

## Vote on proposed improvement to healthcare

As an incentive for Local 2822 bargaining unit members to use HCMC (Hennepin County Medical Center), HCMC clinics and the HFA (Hennepin Faculty Associates) doctors, Hennepin County is proposing a change to our current contract to allow further **reduced office visit co-pays**. Our current contract specifically states what the co-pays are to be. So any change to that stipulation has to be approved by the members. Other incentives may be

proposed, so the vote would include those also.

The vote on this contract change will be held at the December Membership Meeting on Wednesday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m. at Minneapolis Central Library on the second floor.

This information was informally presented and discussed at the November Membership Meeting. All those present at that meeting, which included all but two executive board

members, agreed that there was no down side to this proposal. And they support our local's acceptance of this change. One member commented that for many years those who chose HCMC and HFA have paid much higher premiums and co-pays and was very pleased at this proposal.

Anyone with questions should contact an executive board member. Phone numbers are listed on the back of the newsletter.

## Delta Dental deadline

Every member of the Local 2822 bargaining unit has a right to Delta Dental coverage at no additional cost. It does not matter whether you are a full dues paying member. Fee payers have a right to

this coverage.

The deadline to sign up for Delta Dental or to change coverage is **DECEMBER 1**. This coverage is **not through Hennepin County**. Do not

call benefits for information. Delta Dental is administered through Council 5. If you have questions, please contact Cindy Pince at 651-450-4990.

## Federal changes in healthcare

By Molly Malecki,  
Vice president  
Brookdale Service Center

On November 10 President Lynn Stetler and I attended a two hour workshop on the "Federal Changes in Healthcare: the impact on bargaining and Labor-Management committees." We are both on the Hennepin County Labor/Management Healthcare Committee and have served at the negotiating table for

many years, so it seemed appropriate that we attend. This was presented by the Twin City Area Labor Management Council.

There was a brief overview of "The Patient Protection and Affordability Care Act" and the "State Healthcare Reform." There was a tremendous amount of information, which space this month won't allow me to elaborate on. A couple of quick points that I thought were interesting was

that health care used to be called a "fringe" benefit. The cost of health insurance has gone up 114% in ten years, and what we are buying has been diminished. Minnesota has the lowest uninsured rate in the United States at 7%. The issue that continues to come up is that somehow under the new health care laws, everyone is going to have to change insurance carriers. This is totally false!! If people like what they have, they can keep it.

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**December Membership Meeting**  
Wednesday, December 1  
7:00 p.m.  
Central Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

**Special order of business:**  
Vote on contract change for healthcare incentives.

**January Membership Meeting**  
Wednesday, January 5  
7:00 p.m.  
Ridgedale 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>

As we start to plan for negotiations in 2011 and as self insurance takes hold, there is a lot for us to learn. Our contract states that the aggregate value of benefits cannot change except through negotiations. Minnesota State Law also says that. So whatever benefits we are able to get in the next contract will have to be negotiated. We need all of our members together when that day comes.

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## The way I see it

By Lynn Stetler, President  
Hopkins Library

I have just celebrated my 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of employment at Hennepin County Library. Throughout these many years, I've witnessed a lot of changes. There have been years of growth, very lean years and everything in between. Things continue to change and evolve throughout the county with many new initiatives and programs being suggested.

As our work has changed, our job titles have changed even more. Local 2822 used to use the slogan "Nothing works without clerks" and clerks made up the majority of our membership. Our formal name is "Hennepin County Clerical and Related." The "Related" aspect now makes up a large percentage of our membership. So while we are rarely referred to as clerical, take a look at the descriptive terms of our job classes and what we do. We are assistants, specialists, representatives, operators, coordinators, principals, analysts and associ-

## Social media and our union

By Tammy Richert,  
Phone operator

I attended the "Social Media Class" at the AFL-CIO Convention in September. Both women who taught the class were experts on the subject of social media and the use of it for the AFL-CIO. Rather than get into the specifics of how social media works, I will report on **WHY** social media works.

Q: What is social media?

A: Any website that allows online communication. Example: Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube.

Q: Why should we care about social media?

A: The numbers don't lie. Three out of four Americans use social technology and two thirds of the global international population visit social networks.

ates.

We work in every department and every building and on every shift. We are integral to making the county work efficiently and effectively. As these changes continue, my hope is that management not only solicits our opinions but engages us in these processes.

I worked for many years with a manager in an environment of collaboration and inventiveness by all he supervised, whatever the job class. Our opinions and questions mattered and were demanded on a daily basis as we did our work. I feel that he bears a large amount of responsibility for my becoming active in our local and I owe him a huge amount of gratitude. We are stakeholders, we understand what works and what doesn't, and we would like to be part of the solution as the county redefines the services and work we do.

The county works because we do and we do good work.

Q: How can social media possibly help our union?

A: Social media is a tool for interacting with union members. It is also a very important tool used to communicate with younger members of the local.

Q: Who is responsible for social media site once it is developed?

A: There are many questions that have to be answered when creating a social media website and policy for our union. Start the discussion.

Q: Social media policy? Who decides what to post? Who replies to daily communications? Who decides what is to be communicated to its members and to the public? Who will manage the site? Who can post items? What types of items are appropriate?

A: These are the questions the local will have to answer for itself.

## Scholarship applications available

For more information and scholarships go to Council 5 website: <http://afscmemn.org/afscme-council-5-2007-scholarships>

📖 Dec. 31 is the deadline for college-age children of AFSCME members to apply for a 2011 **AFSCME Family Scholarship**. Ten scholarships worth \$2,000 each will be awarded. The scholarships are renewable for up to four years for full-time students.

📖 April 30 is the deadline for college sophomores from AFSCME households to apply for the **Jerry Clark Memorial Scholarship**. The program, for social science majors, includes a \$5,000 scholarship for students' junior and senior years in college, and a summer internship with AFSCME in Washington, D.C.

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## Council 5 Executive Director Eliot Seide seeks re-election to HealthPartners Board

AFSCME members who have HealthPartners insurance are urged to vote in HealthPartners' upcoming election for its board of directors. Council 5 recommends a vote for executive director Eliot Seide, who is up for re-election. Seide is a strong advocate for consumers and for quality, affordable healthcare.

Ballots and instructions have been mailed to eligible voters. Voters must mail back their ballot or vote electronically by Dec. 3.

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Q: Can our local or its representatives take this class: Get a demonstration? Ask our own questions?

A: Yes. We can contact the Minnesota AFL-CIO to arrange a class.

Finally, this article was intended to encourage our union to develop a social media site to communicate more widely with its current members and reach out to potential members. For further information and examples of a social media site, go to : Web: [mnaflcio.org](http://mnaflcio.org), Blog: <http://www.mnaflcio.typepad.com>, [Twitter.com/MNAFLCIO](https://twitter.com/MNAFLCIO).

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## Why progressive dues

By David Salmon, Executive Board Member, Ridgedale Library

At the membership meeting on November 3, Local 2822 voted to amend its constitution, and with it to change the way by which union dues are determined for its workforce. With the local's approving vote, union dues will no longer be applied as a flat fee across all Local 2822 workers regardless of individual wages, but dues will now result from applying the same fixed percentage rate for all (like a single flat-tax), calculated against gross wages for each pay check.

It needs to be noted that this approval of progressive dues was not easily or quickly met, but followed months of discussion and debate which began in earnest in March. But ultimately it became clear that the adoption of progressive dues **fairly** addresses the concern that both the lower wage earners within Local 2822 and workers less than full-time have long been paying a proportionally larger amount under the flat-fee dues structure (some paying over 5%). The adoption of progressive dues also provides a solid, workable, yet flexible way of maintaining the solvency of our union while also accepting the limitations of no-wage increase contracts—as the dues are directly related to wages. This approval was also in keeping with the formal directive from the AFSCME International Union to move to a progressive dues structure, and in following the long-standing lead in adopting progressive dues as set by the Hennepin County Local 34, Social Services.

Now for a number of us, it will increase our dues to some degree. And in the face of wage increases mostly lost to the ever-rising costs of healthcare plans, it seems like just another demand and expense levied against the same paycheck, even though equitably, it will also decrease dues for those of us who have been paying a larger proportion of our wages. But in the larger picture, Minnesota along with the rest of the

nation is trending toward an anti-union/anti-labor stance. November 2nd's elections make that clear. And that Minnesota candidates for governor whose platforms included proposals to change our very pensions had such strong support, further underscores the environment we're laboring within. And does anyone seriously doubt that when the new legislature convenes that there won't be a feeding frenzy of corporate lobbyists descending upon the capital? It's this very political environment that will place even more demands upon your union to be heard, and require even more support to effectively lobby for the voice of labor—for you. That's what your dues have supported, and that's what your dues—and your union—will support.

## Discussion of progressive dues

By Walter Hanson, Treasurer Brookdale Service Center

On November third local 2822 after an intense discussion approved without a dissenting vote our new dues formula. Your dues will be 1.5% of wages per pay check.

The following are some of the issues that were discussed before the vote was taken:

"IT'S NOT FAIR I HAVE TO PAY MORE DUES WHEN I DIDN'T GET A WAGE INCREASE." Earlier this year we had a dues increase even though we didn't get a wage increase. The reason is that the International has a formula for an automatic dues increase; this will disappear with the progressive dues system. One major benefit of this new dues structure is our local dues won't increase unless our wages increase. This means in the future if there is a zero pay increase we won't pay more dues.

"THE 1.5% IS TOO HIGH! CAN'T IT BE LOWER?" Earlier this year the Council 5 staff did calculations for each separate local. They came up with the 1.5% amount to allow us to match our

current dues revenue with the new structure. More importantly the local's leadership never considered a higher amount.

"THIS DISCRIMINATES AGAINST ME BECAUSE I MAKE MORE MONEY." The point of the progressive dues structure is **fairness**, not discrimination. Currently our dues structure discriminated against those who make less per hour and/or who work less hours. This is meant to help the people who work fewer hours and have lower wages.

"I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PAY OVER 30% MORE IN DUES OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR." Keep in mind this is a one time adjustment because of the new formula. In the future your dues will change only when your hours or wages change. As one of the people who will have a 30% increase, my increase is \$12.37 per month, but divided into two pay checks. Thirty percent sounds dramatic because I've been paying way less than 1.5% in dues; I have been paying just 1.11% in dues.

"WHAT DOES THE LOCAL DO WITH THE REVENUE IT GENERATES?" The short answer is that it supports the implementation of our contract. That includes paying for training of officers and stewards, for their salaries, for working to increase our membership. It can pay for people to go to workshops and conventions, where they can bring back new information and ideas to help grow our local, to be more knowledgeable when going into negotiations.

We are always glad to have these discussions and we hope that more of you will come to a meeting and become more informed and hopefully more involved.



## 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](mailto: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.

**A New Voice deadline is December 1.** 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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