

Election of Convention Delegates delayed to May

Because of a requirement set by the AFSCME International Constitution, Local 2822 was unable to elect delegates to the 39th International Convention in Boston (scheduled for June 28 through July 2, 2010) at the April Membership Meeting. The requirement is that all full-dues paying members must be notified by mail. So members should be receiv-

ing a post card in the mail before the meeting at Ridgedale Library on May 5.

The Local 2822 Executive Board recommended, and the membership at the April meeting voted, to send our full complement of delegates, which is five, and to pay air fare, hotel and per diem. Lost time will not be paid, so dele-

gates will either have to take vacation or Voluntary Special Leave without Pay. Six members indicated they would like to be delegates, but other names may be put into nomination at the May 5 meeting. All potential delegates will be asked to speak for up to two minutes to say why they want to be a delegate. Then there will be a secret vote.

May						
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

May
Membership Meeting
 Wednesday, May 5
 7:00 p.m.
 Ridgedale Library

Special order of business:
 Election of delegates to the International Convention

June
Membership Meeting
 Wednesday, June 25
 7:00 p.m.
 Brookdale Library

For our members who are physically challenged, please let us know if special accommodations are needed.



Visit Local 2822 website:
<http://www.afscme2822.org>

New requirements for reduced co-pays for 2011

By Molly Malecki

At the Labor/Management Health Care Committee meeting on April 8, we were presented with the plan for reduced co-pays for office visits and prescriptions for 2011. If you recall for 2010, we had to do the health assessment and read several statements and answer five questions. For 2011, we, and our spouses, will watch a brief video regarding healthy choices and do the health assessment. The video should be available this summer, so it can be viewed well ahead of open enrollment in the fall. Jill Hamilton, the manager of HealthWorks has stated that every effort will be made so that all employees and spouses will have the opportunity to view the video.

Once the video is ready we

will be notified through county-wide e-mail, letter to homes, HealthWorks intranet pages, county-wide work unit meetings, and the HC Weekly. Keep in mind to look for these communications. Last year some people almost missed out on the reduced co-pays because of not doing the question activity. Also, keep in mind that doing the assessment and watching the video is voluntary. You only have to do it if you want the reduced co-pays.

The reason these requirements are becoming more involved are:

- People are responsible for their health behaviors and are partners in their health care.
- The workplace is responsible for creating environ-

ments, policies, and systems that empower employees in leading healthy lifestyles.

- People are “producers” of their own health instead of “consumers.”
- Hennepin County values its workforce and is committed to keeping employees healthy and productive.
- Hennepin County recognizes its responsibility to be a role model for the communities it serves.
- Hennepin County strives to be a leader in employee health and productivity.
- Health behaviors impact individual and collective health care costs.

Every two years when we begin negotiations on our next contract, we know that health insurance is a huge cost factor. And we have to try and balance health insurance with wage increases. We know what happened the last time—there was no wage increase. We all have to work to bring health care costs down so we can make wages go up.

Health Care Reform - What does it mean?

Jennifer Munt, Communications Director for Council 5, sent out the following message:

“AFSCME tops *U.S. News and World Report*’s list of groups that gained the most and worked the hardest for health insurance reform. We marched, we lobbied and we prevailed! Now that reform is the law of the land, everyone is wondering what it will mean for them.”

She sent a link to “AFSCME Facts: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.”

http://www.afscme.org/docs/AFSCME_health-reform_100401.pdf

This six page article is an extremely readable resource. It is divided into sections: for those who get their coverage at work, for those without employer coverage, for retirees, impact on state and local budgets and state operations. Each section includes the

year by year changes that will be made.

For us, who have coverage at work, nothing changes this year. The only change next year is “Over-the-counter drugs not prescribed by a physician can no longer be reimbursed through Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), health reimbursement accounts (HRAs) or health savings accounts (HASs).

Local 2822 organizer, Alice Merrill, passes away

Alice Merrill, clerical worker, began the daunting task of organizing over 1300 clerical workers in thirty-three departments and buildings all over Hennepin County in the late 1970s. She was hired in the Welfare Department in 1973 and soon realized that the clerical workers were not getting the same wage increases as the social workers. Social Worker Cliff Robinson told her, “Well, Alice, you have to start thinking about a union.”

The full story of Alice’s work in orga-

nizing Local 2822 was in the March/April 2009 issue of Council 5’s “Stepping Up.” She was a divorced mother with seven children. According to Mary Lee, who worked with her in this endeavor, “What made her successful was that Alice was a normal person who didn’t have her own agenda.” She took a leave of absence, she thought for two months, but it stretched into a year. Many clerical workers were afraid to sign union cards, but whispered to her that they would vote for the union on the secret

ballot. On July 31, 1979, the final vote was 536-278 in favor of the union.

Alice’s obituary was in the *Star Tribune* on April 7, 2010, and it included the fact that she had been an organizer of AFSCME Local 2822. At our membership meeting that evening, we had a moment of silence in her honor. We also voted to make a donation to the family to use as Alice would have liked.

Any singers out there?

Twin Cities Labor Chorus would love to hear you!!! They invite you to “Join us in building the Labor Movement, one song at a time!” Their flyer states, “We are an active chorus that is dedicated to building the Labor and Social Justice Movements one song at a time. We sing at marches, on picket lines, at union events, and anywhere else our message and voices can be heard. We are open to all voices and

skill levels; all you need is passion, enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.”

Rehearsals are every other Tuesday from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church, 701 Lexington Parkway N, St. Paul. For more information visit their blog at www.twincitieslaborchorus.blogspot.com.

“The first thing I want to say to you as individuals and as a movement-if you’re going to be something, if you’re going to do something, you have to be proud of yourself. And you have to be proud of your heritage as a Labor Movement just as you are proud of your family, or your religion, or whatever else it might be.”

– Senator Herbert H. Humphrey (D-Minn., 1949-1964)

Why you are glad you belong to a union

A headline in the *Star Tribune* on April 2, 2010, stated, “Area workers average \$23.37 an hour”. The article stated, “Union workers earned \$28.55, while nonunion workers earned \$21.89 on average.” Thought you would like to know.



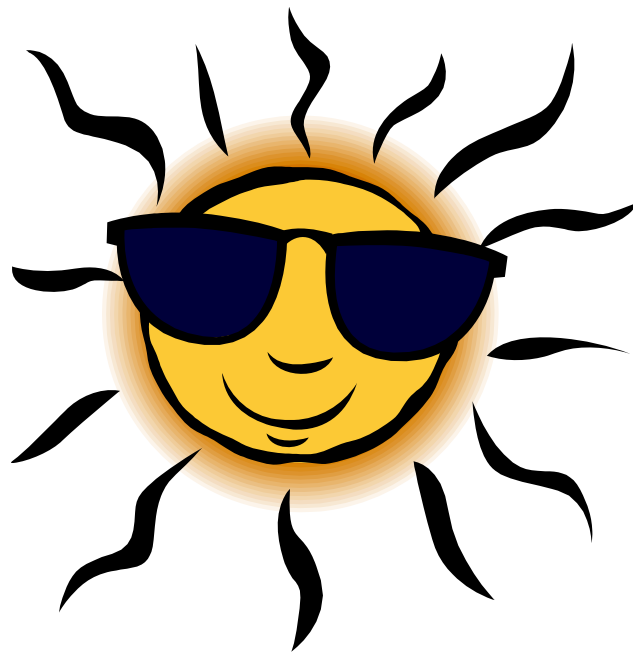
Hennepin County/AFSCME Picnic

Bright spot in the summer

Sunday, August 8
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
French Park, Skyview site
Plymouth

Come share a hot dog and a beer
with your union brothers and sisters
and families

Games
Magician
Face Painter



Mark your calendar and watch here for directions to French Park

Picnic planning underway - volunteers needed

An enthusiastic group gathered to make plans and to offer new ideas for the Hennepin County/AFSCME Picnic. Those enthusiastic participants are Ann Baird, Tammy Richert, Rita Watson, Becca Nizick, Janelle Steinbach, Karen Nash and Molly Malecki. Many volunteers will be needed to help make this a fantastic event. Already Edye Ackerman wrote, "I am at your service. The picnic has been the highlight of my summer and I really missed it last year."

If we get lots of volunteers, no one should have to help more than an hour, unless they want to. We will need help setting up, serving food,

blowing up balloons, handing out tickets for prizes, helping with games and of course, the all time favorite: cleaning up.

If you want to be the first on your block to volunteer, e-mail any of the above named planners. You are welcome to volunteer even if you are the last on your block. We also will need to use ice chests to keep the pop and beer cold. Let us know if you can bring some.

Good and Welfare

Happy retirement, Alice Kelly

Our congratulations and best wishes go out to Alice Kelly who is retiring on May 13 from the Brookdale Library. She began working at Hennepin County in August 1987. Alice has

been an outspoken proponent of the union and a strong voice for co-workers' rights in her area. She has served on our Local's Master Negotiating Team and on the Table Team. We will miss her enthusiasm.

Get well, Co-Chief Stewards

Both co-chief stewards, Theresa Smith and Marilyn Bell, have been out of work for several weeks because of surgeries. We wish them our best and hope they will soon mend and be back to work and taking care of steward business.

New to Hennepin County?

If you haven't been approached by a union representative yet, please fill out this form and send to our membership secretary.

To sign up as a full union member or for Delta Dental Insurance, or to get answers to questions about AFSCME and membership benefits, please fill out this coupon and send to:

Dirk Schot
East Lake Library
Mail Code 760

Name _____

Job Title _____

Work Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I want to sign up as a full member.

I want to sign up for Delta Dental.



Help us remember your co-workers with a card. Let us know to send a sympathy card, get well or congratulations. We will send a card, hand-made by President Lynn Stetler.

Contact Heather Clark, our Good and Welfare Coordinator at :952-847-8523 or by e-mail: hclark@hclib.org. The request should include the name of the member, the reason for the request and home address, if possible."



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Delta Access

651-406-5900 or 1-800-862-6042.

Always refer to your group number 538.

A New Voice deadline is May 5. Articles will be accepted up to and including the day of the monthly Membership Meeting for inclusion in the following month's newsletter. Send your written contributions to Molly Malecki.

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