolution – and our campaigning work is no exception.

Story by Jessica Williams
We’re inviting our members to nominate people in their community who give their all, every day. It brings our members’ jobs to life. They’re real people who love their work and love the place they live. And the services they provide make our towns and cities terrific places to live.

THE MAIN ISSUES THIS TIME AROUND

Our members are tired. Year upon year of pressure to do more with less is starting to take its toll. Across our sectors, the cracks are showing. We asked you what your big issues were, and your answers shaped our campaign.

In local government, our election work will focus on keeping public services in public hands. This will include water, social housing and crucial council assets. We also want to concentrate on keeping our local democracies alive, and encouraging vibrant communities, with the rights of local iwi respected and input from other migrant groups.

And then there’s the issue of fair pay and conditions for local government employees – including the Living Wage. Wellington’s still the only council that’s made a firm commitment to this, and our members have been making a point of asking the question at every candidate meeting.

DHB elections will centre on the issues flowing from the $1.7 billion that’s missing from the health budget since National came to power. Our members want better access to services and better funding for community providers. We’re also highlighting the specific case of mental health. We know services are in crisis across the country. The Ministry of Health says demand will double by 2020 – but do we have the resources to cope?

INCREASING TURNOUT

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) is aiming to get more New Zealanders involved. In their words, healthy democracy depends on people voting – and unless the decline in voter turnout can be reversed, it’ll suffer.

“Far too many big companies think they rule the roost in our towns ... all of us can stand together and make our votes count.”

LGNZ has set a target of 50 per cent turnout and it’s launched a social media campaign #VoteNZ2016 to encourage people to get involved. Eight councils are trialling online voting this time around. There’s also a Kids Voting initiative aimed at 11 to 15 year olds, encouraging them to discuss issues, “vote” for candidates and compare their results against the official count.

AUCKLAND: THE RATES DEBATE

It’s deeply disappointing that in Auckland, the mayoral race might well end up being about who’s prepared to commit to the biggest rate cuts. The main contenders came out of the blocks trading blows about “cutting wasteful spending” and “trimming excess” – while being evasive about where the savings would come from, and how they’d manage to pay for all the expanded services they were promising.

PSA national secretary Glenn Barclay shakes his head at this. “The disturbing thing is that Auckland’s rates are pretty moderate. All the candidates seem to have some element of saying we’ve got to look at some form of job losses or cuts of some sort. It’s unfortunate this is the focus.”

He suggests asking questions about the relationship between job cuts and service cuts – and how candidates will stop Auckland’s quality of life from suffering.

MAKING CHANGES AND BACKING JOBS THAT COUNT

In the future, local government elections could become a focus for nationwide campaigns. As part of its campaign to hold Talley’s AFFCO to account, the Meat Workers’ Union is supporting candidates to stand in towns like Wairoa, Moerewa and Whanganui. They’re hoping this will put pressure on Talley’s over issues like health and safety, waste processing and respecting unions.

Union delegate Bertie Ratu lost her job with Talley’s AFFCO because she visited members at the Rangiuru plant. She’s standing for the Western Bay of Plenty District Council because she wants to make sure Talley’s is accountable to ratepayers.

It’s the brainchild of former CTU President, Helen Kelly: “Far too many big companies think they rule the roost in our towns ... all of us
can stand together and make our votes count.”

WHY ARE SO MANY “TICKETS” APPEARING?
The Labour and Green parties have often stood candidates in local elections, but increasingly we’re seeing local tickets spring up in major cities. It’s a way to group together candidates who share similar values – and it’s seen as a way for voters to cut through the hype and choose how to cast their votes.

Local tickets such as the People’s Choice in Christchurch, City Vision in Auckland, and Community Voice in Hamilton are supporting initiatives like affordable housing, good public facilities, and the Living Wage. These tickets also clearly state what they are against such as privatisation, and a lack of public green space for whānau to enjoy.

“It’s a way to present voters with a grouping of candidates who largely agree,” PSA campaign organiser Conor Twyford says, “the political landscape is changing, and we’re seeing more and more groups coalescing around particular issues.”

WHAT’S NEXT FOR STAND TOGETHER?
We’re already casting our minds to the general election in 2017, when we’ll reach out to members again and ask them to help shape our election asks.

We’ll continue to Stand Together to support candidates who believe in good jobs, fair pay, warm affordable homes and vibrant democracy. We want ordinary working New Zealanders to have a say in how their community and their country has run. And if that takes a change of government, we might need to say that too.

PSA members aren’t just adding their support to Stand Together – some are standing as candidates in these elections. Meet a selection:

**Zoe Brownlie**  
Standing for: Auckland DHB  
“I want to see an improved low-cost system where every person in Auckland feels listened to and in control of their own healthcare.”

**Mike Tana**  
Standing for: Porirua Mayor  
“If we’re serious about unleashing our city’s potential we need to strengthen our communities. Our people deserve safe healthy homes to live in, and good wages for their hard work.”

**Nick Johnston**  
Standing for: Hamilton City Council  
“I’m passionate about helping others and serving our community. This is what has motivated me in my role as a public servant and community advocate.”

**Erin Hodgson**  
Standing for: West Harbour Community Board, Dunedin  
“I’m uniquely placed to give our younger residents a voice, and to fight for a stronger, safer, smarter and more sustainable community.”

**Jake McLellan**  
Standing for: Central Ward Community Board, Christchurch  
“I really believe that more young people need to get involved in making decisions and understanding and contributing to the governance of our city and our communities.”

**Lisa Wall**  
Standing for: New Plymouth District Council  
“Council’s role is to serve the people of its community. I believe it has a social responsibility to ensure everyone within our community is given a voice.”

**Steve York**  
Standing for: Northland DHB  
“If I want to make a real difference to the health of those living in Northland, I’ve got to be sitting at the big table. Many of my patients have shared with me and I know first hand where our health sector needs improvement.”
CONFERENCE SEASON IS upon us, with Congress, SWAN, local government library delegates, the Women’s Network and Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina (TRONTA) all holding hui within a span of three months. This year’s TRONTA Hui Taumata ran from 24 to 26 August, and saw more than 80 Māori delegates and PSA staff come together at Orongomai Marae in Upper Hutt.

Orongomai Marae was founded as an inclusive space that welcomes all Māori ‘from the four winds’ of Aotearoa, and is supported by the iwi of Te Āti Awa. Orongomai means ‘the place of Rongomai’, who was an ancestor and patron of the iwi whose tīpuna arrived in the Kurahaupō waka.

STAND TOGETHER FOR MĀORI

The theme of this year’s Hui Taumata was ‘Stand Together’, tying the hui in with the PSA’s campaign for quality public and community services. Campaign organiser Conor Twyford spoke to the attendees on the second day of the hui.

Ka Tu Tahi Tātou (Stand Together’s te reo name) calls for all political parties to value the work that our members do, properly fund our public and community services and commit to no further privatisation.

Hui attendees were encouraged to participate in the campaign. Our Māori members are the core of the organising and campaign work that we do and will be vital to the success of the campaign.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Our keynote speaker on the first day was New Plymouth mayor Andrew Judd. His time in office has been marked by controversy over his advocacy for Māori representation. Describing himself as ‘a recovering racist’, Judd spoke passionately on his personal journey as well as the difficulties he’s faced in pushing for Māori seats on the New Plymouth District Council.

“We need to ask ourselves as Pākehā, why we react so strongly to the idea of Māori being properly represented, and why we’re happy to continue denying Māori an equal voice” he said in his address.

Judd received enthusiastic applause as well as a spontaneous haka at the end of his speech.

Dr Lance O’Sullivan addressed the hui on Friday. New Zealander of the Year in 2014 for his health work in rural communities, O’Sullivan was warmly welcomed by hui attendees as a Māori with a lot of mana and knowledge to share.

For O’Sullivan, an important part of his work is what he calls “servant leadership”, being born with an inherent desire to serve others, followed by a considered decision to lead. He believes that Māori “have this trait in bucket-loads”, and wants to develop other young leaders.

O’Sullivan shared his work on vMoko, an app that allows trained non-clinical volunteers to identify and record a range of simple medical issues in children and send them on to a GP. Parents can access and add to this information, allowing those closest to the child to
add often missing vital information and perspectives.

“Anger and courage,” O’Sullivan said of what drives him in his work. “Anger at how things are, and the courage to change them.”

SECTOR STALLS

Five market-stall styled desks were set up on Friday, to present Māori work and successes in each of our five sectors. Attendees from each sector stood up and told hui attendees about their achievements and challenges in a wide variety of workplaces, from local government to home-support workers.

Some stark differences were highlighted about how different kinds of work are resourced, showing that there are still obstacles to overcome in recognising the importance of some types of work, particularly in the Community Public Services sector.

Some challenges across many worksites were recognised, such as the ongoing struggle to achieve Māori participation at higher management levels, and promoting Te Reo and Tikanga Māori in the workplace.

HUI POLITICS

It wouldn’t be a union hui without a strong political element. On Thursday afternoon, three of the four candidates for PSA president arrived to introduce themselves to attendees and field questions from the floor. Andy Colwell was unable to attend due to illness.

Benedict Ferguson, Janet Quigley, and Peter Robertshaw each answered questions ranging from the possibility of a Māori co-president, to the treaty obligations of the union. A number of hui attendees will also be at Congress in September, giving them a vote on who will be elected as our union’s new leader.

That evening the marae hosted a Māori MPs backbenchers’ session, featuring Marama Davidson from the Green Party, Labour’s Kelvin Davis, and the Māori Party’s Te Ururoa Flavell.

Strong themes that came out of that evening included the future of work for Māori in New Zealand, and the need to future-proof through sustainable practices, better education, and investing in more tech jobs.

MIKE DROP

Outgoing PSA president Mike Tana was given a fond farewell on Friday afternoon, and was presented with a gift from the hui organisers. Mike spoke of his time with the PSA, the achievements that Māori delegates have made within the organisation, and his current bid to be elected mayor of Porirua.

Te Komiti for Te Rūnanga o Ngā Toa Āwhina worked hard to make this year’s Hui Taumata a success, and attendees left with new connections and inspiration for the work ahead of them, to keep improving the working lives of our Māori members.

By Dan Phillips
A STERILE SUPPLY technician who works in the North Island says hospitals have been overruling what manufacturers say about single-use equipment.

“The reason they are single use is because they are hard to clean or the sterilisation process doesn't sterilise them properly once they are used once.”

The sterilisation departments claim they are being pushed aside by surgeons and nurses, despite having trained specifically in the theory and science behind sterilisation.

“Unfortunately it comes down to budget rather than what's better for the patient,” he says.

While his DHB is taking measures to be increase safety – when he first started they were reusing the cord cutting clamps for umbilical cords – the technician is concerned about what the public don't know.

A South Island sterile supply technician believes things haven't gotten better and sterile supply technicians are undervalued.

“Single use items are just that: single use,” she says, referring to a standard ruling that indicates “an item labelled as or intended for single use shall not be reprocessed or reused.”

The role of sterile services and sterile supply technicians is “pivotal” to the provision of surgery within hospitals, she says.

“The role of the sterile supply technician is to ensure that when a patient goes for surgery they not only get operated on by an experienced surgeon, but that the equipment is decontaminated, cleaned and put through a sterilisation process by a sterile supply technician who has an in-depth knowledge of the theory and science behind that work.”

In 2016 it was discovered, she says, that a South Island DHB thought it was okay to reuse clearly marked “single use” vaginal pessaries on women as long as they had gone to sterile services.

“‘This was going into a sterile body cavity and he surely would be giving himself an infection which would require costly antibiotics when they could have just given him another catheter.”

When the Minister of Health Jonathan Coleman was questioned about it in Parliament he was shocked.

“I find that pretty unlikely because that would be a source of infection, so that would not be correct for the core practice. And I would find it hard to believe that is really happening.”

Yet, according to sterile supply technicians at DHBs across the country, it is happening.

“There are numerous more cases of this kind of action out there,” says the sterile supply technician from the South Island.

“Only last month, it was reported by TVNZ that nurses at Waitemata DHB had advised an elderly cancer patient to hand wash his single use catheter and then reuse it – going against the instructions on his packaging and advice of his GP.

“‘The public would be horrified to know what is happening. NZSSA and sterile services are trying to stop these practices but face an uphill battle.”

By Jess McAllen
Delegate profile

IT’S HARD TO find a time to talk with McIntosh because she fills her life to the brim. She has a son, a daughter, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren. When she’s not working – specifically dealing with pacific and rangatahi youth court procedures – she’s a full-time caregiver for her 62 year old husband, Eric.

McIntosh is the definition of high achiever, her roll call of honours includes: former national president for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (now NZ Women), area director for international business women’s organisation, Zonta, and a member of the Maori Women’s Welfare League. In 2000, she was awarded the Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for Services to the Community and Services to Business.

The first afternoon I try to call McIntosh, she was coordinating a pōwhiri with kaumātua for the swearing in of a new judge. The second time, her colleague tells me she’s at the doctor. Third time lucky: she’s waiting for “the ultimate chocolate cake” – it has raspberries – to rise, but I can call again in 20.

McIntosh says she stepped up to be a delegate because she believes passionately in unions and comes from a strong background of unionism.

“Even when I was an employer for 33 years, I was probably the strongest supporter of unions in the company.

“Union delegates are never the most popular people,” she says.

“You get blamed for everything. If you don’t get a rise, you didn’t work hard enough. It’s certainly different from the days of compulsory unionism.”

During the 1951 wharf lockout, McIntosh was a young girl living in a state housing area in Auckland. She says the atmosphere at the time was all-consuming.

“I could see all the effects. I saw everybody get together...that sense of community.

During the 1951 wharf lockout, McIntosh was a young girl living in a state housing area in Auckland. She says the atmosphere at the time was all-consuming.

“I could see all the effects. I saw everybody get together...that sense of community.

People would go and collect vegetables and help each other.

“I grew up with a strong sense of social responsibility and that’s why I like being with people who are really fighting to survive. My family and children seem to have inherited it.”

When she’s not flat-out with family and work duties – luckily, McIntosh thrives off organisation – you can find her sewing or baking.

“They’re making marmalade late at night these days. The Maori Women’s Welfare Conference is later this month and my branch is filling up the bags for people. We’re making little pots of jam and preserves to put in each one.”

Recently, the wind had been shaking her lemon and orange tree, leaving a carpet of fruit outside and McIntosh can’t stand to see food go to waste.

“I like craft and concentrating on something different,” she says. “It’s probably what keeps me going.”

By Jess McAllen

80 years and still going strong

At 80 years old, Manukau District Court judge’s assistant Lorna McIntosh is the PSA’s oldest delegate – and she shows no signs of slowing down.
Family violence

Supporting people experiencing family violence

For far too many New Zealanders, family violence is a reality. It doesn’t end at home – our workplaces can be places of respite, and the financial security they can offer can help us to escape, but the harm violence does also has a significant impact there.

AS A UNION we’re proud to lead the way on making employers address family violence as a workplace issue. Following local and international research, and some excellent experiences from our Australian sister unions, we are consistently pushing for employers we deal with to adopt policies and clauses in collective agreements that support those experiencing family violence.

These supports include training for management and HR, explicit policies on family violence, paid leave for court and counselling, a commitment not to discriminate against those experiencing family violence, and safety measures including changing start/finish times, workplace locations, email addresses and phone numbers for those at risk of being harassed or attacked at work.

Green Party MP Jan Logie has also championed this issue, and became a PSA member to support our work in this area. She has drafted legislation, the Domestic Violence—Victims’ Protection Bill, which would ensure that all people, no matter where they worked, had access to the support they need.

“To me it’s about creating an even playing field and ensuring that every victim has the same protections and the same opportunities for getting help across the country,” Jan says, “when we know that 1 in 3 women over their lifetime is likely to be a victim of family violence, and 1 in 20 will be in that situation right now, it doesn’t make sense to only do this in a piecemeal way.”

WORK SHOULD BE SAFE

Prior to becoming an MP, Jan worked at a Women’s Refuge, and worked with a woman who was trying to leave her abusive partner. “She needed the money that work provided, to pay back debt that he had racked up, and so she had to keep working, but he knew where she worked, and that put her life at risk.” The women’s ex-partner knew where she worked, and what time she would be arriving and leaving, and her employer refused to move her to another location. It was this that helped Jan realise that employers needed support to take a lead on this issue.

In order for Parliament to have a chance of voting on this proposed law, it needs to be drawn in a random ballot from amongst dozens of other proposed pieces of legislation. Jan says she would love it if the Government recognised the importance of this law change and agreed to put it to Parliament immediately.

“I would be very happy to work with this Government to pass this legislation – I don’t need it to be mine, I just want it to be implemented,” though Jan adds that she doesn’t think it is likely to happen under the current Government, saying “I’ve spoken several times to different ministers within the Government and the
response I've had is ‘that’s interesting but we don’t need it.’

**NOT A PERSONAL ISSUE**

One of the biggest obstacles to putting better supports in place is the idea that family violence is only an issue for those experiencing it. Jan is clear that it isn’t a personal issue, it’s a societal one.

“The sense I get from some people in business and ministers is that family violence is a home issue, and we can just leave it to people to sort out themselves, it’s a bit messy and we don’t want to get involved. But there’s so many things wrong with that – we know from the Family Violence Death Review that often, colleagues are the only other people who know that somebody is in danger.”

In the interim, some organisations like the GCSB and The Warehouse are introducing measures. The Warehouse are developing an app for managers to use when a staff member discloses their experience of family violence, and Jan says “that kind of creative thinking saves lives, it’s awesome.”

To support Jan’s proposed law, write to minister Michael Woodhouse at m.woodhouse@ministers.govt.nz and tell him you want the Government to pass the Domestic Violence—Victims’ Protection Bill.

By Asher Wilson-Goldman

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**New resource for delegates dealing with sexual harassment**

FOR MANY OF us, sexual harassment is a reality in our workplaces. A recent State Services Commission survey of state servants found that 1% of people reported being sexually harassed in the workplace in the previous year.

For PSA delegates, responding to sexual harassment can be complex – needing to address the issue while ensuring that those who have been harassed are not subject to further victimisation.

A new resource, *Calling Out Sexual Harassment: A guide to dealing with sexual harassment and creating safe, respectful workplaces* is now available to help guide delegates and members through dealing with the issue.

The booklet provides useful definitions, details of the impact of sexual harassment, how it differs from other forms of bullying and harassment, and the law.

Our role as PSA delegates and members in confronting sexual harassment and ensuring our organisations have strong policies and procedures in place is extensively covered, so that anyone can make sure they know what to do, and how their organisation should act where sexual harassment is reported.

Lastly, the booklet has a step-by-step guide that delegates can use to make sure that a person who has been sexually harassed gets the support they need to raise the issues in ways that keep them safe.

As the booklet says, “by working toward a culture where negative and inappropriate words and actions are not tolerated you are ensuring that your place of employment is safer, more productive and a lot more enjoyable – for everyone.”

Download the booklet: [psa.org.nz/sexualharassment](http://psa.org.nz/sexualharassment)

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**More information**

*Domestic Violence—Victims’ Protection Bill*

*Family Violence: It’s Not OK*

**Need help?**

*Women’s Refuge*
https://womensrefuge.org.nz/
0800 733 843

*National Collective of Rape Crisis and Related Groups Aotearoa*
http://www.rapecrisisnz.org.nz/
0800 88 33 00
Know your rights
by the PSA Legal Beagles

YOUR RIGHT TO GET ACTIVE IN THE LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS

All New Zealanders, including all PSA members, have the democratic right to participate in the important upcoming local government and district health board elections.

Under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, PSA members including public servants, local government employees and district health board employees have the same rights as any other New Zealanders to be active in election campaigns.

You can stand as a candidate or actively campaign in support of a candidate or party. You have the right to actively support a political party or a candidate in the elections in your personal capacity, in your own time, using your own resources. This means you can help with fundraising, leaflet drops and any other kind of support.

The PSA will always encourage members to be active and informed citizens and defend the rights of members to be political.

To make it easier, we’ve developed the following guidance for members standing for election and for those who are actively involved in current campaigns.

**Do:** agree to do volunteer work for candidates, parties or groups who you support in the elections.

**Do:** feel free to express your political views through social media, but only in a private capacity and in your own time. In your social media profile, you might choose to make it clear that these are your views as a private individual and not mention where you work.

**Do:** attend public meetings or rallies in your own time (e.g. lunch breaks and after work).

**Do:** help with fundraising activities for a candidate or assist with leaflet drops in the community in your own time.

**Don’t:** use work printers to make campaign leaflets or posters, and don’t use work computers to receive or send political information.

**Don’t:** arrange to hold any meetings on your work premises.

**Don’t:** take on paid employment with a candidate or political party in the election without first checking, and ensuring you comply with, your employer’s policy on secondary employment.

**Don’t:** use or disclose information from your work.

**Don’t:** wear anything that identifies your employer at a public meeting or rally, or if you’re delivering leaflets in the community.

It’s important to note that some councils and district health boards have their own guidelines for involvement in election activity. They may be stricter than the law requires. If they are, you are not required to abide by them. We ask that you advise the PSA if this is the case so that we can seek to have them changed.

**ADVICE FOR CANDIDATES**

If you are standing as a candidate, the PSA has produced specific advice for you which is available here:

For local body candidates – psa.org.nz/localgovtadvice

For DHB candidates – psa.org.nz/dhbadvice

Need further advice?
Get in touch with the PSA Organising Centre on 0508 367 772, or talk to your PSA organiser.
ENGAGING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

While for some, the topic of unions summons an image of “old men shouting about communism”, Ministry of Health statistician Ruby Grant is praising the PSA for embracing younger workers.

Grant was one of a hundred PSA members who attended a gathering of Wellington’s mayoral candidates at the PSA office on August 15.

The event was organised as part of the PSA’s work on the local body elections, to allow Wellington members to hear what candidates had to say on the issues that PSA members care about.

Justin Lester, Jo Coughlan, Helene Ritchie, Keith Johnson, Nicola Young, Andy Foster and Nick Leggett each delivered a two-minute pitch outlining their election promises and answered off the record questions from the audience.

Grant attended the session because of an interest in local politics – particularly surrounding issues such as rental housing quality and affordability, and public transport.

“I’ve rented all my life,” she says, “and, like most people, will probably be renting all my life.”

Justin Lester was a surprise for Grant.

“He was pretty onto it in terms of his responses to the housing questions. They were well thought out but not too polished. His answers felt honest...not just a random throwaway policy line.

Nicola Young, on the other hand, appeared “disingenuous”.

“In the past she has stated that she disagreed with warrant of fitness policies for rental properties but at this meeting she was for them.”

Grant went into the session without a favourite but now has an inkling of who she will be voting for come October.

“I was originally just going to vote for Celia because I think she’s great but she pulled out. Part of the reason I went was to figure out who to vote for.

“I wasn’t expecting to be impressed by Justin Lester but I think I’m going to vote for him.”

While Grant takes her mayoral pick seriously, she also admits local body politics can be a maze when it comes to influence.

“It’s often hard to believe local politics does matter. Mayors don’t actually have that much power. They still have to work within the confines of the council. It doesn’t really matter who the next mayor is, but who is on the council.”

The session lasted for around an hour and a diverse and full crowd attended, both young and old. There was a healthy mix of heckling and some slightly-irritating quips from old members along the lines of: “remember that sign you had 12 years ago”.

“It’s cool the PSA is doing stuff like this,” says Grant.

“It’s cool the PSA is doing stuff like this,” says Grant.

“I’ve been working in government for a couple of years now but I only joined PSA about half a year ago. It can feel a bit idealistic. That’s why I like it when they do things I can engage with and things that can reach out to potential members.”

www.psa.org.nz         Working Life           September 2016          19
Behind the scenes
by Asher Wilson-Goldman

DELEGATE EDUCATION

In our workplaces, if members are our lifeblood, then delegates are the beating heart that keep the PSA alive. More than 3400 of us are currently delegates, having been elected by our colleagues to lead our union activity, from recruitment to disciplinary meetings, from planning for the future to collective bargaining negotiations.

The scope of a delegates work can be huge, but not everyone does everything – we’re in this together for everyone’s benefit, and so we share the work with our fellow delegates and with other union members, alongside support from PSA staff.

It’s important that becoming a delegate isn’t seen as something scary, but rather is a welcoming and empowering action that everyone feels supported to take. When you are elected as a delegate, you’ll be sent out an introductory delegate guide that has a bunch of information about your rights, responsibilities, and where you can go to get advice if you need it.

You’ll also be enrolled in your first delegate course, called Building Positive Workplace Relationships (BPWR). This is a two-day course with a one-day follow up, and we hold it several times a year right around the country.

In the last twelve months, more than 900 PSA delegates have attended at least one of our regular courses, including not just BPWR, but also the level two Enhancing Productive Workplace Relations two-day course and our Bicultural Unionism one-day training.

Delegates at a recent training course in Wellington told Working Life that the training itself was good, but the best part was the space it created to get together with delegates from other parts of the PSA, and hearing about what is happening in their organisations.

Conversations to share recruitment strategies, great clauses in collective agreements, and ways to help raise member engagement are had across the two days, in the formal training and in the breaks.

Sometimes, delegates meet up again at other training courses, and it’s great to catch up with people again and see what’s changed in the intervening months.

Becoming a delegate is a great thing, and it’ll give you skills and experiences that will be with you for the rest of your life and help in your career and your community. Next year, at annual members’ meetings, we’ll be electing new delegates at every worksite – take the step and volunteer.

DELEGATES:
• Are the PSA’s representatives in our workplaces
• Elected for a term of two years at Annual Members’ Meetings
• Get specialised training across the country
Worth a look
By Colin Feslier

LABOUR: THE NEW ZEALAND LABOUR PARTY 1916–2016

The least-read part of this book will be its preface. That is a pity. In 12 pages it summarises much of the history of the world social-democratic movements, the existing scholarship on the New Zealand Labour party, its success and failures, and its influence on New Zealand society.

The authors make a convincing argument that placing emphasis on the moderate/militant and union/parliamentary divides is largely wrong. They present a nuanced narrative, that makes clear the underlying complexities of people and policies. They also stress Labour’s later and continuing experience as a party of influence as political opponents adopt its policies to win voters.

Franks and McAloon develop the history of what J.D. Salmon called ‘Labour’s pioneering days’ from 1840 to the turn of the century – a long evolution stretching through the disastrous maritime strike of 1890 and the waterfront and Waihi disasters of 1912 and 1913, to the Great War, conscription, and imprisonment of Labour leaders. It is an origin myth that continues to inspire. The history behind the myth is told impressively across the first two chapters.

In the traditional Labour myth we leap from the end of the Great War to 1935 and the triumph of Savage’s first Labour government. This book’s coverage of those years reminds us of the three-way fight between Liberal, Reform and Labour and consequent split votes. The authors place a welcome emphasis on the financial practicalities of ‘building a party’ and the efforts to develop women’s participation and alliances with Māori.

The period from 1935 to the 1950s is well summed up in the intervening chapters, from the welfare state under Michael Joseph Savage to war and recovery led by Labour’s Peter Fraser. The book examines Labour’s long period of opposition during the prime ministership of National’s Keith Holyoake and the changes that happened immediately after in the 1960s, before looking at the hope created (and then dashed) with Norman Kirk in the early 70s.

Changes in the social fabric of society, and Labour’s engagement with these changes, are examined in the chapters looking at the period from 1975-1984, before the book moves on to the era of neoliberalism.

When talking about the 4th Labour Government, the authors attempt balance while making clear the damage done to country and party. This was the period of the greatest conflict between the PSA and Labour but there is no reference to the changes created by the repeal of the State Services Conditions of Employment Act and the subsequent experience of hundreds of thousands of state workers having their terms and conditions taken away.

Lastly, the recent history is finely-crafted and gives a strong argument against any undervaluing of the remarkable achievement of Helen Clark in the restoration of Labour.

This book creates a new standard narrative of the Labour Party. The brave decision of the party to allow the authors, albeit sympathetic, free rein to write it as they saw it is vindicated by a fine and readable account; it is essential reading for anyone who would understand New Zealand.

Peter Franks & Jim McAloon, Victoria University Press, 2016
$50.00
Available from: goo.gl/8zBzoZ
See page 7 to win a copy of this book.
IN THE RECENT Australian elections, two unions came up with a great campaign to highlight an issue of huge importance to their members, grow member activism and have a real influence on the makeup of Parliament.

United Voice (UV) and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA) members took part in the Save Our Weekend campaign, and they made their core demand one of the key election issues in marginal electorates across Australia.

IDENTIFYING THEIR ISSUE

At the heart of the matter was the importance of weekends. Unlike in New Zealand, many Australians are still paid extra for working on a Saturday or Sunday to compensate for the sacrifice of family time that they have to make.

Many businesses are not happy about paying extra on these days, and the Liberal Government made getting rid of weekend rates part of their plan for after the election. As two unions made up of people on low-pay, many of whom rely on weekend rates to provide for their families, UV and the SDA knew they had to do something.

The campaign used personal stories to tell a powerful message.

So, the Save Our Weekend campaign was launched. They used both traditional and digital media to raise their issue, getting huge publicity in the process, but they also embarked on a strong organising campaign, mobilising their membership, recruiting new members and talking to thousands of people around the country about why weekends needed saving.

ON-THE-GROUND ORGANISING

The on-the-ground campaign focussed on ten key parliamentary seats, out of 150 in the Australian House of Representatives. Research showed that these ten seats were all potentially winnable, with the end goal of having a Government that would either explicitly support retaining weekend rates, or at least one that was too afraid of a backlash to oppose them.

Out of the ten seats targeted, eight were won by the Australian Labor Party, and these results have been largely credited to the success of the Save Our Weekend campaign. In post-election polling, commissioned by UV, 60% of people said weekend rates were between ‘somewhat important’ and ‘the most important’ issue when they decided who to vote for.

BUILDING MEMBER CAPACITY

Another key goal was building capacity amongst union members for future campaigning. Volunteers
If you’re looking for a competitive House, Contents, Car or Boat quote, your PSA membership gives you access to comprehensive insurance cover at preferential rates.

It’s important to ensure your belongings are fully covered. With Vero CIS you can feel comfortable knowing that their comprehensive policies will leave you sitting pretty.

Call Vero CIS today for a quote on 0800 505 905 or email cis@vero.co.nz

Sit back and make your membership work for you.

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International

If you’re looking for a competitive House, Contents, Car or Boat quote, your PSA membership gives you access to comprehensive insurance cover at preferential rates.

It’s important to ensure your belongings are fully covered. With Vero CIS you can feel comfortable knowing that their comprehensive policies will leave you sitting pretty.

Call Vero CIS today for a quote on 0800 505 905 or email cis@vero.co.nz

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For many union volunteers, the Save Our Weekend campaign was the first time they had been active in their union, and for many more, it was their first time using their union as a vehicle to take action outside of the workplace.

Being a part of such a successful campaign has meant the experience was deeply inspiring to many, showing participants the power of working together to make positive social change.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The fight isn’t over for UV and SDA members. Employers are continuing to attack weekend rates, even though many of their strongest supporters were removed from Parliament in the election. The Fair Work Commission, a similar body to our Employment Relations Authority, is currently considering a case on Sunday rates, and they will no doubt be taking note of the strong public opinion on this issue.

The national secretary of UV, Jo-anne Schofield, told the Sydney Morning Herald that it was humbling watching her members tell their stories of what a cut to weekend rates would mean to them.

“We have got to a point in this country where the lowest-paid workers are having to give an account to a court about why they need to keep earning the money that they are earning. It has been for me galling to see hard-working people come to the commission to open up their household budgets and financial situation to be cross-examined on that, to be accountable for what it means to have a cut in pay.”

By Asher Wilson-Goldman

More info

Save Our Weekend
saveourweekend.org.au

Mandate to keep penalty rates —
the people have spoken
bit.ly/2bL8G9c
OUR LARGEST NETWORK, PSA Youth, is currently working to make it easy for our younger members to understand and get involved in bargaining. Working Life spoke to national co-convenor Caleb Gordon to find out more.

Joining together with our colleagues to negotiate our pay and other terms of employment is one of the key advantages to being a union member. Collective bargaining is at the core of what we do as a union, but it can seem complicated and hard to get involved in.

“The idea for a bargaining working group came from the PSA Youth Leaders Hui last year,” says Caleb, “one of the attendees ran a workshop to share their experiences of being on the bargaining team, to talk about how it went and to demystify the process so others could be encouraged to step up.”

Caleb says that bargaining was an issue that came up again during the Youth Leadership Training courses (run in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin) earlier this year, and from that a small group of people got together to do some work on the issue.

“We always find that people want to know how our union operates, and one of the things that stands out is collective bargaining. People aren’t confident in how it works, so when the opportunity comes up to be directly involved in bargaining, a number of our younger members don’t step up because they don’t feel they have the skills.”

After a couple of phone/video conferences, the working group has split into two, each focusing on a different part of the issue.

The first group is creating a how-to guide for bargaining – including what’s involved, how to write a claim, ways to get onto your bargaining team, the process around gathering issues from members across workplace, and basic info about workplace democracy. Caleb says he wants to make sure young members know that they are the union, and to encourage there to be a youth voice in the bargaining team and the workplace.

“The second group is looking at model clauses,” Caleb says, “to offer clauses across the PSA that speak to young people’s experiences in the workforce.” These model clauses will cover a wide range of issues that affect young people disproportionately, from flexible working arrangements to cater for childcare and part-time study, to ensuring that people in casual and fixed-term work have the ability to be part of the collective.

Caleb notes that group is also “thinking about internships. Lots of young people are increasingly having to come into the workforce through unpaid work, so we need to address that.”

Ensuring release time for union members to be involved in network activities (such as these working groups) during work time, and professional development and career pathways for young workers have also been raised as something the group will consider.

“We have a solid group of people involved. It’s still quite a new group, but it looks like it’ll be productive and I really feel like it’s an opportunity for people to step up, leading from wherever they are rather than expecting the elected convenors to do it, which is always nice to see.”

Collective bargaining for all
The PSA Women’s Network Biennial National Conference

THE BIENNIAL PSA Women’s Network conference Stand Together for Equality Tū Ngātahi kia Taurite was held on 28 and 29 July in Wellington.

It was a fantastic and action-packed two days where attendees participated in workshops and networking events on women’s leadership and organising for equality throughout the union movement.

Dr Cybèle Locke delivered an energising keynote about the history of women in the union movement. She highlighted the triumphs, achievements and challenges faced by women – especially Māori women – in getting men to recognise their voices as legitimate. Women have always found creative ways to make themselves heard, and Cybèle’s talk showed this with humour drawn from our movement’s vibrant history.

The workshop sessions on day two allowed attendees to delve deeper into difficult topics. Family Violence is a Workplace Issue ran two highly attended and emotional sessions, reflecting on what the role of an employer should be when dealing with both victims and perpetrators.

Themes of community, solidarity and women’s strength ran through almost every session. Some women who began the conference feeling unsure of themselves and their place in the union movement left as Women’s Network Committee members.

Attendees felt inspired and uplifted by the experience and recommend that more women take the opportunity to attend future conferences.

To become a member of the Women’s Network, sign up online: visit www.psa.org.nz/women and click ‘join network’, or join over the phone on 0508 367 772.

Discover more.

Exclusive rates and offers available for PSA members, for more information head to psa.org.nz/plus
Our members who work for the Aviation Security Service (AvSec) hit the headlines recently after taking action for fair pay and conditions during collective bargaining. Our members worked alongside their colleagues in the E tū union to jointly take a stand against an offer from their employer that would have meant a pay cut for many of them.

Every day, AvSec staff keep us safe when we’re in the air. They have legal powers that extend not only to airport security, but also along flight paths, and they take that responsibility seriously.

Concerned that they weren’t being treated with proper respect by their employer, AvSec staff twice rejected sub-standard collective agreements before voting in July to take industrial action in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

In response to the threat of three three-hour strikes towards the end of the school holidays, AvSec issued lockout notices which could have meant that all union members at AvSec were unable to work for 8 days, potentially causing havoc for passengers. AvSec extended the lockout to Queenstown and Dunedin airports, even though these were not taking any industrial action.

The PSA and E tū immediately filed for an injunction from the court, seeking to declare the lockout notices illegal, while at the same time agreeing to attend mediation with AvSec management in the hopes of reaching agreement.

The mediation was successful, and all strike and lockout notices were withdrawn, while members had a chance to discuss and vote on a new and improved offer from their employer. In the end, members of both unions overwhelmingly voted in favour of the proposed new collective agreement.

Thanks to everyone who sent messages of support to our AvSec members during the dispute, they really appreciated knowing our whole union was behind them.

Labour MP Grant Robertson and Green co-leader James Shaw show their support.
Better funding for support staff – better learning for kids

New Zealand’s two main education unions, NZEI (primary schools) and PPTA (secondary), have launched a campaign for better funding for support staff.

The education of the nation’s tamariki depends on schools having the right people in the right jobs. This year, the Government has frozen school funding, so schools have less money than they need to operate. This means New Zealand’s schools have to do more with less, with support staff being the ones closest to the cutting line.

Librarians, teacher aides, kairahi and office administrators are all essential to ensuring children have the best education possible. They are in their roles because they care about children, about providing support and inspiration and helping our young people find their place in the world.

Already support staff are paid only just above minimum wage, are employed only 40 weeks of the year and have no job security. It’s difficult to live on such a small amount.

If the freeze remains, schools will have less money. Trade-offs will happen between support staff, operational costs and teachers. This is unfair on schools, teachers, and children.

Stand with schools and sign the petition to value support staff: http://www.together.org.nz/kids_education

Foodstuffs stuffing up staff in the south

South Island Pak’nSave employees are still left without answers with parent company Foodstuffs refusing to bargain on pay. First Union are taking the store owners to the Employment Relations Authority to test whether this is legal.

Many Pak’nSave employees are turning to charities for food parcels, while their CEOs boast record profits. Communities have held rallies and protests around the country in support of Pak’nSave workers, calling on others to support a fair wage so supermarket workers can feed their whānau.

Bunnings have settled!

After more than 11 months, First Union members employed at Bunnings Warehouse stores finally have a new collective agreement. The new agreement came into effect last month, offering a pay rise and back pay. The issue of zero-hours and shifting contracts is addressed with a new clause giving both employers and employees a say in shift patterns.

It’s a huge relief to First Union members to reach such a positive outcome, after union members had faced uncertainty over hours and pay. After demonstrations, strikes and plenty of public support, Bunnings bosses knew their position was unfair.
Around & about

facebook.com/nzpsa to see more photos of union activity

High school students cutting a cake for an equal pay event at Parliament.

The PSA bargaining team at the Ministry for Primary Industries.

PSA members and staff march through Wellington on the first Māori language week parade.

The biennial PSA Women’s Network conference took place in Wellington in August.
Ministry of Social Development national delegates gathered from across the country.
PEOPLE OFTEN THINK of values as abstract and subjective ideals that rarely translate into people’s actual behaviour. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, a growing body of research shows that values are at the heart of progressive change.

In recent decades, social psychologists have made incredible advances in understanding how the human value system works and why it matters. What they’ve discovered is that people around the world share 58 universal values. The difference between us is that we priorities these values differently.

Our values priorities, in turn, influence the goals we set ourselves in life, the attitudes we hold and the behaviours we exhibit.

Dozens of studies show that people who prioritise a broad group of values known as intrinsic values - which includes things like creativity, broadmindedness, unity with nature, responsibility and loyalty – are more likely to act in pro-social and environmental ways.

On the other hand, people who prioritise a competing set of extrinsic values – such as wealth, public image, social power, ambition and success – are more likely to act in anti-social and environmentally destructive ways.

The good news is that in New Zealand, as well as in over 60 other countries on which we have data, we know that the majority of people prioritise intrinsic values.

Unfortunately, this is only half of the story.

Researchers are now exploring the extent to which our values are primed by our context – the things we see, hear, read or otherwise experience. This includes the way corporations, governments and non-profits frame their communications.

In fact, studies show that our context can be a lot more important than our normal values priorities in determining which values guide our attitudes and behaviours in that moment.

For example, in one study researchers wanted to see if values priming could be used to influence people’s levels of helpfulness. To do this, they split 94 participants into three groups. The first group was asked to write reasons for and against honesty and loyalty (intrinsic values). The second group to write about success and ambition (extrinsic values). A control group was asked to complete an unrelated task.

Then, one at a time, the participants were told the study was complete and that they needed to go into a separate room to fill in a form before leaving. In the other room, a researcher pretended to knock over a cup of 10 pencils. The real test was to see how many pencils each unsuspecting participant picked up in the allocated time.

It turned out those primed with the intrinsic values of honesty and loyalty picked up more pencils than the control group. Not only that, but those who had been primed with the extrinsic values of success and ambition picked up fewer pencils than the control group. In other words, priming people’s extrinsic values doesn’t just fail to boost helpful behaviour – it actually supresses it.

Dozens of other studies have found the same effect using a variety of priming techniques and measures of pro-social and environmental behaviours.

Last time I was in New Zealand I picked up a newspaper with a headline proclaiming the cost of violence against women to the economy – as if violence is only worth preventing if it also hurts the economy. In a similar vein, environmental organisations increasingly assign financial value to “eco-system services” in order to advocate for the conservation of nature.

In all these cases, we’re assuming the worst in people instead of bringing out their best. And the more we do it, the more we strengthen values in people that actually undermine support for all of our causes.

So the next time you’re trying to convince someone to support a cause you care about think twice about the values you’re appealing to – it really does matter.

Mark Chenery is the co-founder and director of Common Cause Australia.
Download free resources at www.commoncause.org.au.
You all get Mates Rates at Kiwibank

Call 0800 MATE RATE, apply online at kiwibank.co.nz/psa or visit your local Kiwibank.

Every member of the PSA gets a special package at Kiwibank. Check out what a bank set up by Kiwis for Kiwis can do for you.
Holiday homes

The great kiwi bach owned by union members

Contact us:
Web: psa.org.nz/holidayhomes
Freephone: 0800 10 30 90
E-mail: holidayhomes@psa.org.nz
Address: PO Box 3817, Wellington 6140
Office hours: Mon – Fri, 8.30am – 4.30pm