

## Officers elected: much work ahead

By Lynn Stetler

At our March Membership Meeting, nomination of officers was continued from our previous meeting. I'm happy to report that our E-Board will continue with most of our previous members. Ann Baird has stepped down as an At-Large member but will continue in her role as our Delta Dental trustee. We thank Ann for her service to the local. She is a stalwart in our local always stepping up to help wherever and whenever needed. In fact, she will be acting as a co-chair for the Hennepin County AFSCME picnic this summer.

We welcome Rita Watson as our newest member and she will serve as an At-Large member. Rita is a legal secretary from the County Attorney's Office who has been actively serving the local over the last few years including

phone banking our members, being a delegate to the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, working on the master team for negotiations, and attending Day on the Hill.

We're facing many challenges in 2010 chief among them the possibility of \$50 million in unallotted funds to the county by Governor Pawlenty. The commissioners will begin meetings this month to begin discussions of how the county will deliver service doing less with less, something most of us front line workers have been dealing with the past few years. The county administrator recently asked union leadership how we felt about offering voluntary SLWOP again in 2010 as a cost savings measure. If you have an opinion on this, contact us at [mmafscme2822@aol.com](mailto:mmafscme2822@aol.com). More staff will begin working in HSPSD with ROWE. The

Hennepin County Labor/Management Health Care Committee will begin discussions regarding the county's intention to change to self insurance in 2011. APEX issues seem to be getting solved and it's great to get regular updates from HR about what's being worked on. Those updates are a result of union presidents meeting regularly with management about problems with the system. We feel very fortunate to have built positive relations with county administration where we bring issues of concern by our membership for discussion and dialogue.

Please continue to contact any of your executive board members with concerns.

Hennepin County works because we do and we do good work.

April						
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**April**  
**Membership Meeting**  
 Wednesday, April 7  
 7:00 p.m.  
 Central Library

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

**May**  
**Membership Meeting**  
 Wednesday, May 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>

## AFSCME International Convention

### Unexpected election

The 39<sup>th</sup> AFSCME International Convention will be held in Boston, Massachusetts from June 28 through July 2, 2010. The Convention Call will be mailed out to our local at the end of March. The Executive Board would like to elect delegates at the April 7th Membership Meeting at Central Library in order to be able to obtain air arrangements as soon as possible,

and, hopefully, at a good price. The Local 2822 Executive Board has not yet met to make a recommendation as to the number of delegates to send and what costs will be covered. They will have done so by the April Membership Meeting.

Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy announced last week that he will be retiring from his position as of June 25. There will be an election for his position

at the convention. Secretary-Treasurer is the second highest position in our International Union. Bill Lucy has been the Secretary-Treasurer for 38 years. He has served our union for 57 years. This will be an extremely important position to fill. And much thought will have to go into the decision as to who should replace him.

It is important for our local to have representation at these

conventions as important decisions are often made. For example, at the 2006 convention it was decided that all locals will have a progressive dues structure—this is an issue our executive board is struggling to implement at this time.

Anyone interested in being a delegate should attend the April Membership Meeting or have someone put their name into nomination.

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## Day on the Hill reports

### **Molly Malecki** **Brookdale Service Center**

Nearly one thousand AFSCME members from across Minnesota gathered at the Capitol on February 17, 2010 to rally and to meet with their legislators to present issues that are important to AFSCME members. At the rally, Council 5 Executive Director Eliot Seid held up a plastic spine and admonished the legislators to get a spine and support the issues that are important to our members and our clients.

The main issues that we addressed with our legislators were the budget, General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC), Local Government Aid (LGA) and our pensions. PERA and MSRS have brought forth proposals to the legislature to increase the funding for those pension funds, which have suffered because of the problems with the stock market. AFSCME is now supporting this legislation because of the fear that next year things may not be better, and we have to start building up these funds. For more information on the legislation and for continuous updates go to [afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org), on "Pension fix" click on "PERA".

Nine members of Local 2822 attended the Day on the Hill. Besides those filing reports, Lynn Stetler, Dirk Schot and David Salmon attended. Hopefully we will hear their insights in future newsletters.

### **Rita Watson** **County Attorney's Office**

Day on the Hill. I arrived to ascend an escalator to the registration area. Throughout the day I noticed how many stairs there were at each destination. I realized that it seems with every thing we do, there's a climb involved. We're always at a level that encourages reaching that next plateau. It requires expending energy, goal setting and achievement. This process is similar in comparison to what our legislators are expected to accomplish every session.

I attended the AFSCME workshop on the Minnesota State Budget 2010. The budget determines how much money is available

at the state, counties, cities, school districts, non profits and for profits to fund our jobs and the vital public services we provide. This session involved primarily the statistics that we are currently faced with, and the cuts to the various programs we have all relied on. (I won't overwhelm you with the actual figures). Suffice it to say; nearly all areas are being scaled down. We've grown accustomed to enjoying the benefits of our labors. The brutal truth is you never know what you have until it's gone, (or threatened to be eliminated).

We all know that our involvement in the Iraq war as well as coming to the aid of numerous emergencies has resulted in a shortfall. We have to be realistic and continue to persevere. Overall, the day was energy filled and rejuvenating. I believe our elected officials are truly trying to find a resolution that will have the least adverse impact on us all. I observed their office personnel working under the same constraints. I am assured that with our continued efforts to provide excellent service, we are creating a better Minnesota.

### **Dawn Klingman** **HSPHD, Accounts Payable**

February 17th was AFSCME's annual Day on the Hill. As always it was an honor to be part of a day with so many dedicated AFSCME members from across the state. It was a day of having our voices heard. And in these very trying times, this is even more important. We met with our Representatives and Senators. I know my legislators were actively listening to and asking for our ideas. We are the ones who are doing the work. We do have valuable insight into the issues. And the legislators know this. We need to be sharing those insights with our legislators.

I met an AFSCME member who works in one of the jails, and he was the only one from his district to attend. So a few of us went to meet him for his meeting with his Representative. We pushed for GAMC and for the future of Hennepin County Medical Center. I learned that not all cit-

ies receive local government aid (LGA). Eden Prairie, I learned, does not receive this aid. This does effect the voting of those legislators that are not in cities receiving LGA, so they need a stronger sell on how restoring or maintaining this aid is in their interests as well. We need AFSCME members to continue to actively engage their legislators while navigating these troubled times.

### **John Christensen** **Government Center Service Center**

Politics is the process to determine who gets what, who decides, and who pays.

It plays out in our lives far from home (Washington DC), closer to home (St Paul, Hennepin County,) in our own home.

Sitting around the kitchen table trying to decide how the family spends its money (Vacation? Where? When?) is debated, argued over, eventually decided. It's a political act.

Our Governor views Minnesota's deficit disorder as fundamentally a problem of rich people having too little money and poor people having too much. He believes without wealth at the top, there would be nothing to trickle down.

Not everyone agrees with his theory. I don't.

I attended DAY ON THE HILL at the capitol with other AFSCME members, to put a face on the idea public service is in the public interest.

The current state budget debate really comes down to whether we, as a society, value things like public parks for all to use and enjoy, or private golf courses. Should we provide community centers in our neighborhoods, or membership only country clubs? Is public education a good idea, or is knowledge a dangerous thing? Hospitals and clinics to treat injury and illness? Or do people end up there because of poor life style choices and the desire for attention?

*(Day continued on page 3)*

(Day continued from page 2)

Do we want to pay those who labor on the public behalf a living wage? Should they be allowed vacations? Health insurance?

Fairness is a virtue most of us try to instill in our children. Not everyone takes the lesson to heart. Workers rarely get fair treatment without joining together to advocate for themselves. Labor unions help keep the principal of fairness alive.

It's all politics

### **Tammy Richert Telephone operator**

Always a fast paced and informative Day on the Hill kicked off with speakers talking about, of course, **THE BUDGET** and **THE GOVERNOR**. Soon to follow was AFSCME Council 5 President Mike Buesing rousing the crowd with a brief speech and an introduction of our endorsed candidate for governor, Mark Dayton.

Mark Dayton really is quite an impressive and passionate fellow, and his public speaking really reflects that. I mean you can feel the raw power behind the man and his words. It was a surprise to me to see him at the opening session for Day on the Hill. It was a bigger surprise when I was challenged to go up and request a picture taken with him. Oh my God! Sometimes you just have to step out of your comfort zone and get involved.

I always look forward to Day on the Hill because it allows me to spend time with my friends and co workers. But meeting people from other locals statewide and hearing their stories and concerns with their employers is a real experience and always interesting.

Meeting with State Representatives and Senators is a big part of the day. Nervous energy is what kicks in at his point for me. I mean you really have to talk the talk, and know the importance of the topics in discussion. This year, Day on the Hill was a one day event rather than two days, and we had to scramble to find and get to our appointments.

I also participated in the Capitol tour and learned much about the Capitol and Minnesota history. It really is an interesting day, and I would suggest it to any one. Thank you, AFSCME.

### **Nancy Crouse Ridgedale Library**

In 1987, 22% of the National Debt was foreign owned, and now it is 80% foreign owned. The situation is so bad that the only recent comparison is when the UK was at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and it took until 1930 to pay down the debt.

Now President Obama is faced with a financial crisis plus trying to pay down the debt. This is going to be more difficult for him than it was for President Clinton who spent eight years getting the debt down to one time revenues. The population demographics have shifted, and the baby boomers are no longer in their best earning years. In addition, we have to deal with the high rare of unemployment in the population.

What can be done? We need to support Mark Dayton for governor and to raise the tax rate on the rich. We must get out the vote and work for our candidates. If our candidates cannot carry the day, we face becoming a third world power and living in poverty in our later years.

### **Watch for the AFSCME bus**

You will see it downtown near the Government Center. It is a Number 16 that runs between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul on University Avenue. The bus is wrapped with AFSCME's mission for excellence in public services, dignity in the workplace and the opportunity and prosperity for all working families. The bus begins running March 8. It is part of a transit advertising campaign designed to build a bold, proud image of our union. To see a picture of the bus, go to the Council 5 website: [AFSCMEMN.org](http://AFSCMEMN.org)

### **Vacation Donation requests**

By Dawn Klingman

HSPHD's Accounts Payable has been hit hard with workers facing serious health issues. We currently have two employees that have needed to take medical leaves and are in need of vacation donation as they struggle to stabilize or qualify for disability payments. Carlotta Markuson, a 30 plus year OS III, has been in an extended hospitalization. Gregory Horner, a 22 year OS III, just recently had to go out on medical leave. Both have been dedicated hard workers. Both have exhausted all vacation and sick leave. Both are single and the sole income earners. Any vacation donation would be greatly appreciated.

With the new APEX system, this is how you do it: Go to HCNet: at bottom of Home page there is a box "Human Resources," click "Forms." Click Box "Income Replacement Options," Click top choice "Vacation/PTO Donation," In Box "Forms and Guidelines, click "waiver and donation authorization." It only takes a few minutes.



We can fix the budget crisis with fairness and compassion if the richest Minnesotans pay their fair share of taxes. It's simply wrong to continue shifting their burden onto the middle class, the jobless and vulnerable.

### **STOP THE CUTS & DEMAND REVENUE**

#### **PLEASE CALL:**

Your Senator. For the number, dial 651-296-0504 or 1-888-234-1112.

Your Representative. For the number, dial 651-296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550.

#### **ASK THEM TO:**

Stand up to the governor.

Stop deeper service cuts and layoffs.

Raise revenue, including fair taxes on the rich.



## 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."



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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 April 7.** 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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