



October Membership

Tuesday, October 3

7:00 p.m.

Southdale Library

November Membership Meeting

Wednesday, November 8, 2006

Ridgedale Library

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

Post-employment Health Care Account Meetings

Plans are being made to have information meetings for employees about the possibility of developing a post-employment health care account. The meetings that are being planned will only give information about what such a plan might look like. No decisions will be made at these meetings.

Each local union and bargaining unit will have to create and vote on their own plan. This subject was written about at length in the July issue of *A New Voice*. You can access that by going to afscme2822.org and clicking on "Archives" and then July.

Would you vote for this man?

Would you vote for this candidate: a dentist who has been convicted of drug possession and fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct and faces an arrest warrant in Hennepin County on a 1982 arson charge? And as a result of his legal problems he lives in Rome (Italy).

Hopefully not. But in the September 12th, 2006 Primary Election, 4,886 people did vote for him to run against Betty McCollum for CONGRESS, not dog catcher, but Congress. He didn't win, by the way.

Sometimes our union members complain because the union is "too political." Some say they know who to vote for and don't want the union "telling them who to vote for." For those who have the time, the energy and the inclination to study the candidates and the issues, more power to them. The union is NOT "telling you who to vote for." The union is not telling anybody who to vote for.

The union would be remiss in not studying the candidates and issues and finding out which candidates best support our issues. Which candidates support working families? Which candidates voted to keep our pension plans intact? Which candidates support safe working environments? Which candidates support health care for the working poor? The union has the resources to evaluate voting records of candidates and to communicate their findings. The union has a screening process where candidates are interviewed on these issues that effect working people.

When the union takes the step of endorsing a candidate there is an implied bargain. The union will help the candidate win the election and the candidate will follow through on the promises made to support working families.

How does the union help the candidate? There is usually a monetary contribution, which mainly comes from the PEOPLE fund (see article on PEOPLE). The union will inform its members that the candidate is good for working families. And more than anything the union will provide man/woman power to the campaign. Members will phone bank, door knock, drop leaflets, pound lawn signs, or give any other help that is needed.

It is the responsibility of all union members to find out about the candidates, decide whom to support, and do what we can for that candidate and then to VOTE.

AFSCME's endorsed candidates can be found at afscmemn.org.

Don't be one of the 4,886 that voted for a sex offender for Congress.

First AFL-CIO Convention

By Karen DiCosimo

I attended my first AFL-CIO convention in August, and I have to say it was a wonderful learning experience. We had excellent speakers. Amy Klobuchar gave a very inspiring speech,

(AFL-CIO continued on page 2)

More activists leave local

For the third newsletter in a row we announce departures. Three activists are leaving our local. Jennifer McNair, our Chief Steward has accepted a position as a supervisor. Merry Brigham who serves on our Executive Board and who is our web mistress is taking a new position that will make her a member of Local 34. Janet Keefe a long time steward in this local is also taking a position that will make her a member of Local 34.

We wish them all the best in their new endeavors. And we thank them for the service, the time and the talents that they have shared with our Local.

Jennifer had a final message she wanted to share:

To All AFSCME Members,
I have accepted a position that removes me from my union position. I would like to thank all of you for the trust you bestowed upon me as Chief Steward. I would like to say to each and every one of you "Get Involved." Do what you can! That is all we need from you. Each of you brings something different and that is what is important. Become involved and have a voice.
Respectfully,
Jennifer McNair

(AFL-CIO continued from page 1)

as did Mike Hatch, Steve Kelley, Patty Wetterling and many more. From all of their speeches the most important thing that I came away with is that we really need to get out and VOTE,VOTE,VOTE.

On the AFSCME Website, afscmemn.org, there is a listing of all the candidate that are union/labor friendly. Please check it out and consider voting for these folks. They have been endorsed by AFSCME because they support a lot of our issues. We need all the help we can get. As you know, we are going to be entering into negotiations soon and this contract isn't going to be any easier than the last one. If you could please take some time to look at these candidates and see if they meet the requirements to earn your vote it would be of benefit to everyone in the labor movement.

P.E.O.P.L.E.

AFSCME e-Action Network

By Tracey Conaty

Politicians may play games. They may stretch the truth. **But when they start messing with our futures, they've gone too far!**

This Election Day we're going to show them. We won't stand for them raiding our pension funds, under-funding our futures or denying us the secure, guaranteed retirements we've worked and fought so hard for at the bargaining table. This November, let's show them that public service workers are a powerful force here in Minnesota and across the country. Let's fight for our futures—with PEOPLE.

PEOPLE is Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality, AFSCME's political action arm that is funded solely by voluntary contributions from members. **PEOPLE fights to elect candidates who fight for our retirements and who will negotiate contracts with us that protect our pensions.** Our contributions to PEOPLE will support the campaigns of candidates who are on our side—and help defeat the ones who aren't—through get out the vote efforts, direct campaign contributions and grassroots action. Because the people we elect affect our contracts!

Across the country public service workers are facing serious challenges to their retirement security. Protecting our futures here at home starts with the action we take now!

We also held the caucus to elect delegates and officers of the AFL-CIO. This was a very intense process. All of our AFSCME delegates were re-elected so we still have a strong voice on the board.

I enjoyed this convention so much that I volunteered to do another convention the beginning of October. You'll be hearing from me again. Please remember the importance of researching the candidates and getting out to vote!

In California, last year we beat back the governor's plan to privatize our traditional defined benefit pension system and replace it with a risky 401(k) style plan that would have cost taxpayers billions of dollars. But the issue still is not dead.

In New Jersey, the state pension shortfall is approaching \$30 billion. This began in 1994 when Republican Gov. Christie Whiteman raided pensions to pay for a \$1.2 billion tax cut for the wealthy and at the same time increased employees' contribution to the plan to 5 percent.

In New York, the state pension system is one of the healthiest in the nation but recent reports from the right wing, including the Manhattan Institute, have raised questions about continuing the traditional guaranteed pension in the state. These attacks could lead to shifting the risk of retirement from public employers onto workers.

In Pennsylvania, a House panel in the state legislature will be making crucial recommendations on our pensions and retiree health care. Victory on November 7 means raising money immediately—to support the campaigns of candidates who support our retirement security.

Give now to PEOPLE and support our fight for retirement security.

Contributing is fast, easy and secure. You can do it through payroll deduction. Contact Neng Lor at neng.lor@co.hennepin.mn.us to sign up. And when you give just \$4.17 a month, you'll get a union-made AFSCME windbreaker. Or for a commitment of just \$8.35 a month, you'll get the special AFSCME PEOPLE MVP jacket. Wear it on Election Day to show them you're fighting (and voting) for good contracts and a secure retirement. Smaller monthly contributions are also welcome.



Together we can make a difference.

37th AFSCME International Convention

The International Convention

By Molly Malecki

As an “old-timer” at the AFSCME International Convention in Chicago, I was still amazed and invigorated by the enthusiasm and dedication of the 4,000 members who attended this year. It is a real shot in the arm to “old-timers” who are growing weary of struggling to get good contracts for our members, of cajoling members to become involved and to understand the role politics plays in our lives as public employees.

The other four Local 2822 members who attended the convention have reported on the importance of the political scene to our lives and to our work. Another important theme of the convention was ORGANIZING. AFSCME must continue to work at organizing new members. Unions are on a very slippery, steep slope right now. Ford Motors is offering buy-outs to 75,000 of its union employees. That could mean 75,000 less union members/union jobs in America. Unions must be organized in more areas or the middle class is going to disappear. My latest issue of *AARP Bulletin* (I said I was an “old-timer”) reported that a study in the July-August *Health Affairs* predicts that perspective home health-care workers may instead opt for careers flipping burgers. There is more money there. Coupled with the looming cuts of Medicaid, the potential shortage of home care assistants is “a tsunami waiting to happen,” according to one industry official. This is a group that needs to be organized by the union.

The workshop I attended at the convention was “Labor History: Our Pride, Power and Legacy.” Unexpectedly it turned out to be a bus tour, and it specifically dealt with the “Hay Market Affair” in Chicago in May of 1886. Our education is so sorely lacking in labor history, and labor history accounts for so much of what is right and good in this country. I think we all “enjoy” our forty hour weeks—if we have to work more hours, we get overtime. This did not come out of the magnanimity of any employer but from the **BLOOD**, sweat and efforts of the labor unions.

Safe working conditions can be credited to the work of unions.

If you would like to whet you’re appetite on the labor history you didn’t learn in school, here are a few movies to get your started:

10,000 Black Men Named George (2002) Docudrama of the life of A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, with Andre Braugher.

American Dream (1991) Academy Award winning documentary focusing on the 1984 Hormel Plant strike in Austin, MN.

Bread and Roses (2000) drama loosely based on the 1990 janitor’s strike in Century City, CA, the film tells the story of union efforts to organize office cleaners in Los Angeles, with Adrien Brody and Pilar Padilla.

Silkwood (1983) Dramatization of the life of Karen Silkwood, a union activist in a plutonium processing plant who blew the whistle on unsafe practices at the company and who died under suspicious circumstances, with Meryl Streep and Cher.

First-timer’s view

By Nancy Crouse

The convention was terrific! It was a wonderful opportunity to represent Local 2822 at the AFSCME International Convention in Chicago for 6 days, August 6-11. It was an opportunity to be energized by dynamic speakers and presidential hopefuls. Senator Barrack Obama from Illinois was handsome and riveting in his remarks. Seeing Hillary Clinton up close was exhilarating and fulfilled a long held dream.

Listening to Gerald W. McEntee, our International President and to William Lucy, Secretary-treasurer was inspiring. They underscored the extreme difficulties that middle-class families face: 1) retaining their jobs, 2) privatization of their jobs, and 3) fighting off the reduction of health care benefits.

I had never been to Chicago. I found it gorgeous and magnificent. It was a cross between Boston and New York, a combination of green spaces and sparkling, modern buildings. The “Tall

Ships Chicago 2006” event was in town, and our hotel was situated on the Chicago River with many of the tall ships anchored below our windows.

Another first-timer

By Janet Keefe

I felt privileged to represent Local 2822 at the convention. I had fun! It was a blast.

The Convention had a very serious tone. Unions and working people are under attack by employers both public and private. Right-wing politicians want to take away our basic right to organize. It is through unions we’ve gotten protection of just and appropriate discipline, better than non-union wages and benefit packages, etc. We must maintain our strengths through solidarity, and we must get into the political arena, where these attacks are being made.

As public employees, who are the deliverers of social and infrastructure (roads, schools, parks) services, we face layoffs if funding for these are cut, and indeed, they are. We, in Minnesota, are already aware of the elimination of some social services.

Our challenge is WORK. We must increase our membership strength, and help organize other public and private workers.

We must WORK to get the message out about anti-working-people candidates. We don’t want companies who get tax incentives but won’t pay a living wage. We want candidates who support the living wage bill, and will reverse the tax cuts given to the wealthiest, so the deficit can be cut, and public service cuts can be restored.

WORK to get the WORD OUT. That’s what the convention was about. Our strategy for the 21st century: Reform Healthcare, Organize New Members, Strengthen Political Power, Boost Member Involvement, Escalate Communications.

Local 2822 Officers

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Bulletin Board

The New Voice deadline is October 3. 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 or Lynn Stetler.

Visit Local 2822 Website

<http://www.afscme2822.org>





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 E-board member 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."

With Delta Access, you can find out about your Delta coverage without even opening your mouth. Delta Access
651-406-5900 or 1-800-862-6042.
Always refer to your group number 538.

Council 5 Contact person:
Cindy Pince, 651-287-0564

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Bridget Walker	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail

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:

Bridgette Walker
Jail, Mail Code 905

Name _____

Job Title _____

Work Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I'm especially interested in:

I want to sign up as a full member.