

Contract campaign begins

By Molly Malecki

What the heck is a contract campaign? Do I mean negotiations? Not exactly. We can have negotiations without a contract campaign. We did that last time, and see what we got? Zero and zero. A contract campaign is negotiations with teeth in it. It is negotiations with an Action Team. It is negotiations with a Strike Team. It is negotiations with an action plan.

The Hennepin County AFSCME presidents and another activist from each local met on January 13 to learn about forming a contract campaign. We agreed we want to do this. And we agreed we want to work together to get the best possible contract. There are over 5000 AFSCME members in Hennepin County, and with all of us pulling together, we will have to do better than last time.

We are committed to do **one-on-one surveys** of our members. We have to find out what our members want in the next contract and, just as important, we have to find out what members are willing to do to help us achieve our goals. Many of our members have had training on doing one-on-one interviews, and they will be coming around to do interviews. If you like talking to people, you might want to sign up for this role.


Another group that has to be formed is the **Action Team**. These folks will organize events and actions through-

out negotiations. They may organize rallies, button day, green day, letters to the commissioners, letters to the editor. They will only be limited by their imagination and enthusiasm (we are trusting there will be no limit to either). If you are an enthusiastic, action-oriented person, this is where you will want to be.

The team we really don't want to have to think about is the **Strike Preparation Team**. But if our contract campaign is going to be successful, we have to be ready for all eventualities. And we can't pull our punches on December 31 because we aren't ready to strike. This team will have learned what needs to be done to be ready for a strike. Where do you get picket signs, who pickets where, how long before we have to pay our own insurance, can we get food stamps, how patient will our creditors be? These are questions that have to be answered long before we call a strike. If you like working behind the scenes and would like to get answers to these gritty questions, you will be welcomed on this team.

Keep in mind that there are at least seven locals that can go on strike, so these committees will be made up of members of all the locals. There also will be ongoing training from Council 5 for all of these activities.

The people who met on January 13 put together a time line to take us through
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February Membership Meeting
 Tuesday, February 1
 7:00 p.m.
 Ridgedale Library

Special order of business:
 Nomination of officers

March Membership Meeting
 Tuesday, March 1
 7:00 p.m.
 Brookdale Library

Special order of business:
 Selection of attendees at Day on the Hill on March 16.
 Selection of attendees at Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Dinner on March 31.

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

Union scholarships are available now!



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Dignity and respect

By Molly Malecki

I heard that—"yeah right". That is the usual response when I talk about the Dignity and Respect Labor Management Committee. The committee has met about a dozen times since last April and is now beginning two pilot programs to bring dignity and respect into the workplace or, at least to improve it.

The library is one of the first pilots to begin. They have the complete support of their new director, Amy Ryan, and they will be bringing the program to the whole department. Each department will decide how their dignity and respect program will look. The library is bringing in an outside consultant to help them. Her name is Deborah Anderson, and she is currently working with HCMC on the same issue.

The other department beginning a pilot is Taxpayer Services. Patrick O'Connor, the Director, is also fully committed to this process for the entire department. The Taxpayer Services Department will be using the help of the county's own occupational development folks.

That two departments are beginning these programs does not mean that the rest of the county doesn't have to work on this issue. Last month County Commissioner Randy Johnson and County Administrator Sandy Vargas sent all county employees an e-mail in support of a respectful workplace. The county has a policy on respectful behavior with sanctions. We are all free to use that policy as necessary.

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negotiations. Now we have to make it happen. We need everyone's cooperation—everyone can do something. Start thinking about what you can and will do. And if you want to jump in right now, don't hesitate. Call one of the officers listed on the back page.

Need a union steward?

By Lynn Stetler

Most of us working in Hennepin County will never have to call a union steward because of trouble on the job. That is a good thing.

But what happens when you DO need to contact a steward? Do you have any idea if you have a steward in your work unit, or on your floor, or even in your building? Don't panic! The best way to locate a steward is to look at the back of the most current newsletter for the list of stewards. Or go online to www.asfcm2822.org and look under stewards. If you do not find a steward near you, please call one of the co-chief stewards. Zanona Anderson is usually available by phone. Shawneise Sudduth is our other co-chief steward but is currently floating job locations, so doesn't have a permanent phone number. As chief stewards, these people can listen and help decide who is the best person to help you and/or the closest person to your work location. Part of the chief stewards' job is similar to a first call for help: she may be able to help you or assign another steward to take your case.

Contact only one steward. In the past few months, we have encountered quite a few people who have phoned more than one steward because they don't like the answers they have received. We call this "steward shopping". The problem with this "shopping" is that more often than not, more than one steward ends up working on your case causing us to double up. Please remember that as stewards, we are here to help you but we also have county jobs to perform. It is very inefficient for more than one person to be working on the same case.

It might interest you to know that as stewards, we meet monthly to discuss current cases and discuss any problems we might be having. So, we will find out about problem work locations

and personal grievances. We have all attended the same steward training and are all qualified to help. We want to encourage you to call a steward when necessary, but please start with the chief steward if you don't know whom to call. Please feel free to call a steward when you just have a question as well.

We often get asked why we don't have a steward for every work site? The answer is that we sure would like to. If you are interested in becoming a steward and helping your co-workers, please contact Zanona or Shawneise. We are always looking for new stewards. It can be a very rewarding part of your job.

Nomination of officers We repeat

Nomination of officers will take place at the February 1st Membership Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Ridgedale Library. If there are any contested races, an election will take place at the March 1st Membership Meeting at the Brookdale Library at 7:00 p.m. All seats are open for nomination: president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, membership secretary, two co-chief stewards, four at large positions, and one trustee, which is a three year term.

The only qualification for being elected to the Executive Board is being a member in good standing of this local for one year. Minimum duties of member-at-large include attending two meetings per month: the Membership Meeting on the 1st Tuesday evening of the month and the Executive Board Meeting on the 3rd Tuesday at 11:00 a.m.. Anyone interested or with questions should contact an E-Board member. Phone numbers are on the back page.



Day on the Hill

By Molly Malecki

Where does the money come from to pay our wages and for our benefits? From selling more widgets than Ramsey County? Where do the funds for the services we provide come from? From the profit on the investments in Blue Chip Stocks?

Those funds come from the taxpayers and the legislature, the taxpayers' representatives. Except for the Service Centers, someday, none of the work we do produces income. So how does Hennepin County get these resources? Hennepin County has to lobby the legislature to give it its fair share.

How are we to get our fair share? The same way. We have to lobby the Legislature to give Hennepin County its fair share, so that there will be something for us at the table when we sit down to negotiate this summer.

And how do we do that? We participate in AFSCME's Day on the Hill. On March 16, Minnesota AFSCME members will go to St. Paul and, in small groups, lobby their legislators about the issues that are important to them and to their jobs. The day begins at 9:00 AM at the Radisson Riverfront. Local 2822 members who have gone to this find it very rewarding.

If you are interested in attending, contact an officer. Submit a leave request for that day (it is not too early). Ask for "Special Leave Without Spay for Union Business". The local will pay lost time for those who contact an officer.

The following should be a mantra that we all have committed to memory: "Wages, benefits and working conditions are set by contracts. Contract negotiations are framed by budgets.

Budgets are determined by elected officials. Elected officials are chosen through political action, Political action impacts elected officials' decisions." Here is one opportunity to "impact elected officials' decisions."

Union scholarships

There are numerous scholarships available to union members. The following is a partial list available through AFSCME and the AFL-CIO. For more opportunities go to the AFSCME and AFL-CIO Websites.

Applications for the following scholarships are available at www.mnaflcio.org:

Bill Petereson Scholarship: Available to participating local's member-in-good-standing, their spouses, or their dependent children and is open to adult learners, college students or high school seniors. Ten \$1000.00 scholarships to be awarded. Local 2822 is a "participating local."

David K. Roe Scholarships: Two \$1000.00 scholarships

Hubert H. Humphrey Memorial Awards: Two \$1000.00 scholarships

Donald Pilla Memorial Award: One \$1000.00 scholarship

Martin Duffy Adult Learner Scholarships: Four tuition scholarships.

Applications for the following scholarships are available at www.afscmemn.org:

Richard E Patterson Scholarship: One \$1000.00 scholarship

Robert L. Norberg Scholarship: Two \$250 scholarships

Clarence J. Moss Scholarship: One \$500.00 scholarship



AFSCME helps tsunami victims

Reprinted from www.afscmemn.org, Council 5 update

The AFL-CIO American Center for International Labor Solidarity (Solidarity Center) has established a **Tsunami Relief Fund**. As the tsunami tragedy continues to unfold, the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center offices in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand are helping the region's unions to participate in relief efforts.

AFSCME has contributed \$10,000 to relief efforts and is encouraging councils, locals and individual members to consider making donations as well. According to AFSCME President **Gerald W. McEntee**, "In the same way that AFSCME supports the workers of America, we're reaching out to our fellow workers across the globe who've had their livelihoods and entire way of life taken from them by this devastating event. They

are in most cases people with precious little margin for economic reversals of any kind, let alone of this magnitude. Yet they face immediate hardships that are unimaginable to us here in the safe and comfortable West."

To make a donation to the relief fund, make out a check marked Tsunami Relief, payable to Solidarity Center Education Fund, and send it to:

**Tsunami Relief Fund
Solidarity Center
1925 K Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006-1105**

Executive Director elected to Health Partners Board

Council 5 Executive Director Eliot Seide was elected to the HealthPartners/Group Health Board of Directors in December. That is very good news for those of us who have Health Partners as our insurer.

Local 2822 Officers

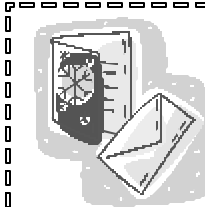
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Vacant	
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<i>hclark@hclib.org</i>	

Bulletin Board

The New Voice deadline is February 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 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 952-847-8650 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,
1-800-862-6042.
Always refer to your group number 538.

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Bennie Wilson	612-596-8025	Sheriff	Jail

I want a paper contract

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:

Merry Brigham
CSD—110 Bldg, mc1890

Name _____

Job Title _____

Work _____

Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I'm especially interested in:

- I want to sign up as a full member.
 I want to sign up for Delta Dental.