

Public pensions are strong

The following is from the Council 5 Action Update of May 4, 2006, in response to stories run on KARE 11 News about our PERA pension:

You will be able to retire with dignity despite recent media reports alleging that taxpayers will have to bailout public pensions. Minnesota's three statewide public pensions—MSRS, PERA and TRA—are strong and well-managed with funds sufficient to pay benefits to retirees. Investment returns have been excellent and AFSCME retirees can count on modest pensions. Today, that means \$10,500 to \$14,000 a year.

Your pension is a binding contract between you and your employer. Employers shouldn't be allowed to walk away from their obligations to their workers. Bottom line, Enron is a bad

role model for government!


Our opponents will continue to misinform and scare taxpayers about public pensions. Rest assured that Council 5 will work with legislators and pension administrators to fix what's broken and protect what isn't. Our board has already taken responsible steps to protect our members' deferred wages. We backed a 5% cap on the post-retirement fund and we supported fixing PERA by increasing employer and employee contributions.

Last week AFSCME PEOPLE successfully fought back an attempt to eliminate your guaranteed retirement income. We need you to remain vigilant and stay informed. For updates, call our hotline at 651-287-0499 or toll-free at 1-800-652-9791, ext. 499.



During February, March and April, small group sessions were held to ask staff to describe healthy and harmful behaviors, how to approach people who are using harmful behavior and what to do with staff who can't or won't stop using those harmful behaviors. The team is currently inviting new members to the team as we begin to put together a work plan after posing the question—what will success look like at the Library for this initiative? Posters will be distributed to all Library departments shortly using the words staff described to the team in the small group sessions. There are three Labor Rep-

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June Membership Meeting
Tuesday, June 6
7:00 p.m.
Brookdale Library

Special order of business:
 Choose attendees for the Midwest School for Women Workers

July Membership Meeting
Wednesday, July 5, 2006
Southdale Library

Special order of business:
 Election of delegates to the AFL-CIO Convention and to the AFSCME International Convention

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

Dignity and respect: Pilot updates

By Lynn Stetler

Hennepin County's Dignity and Respect initiative is alive and well. The countywide Labor/Management team met recently to get an update on the current pilots. We will have about 2500 County employees participating in this process by June 2006. There are currently three pilots underway in the Library, Taxpayer Services, and Century Plaza. There is also a separate Dignity and Respect program at HCMC. County Administrator, Sandy Vargas attended this meeting and again reiterated her support of a re-

spectful work environment. This is a message she continually expresses to her Directors, managers and supervisors.

The Library initiative has been underway since March 2005. A team of 25-30 staff in a variety of classifications has been working with consultant Deborah Anderson from Respond2, Inc. Over the past year, approximately 70% of library staff completed an on-line survey about Dignity and Respect in the workplace and results were shared in a PowerPoint presentation and were also available on-line.

Post retirement health care expense account

By Molly Malecki

At the end of the last two contract negotiations, our union and Labor Relations have agreed to meet and confer on a Post Retirement Health Care Expense Account. This is money that would be put into an account to be used after retirement for health care related expenses, including health care premiums and prescriptions. The money going into this account would be pre-tax and would not be taxed when used.

This would not be a countywide program, but one designed by each bargaining unit. There could be several versions of this program at Hennepin County. Our local would decide how we want ours to work. The possible variations are as numerous as people's imaginations. And we would design our own. One example of these accounts includes putting your entire severance pay into the account. The entire amount would go in without being taxed, and you could use it for health related expenses. Your spouse would be eligible to use it, and it would be in a trust for your heirs if you didn't use it all. Or we could have half our severance go into the account. Another example is to have a certain amount taken from each pay check to go into this account, so you would have health care funds when you retire.

The Labor Management Health Care Committee is going to have a speaker come to explain more fully how these plans work. Those of us nearing retirement should be interested in this subject. A person making \$15.00 an hour with 700 hours of sick leave would have a severance pay of \$10,500, but it would be taxed at 48%, so that person would get a check of \$5,040. In the first example above the entire \$10,500 would go into the Post Retirement Health Care Expense Account.

Anyone interested in hearing a presentation on this subject should contact me by e-mail at:

Mmafscme2822@aol.com. I will either see if I can arrange to have you come to the Labor Management Health Care Committee Meeting or arrange a separate meeting for our local.

Busy summer of Union events

This summer has several challenging and exciting events in store for our members. There are learning experiences and decision making experiences. The decisions on who will participate in these events will be made at the next two membership meetings.

Council 5 Leadership Conference—June 16 and 17 in North St. Paul. This is for local leaders to get Council 5 updates, hear from endorsed candidates, discuss political program member mobilization, and learn about “Voluntary Member Organizer Program” and “Freedom to Join A Union.” We will also be hearing about the International’s 21st Century Committee Report. At this writing, those who will attend are Molly Malecki, Neng Lor, Julie Yakin and Claudette Moran.

Midwest School for Women Workers—July 16-21 in Chicago. Attendees will be chosen at the June 6th membership meeting at the Brookdale Library. The executive board is recommending sending two members, and they should be individuals who have not attended in the past.

AFSCME International Convention—August 7-11 in Chicago. The executive board is recommending sending five delegates. The business of this convention will be to set the direction of AFSCME in this century. The focus

will be on growing the union. If the union does not have a plan to grow, it will die, as it has in other unions that have not planned for the future. Delegates will be elected at the **WEDNESDAY**, July 5th membership meeting at Southdale Library.

Minnesota AFL-CIO Convention

August 7-10 in St. Paul. The executive board is recommending sending seven delegates. The business of this convention will be to elect the president and other officers and to plan the future of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. There will be many changes to be discussed as several Change to Win unions have left the AFL-CIO. Delegates will be elected at the

WEDNESDAY, July 5th membership meeting at the Southdale

Karen DiCosimo, Neng Lor elected to Executive Board

Karen DiCosimo, a Sheriff’s Custody Records Coordinator at the Jail, and Neng Lor, a Senior Service Center Representative at the Maple Grove Service Center, were elected at-large members of the Local 2822 Executive Board. Both of these members are new activists in this local.

Re-elected to their former positions were Molly Malecki, president, Lynn Stetler, vice president, Jeanne Whetstone, recording secretary, Walter Hanson, treasurer, Bridget Walker, membership secretary, Jennifer McNair, chief steward, and Merry Brigham and Nichelle DeCora to the other two at-large positions.

Dawn Klingman was re-elected to a three year term as trustee. Delegates to Minneapolis Central Labor Union are Molly Malecki, John Christensen, Ann Baird, and Donovan Swain. Claudette Moran was elected as an alternate delegate to Minneapolis Central Labor Union.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the co-workers and family of James Riley, who was a long-time receptionist on 14A. James passed away on April 20.

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representatives on the Library Steering Committee including myself.

Taxpayer Services has been using internal resources in Human Resources and has surveyed their staff. Results are being shared at their work sites. Then they will begin work on their action plan. Local 2822 President Molly Malecki is serving on this Steering Committee.

Century Plaza has just begun their

initiative and is in the beginning stages of planning. They are hoping for a June kickoff. Sheryn Cartlidge, a Local 2822 member is on the initial steering committee.

We expect more pilot programs to get underway over the next year. The County team has developed a Dignity and Respect site on the Intranet and expects to have many of the documents from the individual teams on this site within the next month. We are exploring the possibility of producing a video to show staff as well. The team is pleased to have the continued strong support of Sandy Vargas and Commissioner Randy Johnson that harmful behaviors will not be tolerated in Hennepin County. If you have any questions about these pilots, please feel free to contact a member on any of the Steering Committees.

We are here for you

By Jennifer McNair, Chief Steward

Just a quick note to let you know we are working for you.

We have just installed three new stewards. We have a number of stewards currently working on grievances. A number of stewards have completed their grievance in favor of our members. We continue to seek additional stewards especially in the HSB building. It appears that this has become a critical area, and we would really like to have a couple of union representatives from your location there. Remember there is strength in numbers. If you are interested please let me know. We will talk to you more in the next newsletter.



Hennepin County AFSCME Picnic

Mark your calendars and get ready for an afternoon of fun.

Sunday, July 23, 2006

The Hennepin County AFSCME locals are having a picnic for our members and our families.

2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

There will be food, beer, door prizes, face painting, wading pool, state of the art playground, fishing and a chance to meet fellow AFSCME members.

**North Mississippi Park
4900 N Mississippi Court**

Let's get together and celebrate our success from our last contract. And let's get our enthusiasm ready for the next round of negotiations next year. Our work isn't finished.

North Mississippi Park is in Minneapolis between 49th and 53rd Avenues North. "Mississippi Court" lies parallel to Highway 94 on the east side.

The picnic is being organized by the new Hennepin County Policy Committee, which consists of members from all the Hennepin County AFSCME locals. Pat Guernsey from Local 552 is president. Our member on the committee is Lynn Stetler, who is the treasurer.

Volunteers to help will be welcome. Setting up, serving, cleaning up, clowning, securing door prizes, face painting or any other fun idea will be very welcome. Contact Lynn Stetler at lstetler@hclib.org or Molly Malecki at Mmafscme2822@aol.com. More information will follow.

Local 2822 Officers

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Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569
Treasurer	763-549-3498
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Karen Dicosimo	612-596-8000
Delta Dental Trustee	
Ann Baird	763-549-3498
Good & Welfare	
Heather Clark	952-847-8523
hclark@hclib.org	


Bulletin Board

The New Voice deadline is June 6. 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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Steward's List

Steward	Phone	Department	Location
Lori Berzins	612-348-3248	Community Corrections	HCGC A1100
Nichelle DeCora	612-348-8841	CFASD	Planning and Development 23 rd Floor, Gov't Center
Jody Goers	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail
Walter Hanson	763-569-3683	Service Center	Brookdale Service Center
Janet Keefe	612-348-2564	EA/FAD	Century Plaza - 3rd Floor
Angela Hallquist Mangen	612-596-2100	Service Center	Eden Prairie Service Center
Jennifer McNair	763-245-8308	Sheriff	Jail
Genea Nicole	612-347-3928	MS MHP	A.Y. McDonald Bldg
Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569	Library	Ridgedale Library/CTS, Collection Management
Velva Stewart	612-596-0722	MS MHP	Grain Exchange Bldg
Theresa Smith	612-879-3494	HSPHD	1800 Chicago
Bridget Walker	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail
Julie Yakin	612-348-6186	Service Center	Gov't Ctr. Service Ctr.

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.