

## This is your wakeup call!

By Dirk Schot  
Local 2822 Membership  
Secretary (Former President  
of Local 99)

Brothers and Sisters of Local 2822, I would like to share the experience of what happened to those of us who were formerly in Local 99, Minneapolis Public Library.

Back in 2003 we too were going through a massive budget problem in the City of Minneapolis Libraries. We were told of bad economic problems for the next several years and that the library was going to be making tough choices in order to keep their operations going. We were told that when the

cuts came down they were going to be fair and spread across professional, classified and management staff.

When the cuts came through our local took 95% of the layoffs! Our support staff were the ones who felt the pain. Many of our members thought that they would be spared and didn't believe that the library could cut so many of the lower paying jobs.

We had become too complacent in believing what management was telling us, and we didn't act early enough and in enough numbers to show the strength of our union.

## Officers elected

Nomination of officers was held at the February 4<sup>th</sup> membership meeting. As there were no contested nominations, all those nominated were considered elected by the election chairman, John Chirstensen.

All current officers were reelected: Lynn Stetler as president, Molly Malecki as vice-president, Walter Hanson as treasurer and Jeanne Whetstone as recording secretary. Those returning to the Executive Board as at-large members are Neng

Lor, David Salmon and Genae Nicole. Joining them is Ann Baird. Co-chief Stewards Theresa Smith and Marilyn Bell will continue in their rolls. Dirk Shot has assumed the position of membership secretary. He previously was a member-at-large. Dawn Klingman and Nancy Crouse will continue as trustees.

Delegates to Central Labor Union are Ann Baird, John Christensen, Odell Sumpter, Theresa Smith, and Molly Malecki.

This is a call to all of those in Local 2822 to become active NOW! Don't wait!

When the leadership asks for volunteers to show up at public meetings or events, you really need to show up. Those who will be deciding our fate will be looking at how many members we get to show up. They will take notice, but only if we turn out. You need to come to union meetings or volunteer time at phone banks.

Let us not let this year become our local's year of the long knives!

## Eligible for health care?

To ensure that eligible individuals are covered under the Hennepin County medical plan, employees who are covering at least one dependent are asked to review the HealthPartners dependent definition and to verify the dependent(s) the employee is currently covering under his/her health plan.

During the week of February 9, 2009, the Benefits Unit sent a Health Coverage Dependent Verification Letter and personalized Health

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March						
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 29	23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28

### March Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 4  
7:00 p.m.  
Southdale Library

### April Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 1  
7:00 p.m.  
Central 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>

"I consider it important, indeed urgently necessary, for intellectual **workers** to get together, both to protect their own economic status and, also, generally speaking, to secure their influence in the political field."

— Albert Einstein

## “If you are not at the table, you will be on the menu!”

This is a common quote of Eric Lehto, the Organizing Director of Council 5. Of course, he is talking about unorganized workers. But the idea applies here at Hennepin County.

Although we, Local 2822, are organized, there are many of us who are “not at the table.” For whatever reasons they have not signed union cards and come to the table with the union. The sad arguments include: it costs too much; I get whatever the union gets anyway; I don’t like the union’s politics; nobody asked me; I don’t have time; they didn’t give me enough notice on a dues in-

*(Continued from page 1)*

Coverage Enrollment/Change (HCEC) form, via interoffice mail, to employees who are covering at least one dependent (including spouse and/or child(ren) on their health coverage .

If you haven't received the form contact the Benefits Unit via email at: [HR.Benefits@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:HR.Benefits@co.hennepin.mn.us).

Please review the personalized Health Coverage Enrollment/Change (HCEC) form and return the form to the Benefits Unit by February 27, 2009. (There are several gender errors, so look closely.)

Note: The Benefits Unit sent the Health Coverage Dependent Verification Letter to the employee's home address if the payroll system indicated a formal leave as of the February 6, 2009.

### Why are we doing this?

Health care continues to be one of Hennepin County's fastest growing costs. To control your own costs (as well as the county's), it's important for Hennepin County employees to pay the health premium only for individuals who are legally eligible for coverage.

**If the Benefits Unit does not receive the Health Coverage Enrollment/**

crease; I don't like the bad employees whose jobs they get back; and on and on and on.

Management knows how many of us do not support the union by being full members. They take the dues out of your paycheck after all. They know who is not at the table. And that makes it difficult for the negotiating team to go to the bargaining table without the full support of our bargaining unit.

Monthly dues of a full member who works forty-one or more hours per pay period is \$38.45. The monthly dues of a full member who works forty hours or

less per pay period is \$28.84. Non member dues are \$30.25 and \$23.27 respectively.

If you are not a full dues paying member, which of those above excuses is more important than your job and getting a decent contract? Negotiations will begin again this summer. What kind of a contract can we expect given the horrible state of the County? The theme of this year's negotiations is “For the Common Good.” It is time we all pitch in “For the Common Good” and come to the table. Let's not have the clerical unit on the menu!!

## Scholarship Season

There are many scholarships available to union members and/or their dependents. The best way to find them is to go to the various union websites. Here are several about which our local has been notified to alert our members:

**AFSCME Council 5:** The Richard E. Patterson, the Clarence JS Moss, and the Robert Norberg Scholarships. Find details at <http://afscmemn.org>, click on “Resources”, then “Scholarships”.

**AFSCME International Union:** Family Scholarship, Jerry Clark memorial scholarship plus numerous others. Find details at <http://afscme.org>, type “scholarship” in upper left hand corner and click “search”.

**Minnesota AFL-CIO:** Several scholarships available. Their website is <http://mnaflcio.org>, click on “Scholarships 2008.”

**Union Privilege Scholarship Program:** For union leaders [www.UnionPlus.org/DiversityScholarship](http://www.UnionPlus.org/DiversityScholarship)

**Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship through Labor and Education:** For racial minority union members or their dependents. For more information and application go to [www.nelliestone.org](http://www.nelliestone.org)



Change form (HCEC) from the employee, the Benefits Unit won't know if the dependents are eligible for coverage and so the employee **may risk losing coverage for their dependent(s)**.

April 30, 2009 is **the end of the grace period** for ineligible dependents to be covered under your county group health coverage. For further information, contact Julie Kari, Employee Benefits (MC -070)

### AFSCME'S political rebate procedure

AFSCME'S International constitution includes a rebate procedure for members who object to expenditure of union funds for partisan political or ideological purposes. **This is available to full dues paying members only.**

The procedure is defined in the latest issue of “AFSCME Works” on page 23 or on the International's website: <http://afscme2822.org/>, related links, AFSCME International, Read the January/February 2009 Issue of AFSCME WORKS, “AFSCME's Political Rebate Procedure.”

# SENIORITY/LAYOFF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

There have been many questions to the leaders of Local 2822 regarding seniority and layoffs. We will use this space to try and answer some of them. We all have to understand that this is **completely uncharted territory**. There has never been a layoff situation in Local 2822. So our contract language has never been put to the test. Possibly some of the language will be subject to interpretation. And possibly some of the answers that follow will not hold up to the test. However, at this time, this is what is believed by our leaders and our Field Representative, Steve Marincel, to be true.

Q. If a supervisor/manager is laid off can he/she bump back into his/her previous position?

A. NO! Anyone who has taken a position outside of our bargaining unit-Local 2822-does not have a right to displace a member of this bargaining unit and return to a previously held position. That includes supervisors, managers, or anyone who moved or was promoted to a different local. They could be re-hired to fill a vacancy.

Q. I am notified that I will be laid off. Is it my responsibility to find out who has less seniority than I have and "bump" them?

A. No. It is the employer's responsibility to let you know where you can "bump" or take a position. But it would be wise to look at the seniority list to be sure you are being given the correct options.

Q. Where can I "bump"?

A. You can take a position in your **Department** and in your **Job Class** that you are **qualified for** in that Department. You may

also take a position, in a lower class that you previously held.

Q. What is my department?

A. Departments are listed in Attachment B in our contract, which is on-line at <http://afscme2822.org>, or on the Hennepin County Intranet. Keep in mind that there is a "Super Department", which includes HSPHD, Corrections and NorthPoint.

Q. Do I have to bump to the lowest position in my job class or can I bump to any position that is occupied by someone with less seniority. Example: my job is abolished, so I get a layoff notice, can I **only** bump someone at the bottom of the seniority? Why?

A. You can only bump the lowest senior position. The contract does not allow "serial" bumping.

Q. I see in Article 6, Section 1, D that time at the county as a temporary counts towards seniority. I began as an intermittent and became a permanent employee; are they talking about me?

A. No. "**Temporary**" is an **employment status**, which is not the same as being an intermittent. "Intermittent" is not an employment status for purposes of this article.

Q. If I bump someone, can I keep my same schedule?

A. Article 6, section 4 C, states the senior employee "must accept the work schedule... and work location of the least senior employee."

Q. Where do I find the seniority list?

A. It is on the Local 2822 website at <http://afscme2822.org>, click on Local 2822 Seniority Report. The last time this was updated was in June 2008. The local will be asking for an updated list, and all clerical personnel will get a letter or a post-card telling you when we have the updated list from Labor Relations. At that time you have to check the list to be sure it is correct. The officers and stewards will have the list, and we will post it on our web site. If your hire date is incorrect, you have a **very brief window** to let President Lynn Stetler know so that it will be corrected. Otherwise that is the list from which layoffs will be made.

This is such an unsettling time, and none of us knows for sure where we will end up. This is a storm we will all have to ride out and hope that it will be brief and that those who are laid off will soon be able to return. When your union asks for your help by coming to County Board meetings or contacting legislators, please respond. This is real!

## Does America still need labor unions?

Can you take a minute to stand up for workers?

PARADE Magazine promotes an online poll asking: "Does America still need labor unions?"

Go to: <http://www.parade.com>.  
Scroll down to the middle of the page and

**VOTE YES**  
right now!



Pass this along to your friends and family.

## 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 E-board member 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.

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

**A New Voice deadline is March 4.** 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.



Editor: Molly Malecki

Circulation & distribution:  
Annette Tiedens

## Local 2822 Officers

<b>President</b>	Lynn Stetler <a href="mailto:lstetler@hclib.org">lstetler@hclib.org</a>	952-847-8569 Cell:763-245-8285
<b>Vice president</b>	Molly Malecki <a href="mailto:molly.malecki@co.hennepin.mn.us">molly.malecki@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-543-0272
<b>Treasurer</b>	Walter Hanson <a href="mailto:walter.hanson@co.hennepin.mn.us">walter.hanson@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-543-0272 Urgent: 612-543-0270
<b>Recording Sec.</b>	Jeanne Whetstone <a href="mailto:jwhetstone@hclib.org">jwhetstone@hclib.org</a>	952-847-5455
<b>Co-chief Steward</b>	Theresa Smith <a href="mailto:theresa.smith@co.hennepin.mn.us">theresa.smith@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-596-0826 Cell: 763-267-2077
<b>Co-chief Steward</b>	Marilyn Bell <a href="mailto:mbell@hclib.org">mbell@hclib.org</a>	612-630-6702
<b>Membership Sec.</b>	Dirk Schot <a href="mailto:djschot@hclib.org">djschot@hclib.org</a>	612-630-6552
<b>E-Board at Large</b>		
	Neng Lor <a href="mailto:neng.lor@co.hennepin.mn.us">neng.lor@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-596-1660
	Ann Baird <a href="mailto:ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us">ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-543-0272
	David Salmon <a href="mailto:dsalmon@hclib.org">dsalmon@hclib.org</a>	612-630-6464
	Genae Nicole <a href="mailto:genae.nicole@co.hennepin.mn.us">genae.nicole@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	612-543-3366
<b>Delta Dental Trustee</b>	Ann Baird <a href="mailto:Ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us">Ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	763-549-3498
<b>Good &amp; Welfare</b>	Heather Clark <a href="mailto:hclark@hclib.org">hclark@hclib.org</a>	952-847-8523

## Steward's List

Steward	Phone and e-mail	Department and location
Theresa Smith Co-chief Steward	612-596-0826 Cell: 763-267-2077 <a href="mailto:theresa.smith@co.hennepin.mn.us">theresa.smith@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	Human Services & Public Health Health Services Bldg
Marilyn Bell Co-chief Steward	612-630-6702 <a href="mailto:mbell@hclib.org">mbell@hclib.org</a>	Library Nokomis Library
Janna Carlson	612-596-1660 <a href="mailto:janna.carlson@co.hennepin.mn.us">janna.carlson@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	Service Center Maple Grove Ser. Cntr.
Walter Hanson	612-543-0272 Urgent: 612-543-0270 <a href="mailto:walter.hanson@co.hennepin.mn.us">walter.hanson@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	Service Center Brookdale Ser. Cntr.
Neng Lor	612-596-1660 <a href="mailto:neng.lor@co.hennepin.mn.us">neng.lor@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	Service Center Maple Grove Ser. Cntr.
Genae Nicole	612-543-3366 <a href="mailto:m.g.nicole@co.hennepin.mn.us">m.g.nicole@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	MHP Grain Exchange Bldg.
Dirk Schot	612-630-6552 <a href="mailto:djschot@hclib.org">djschot@hclib.org</a>	Library East Lake Library
Kathy Sell	612-543-0060 <a href="mailto:Kathleen.I.Sell@co.hennepin.mn.us">Kathleen.I.Sell@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	Service Center Ridgedale Ser. Cntr.
Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569 Cell: 763-245-8285 <a href="mailto:lstetler@hclib.org">lstetler@hclib.org</a>	Library Ridgedale Library, Collection Management
Velva Stewart	612-596-0722 <a href="mailto:velva.stewart@co.hennepin.mn.us">velva.stewart@co.hennepin.mn.us</a>	MS MHP Grain Exchange Bldg