

## Building for a better contract training begins

Over one hundred members of Local 2822, Local 34 (social services), and Local 2864 (librarians) gathered at the Ramada Thunderbird Hotel on Friday afternoon, May 21, to begin the process of "Building for a Better Contract."

The participants were divided up by work locations. There were 23 participants from the Health Services Building, 29 from Century Plaza, 9 from the Family Justice Center, 6 from the Ridgedale and Brookdale Libraries, 15 from the Jail and many more from various locations. Their mission was to take lists of employees from their various work sites and interview people one on one, face to face. They are starting by

finding out how the budget cuts are hurting our members, our "customers" and the public. And they are trying to find out in what ways our members are willing to help get a better contract next time. They should be having 10 to 15 minute conversations with employees. They are not necessarily talking to members of their own local. We are all in this contract fight together, so we are dropping those barriers that keep us from working together.

Please be gracious if someone wants to talk to you. We are all volunteers. And there will be many more conversations as we work towards that better contract.

delegates. The Executive Board is recommending sending twenty-eight delegates and paying lost time if necessary. Delegates will be elected at the July 6<sup>th</sup> membership meeting at the Brookdale Library at 7:00 p.m. Anyone interested in attending the convention should come to the membership meeting or contact an officer or steward.

The purpose of unification is to better serve the members by ending the duplication of responsibilities by four councils. Unification will allow them to combine resources for organizing, political action, communications, education and research.

The Council 14 Executive Board is recommending approval of the unifica-

tion. Local 2822's Executive Board also sees the wisdom in this venture. All of the AFSCME members in Minnesota will be under one umbrella when it comes time for political action instead of under four that don't communicate with each other. Please call a steward or officer for more information.

### Vacation donation

We have a request for vacation donations for our member, Elisabeth Amarvi, who works in the jail. She is going to be out of work for several months and is out of sick time and vacation time. Please contact benefits for the form to fill out to give our sister some time. If we each gave a couple of hours, it would help.



### July Membership Meeting

Tuesday, July 6  
7:00 p.m.  
Brookdale Library

Special order of business:  
Election of Delegates to the  
Council 14 Special Convention

Election of Delegates to  
AFL-CIO Convention

**August Membership Meeting**  
Tuesday, August 3  
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
C-23 Government Center

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

## Special Council 14 Convention

On Saturday, July 24 from 9:30 a.m. until noon there will be a Special Council 14 Convention at the Ramada Thunderbird Hotel in Bloomington. The purpose of this special convention is to decide whether or not AFSCME Council 14 supports unification with other Minnesota councils. Local 2822 is entitled to twenty-eight

## President's report

By Molly Malecki

Security has been a prime concern of many of our members since 9-11 and the shooting on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of the Government Center. This is a topic that the AF-SCME presidents have discussed at our meetings with County Administrator Sandy Vargas. On June 10, Property Manager Judy Hollander and Security Manager Roberta Haight took the AF-SCME presidents and business representatives on a tour of the new security area at the Government Center. To say the least, we were impressed. The main focus of cameras is in the perimeters—Public Service level, entrances and elevators. There is a state-of-the-art alarm system that lets security know where to go when a panic alarm is pushed. They explained a lot of improvements that have happened and a lot that are coming in the future.

An important part of security is communication. We recommended that there be a periodic system of reminders about where panic buttons are and how to evacuate our work areas.

### Government Center evacuation

This important security exercise is scheduled for Wednesday, July 21 beginning at 10:30 a.m. The primary purpose of the two-hour drill is to help ensure the safety of employees should a catastrophe occur. It should help develop a sense of safety for employees at the Government Center, provide information about evacuation routes and identify areas for improvement during an emergency evacuation.

**HCMC nurses' raise** Some of you may have heard that there was a proposal to give the nurses a 5% raise. The reasoning was that they needed to do that to keep the nurses. This union responded by writing letters to the Chairman of the County Board reminding him that in November there was no money for raises for the rest of the county employees. We support the nurses' raise, but we asked that the county look into other job classes that might warrant "market adjustments". The County Board voted to postpone the nurses' raise, which in effect kills the proposal.

### Dignity and respect committee

Lynn Stetler and I are serving on the meet and confer committee to come up

with a plan to increase dignity and respect in the workplace. This is a rather laborious task that will take time to accomplish. Some are asking what we have accomplished so far; they aren't seeing any improvements in their work areas. We are still in the "study" phase of the issue. We are trying to define the problem, to determine the root cause, and find resources that will help us improve the environment in Hennepin County. This issue runs the gamut from mere incivility, like not refilling the coffeepot, to outright abuse, like swearing and hitting. No doubt, in the final analysis, dignity and respect comes down to treating each other as we want to be treated. Let's start with ourselves.

### Health Care Committee

Dawn Klingman and I are serving on the Labor/Management Health Care Committee, which met on June 15 in preparation of our getting proposals for next year's health insurance plans and premiums. This committee is one of the best, and most exciting, examples of labor and management working together. Representatives of all the Hennepin County unions, Labor Relations and Benefits work together to come up with the best possible plan for the employees. We sit face to face with the health care providers and question their proposals and their statistics and their figures. We send them back to come up with other proposals or to tweak the ones they have given us. There is a free exchange of ideas and concerns.

### Ageing doesn't increase health care costs

It's what we do while we're ageing. That was the message from the health care providers and from Murray Harber from Hennepin HealthWorks. HealthWorks is a wellness program at Hennepin County, which is dedicated to promoting health and healthy alternatives and activities. HealthWorks works with Health Partners and Blue Cross Blue Shield to find incentives for workers to make healthy choices.

### And then there is politics

I know some of us hate this subject more than discussing healthy life styles. But as I say every election season (I don't know from whom I stole this): To say I am not interested in politics is like a drowning man saying he's not interested in water. We have to come to understand that our livelihoods as well as the livelihoods of our clients are directly connected to poli-

tics. In our last contract we got that big, fat **ZERO** because of politics. There is nothing else to blame. So something in politics is going to have to change. We all need to become informed on the issues that affect our work and find out who supports what we do. If the County Board doesn't raise the levy, read taxes, there will be even less for us and our clients and programs in 2006. Read the literature that the union sends out. Help a candidate. Don't just sit there.

## Labor/ management collaboration at the library

By Lynn Stetler

When Library Director Charles Brown announced in February 2004 that he was leaving his position at Hennepin, discussions began almost immediately about the search for a new director. Many library workers in Local 2822 and 2864 (Librarian's Union) expressed interest in having labor input in the hiring process, and the local's business agents took this request to participate downtown to the Human Resources Department and County Administrator Sandy Vargas. After several months of discussions, management agreed to invite Eliot Seide, the Executive Director of Council 14, to be part of the administrative interview team along with Sandy Vargas and Deputy Administrator Richard Johnson. We were pleased that our request to be part of the decision-making process had been honored, and confident that Eliot would represent our concerns.

The list of applicants for the director position was narrowed to four finalists. A series of interviews with the county administrator, the Library Board and library managers were scheduled, as well as a forum that was open to all library staff to address questions to the four. The interviews with Vargas, Johnson and Seide were to take place on Thursday, May 20 and Friday, May 21. On Monday, May 17, Jan DeSirey, Local 2864 President, and I were informed that Eliot was not available to be a part of the administrative team and that we were to be his replacements. This was a big surprise—and a big day for labor! We had never been invited to this kind of table before. Once

*(Collaboration continued on page 3)*

(**Collaboration** continued from page 2)

our feet landed back down on firm ground (and with the assistance of Solveig Nilsen), we studied the candidates' resumes and the interview questions. We wanted to be sure that we would do our best to represent our members.

It was a time consuming and difficult process but so well worth it—it was truly a labor/management collaboration. We realized early on in the interviews that all of us were looking for basically the same qualities in a library director. Jan and I learned something of the complexities of choosing the right person for the job. I think that Richard and Sandy learned the value of having knowledgeable, front-line staff at the table to ask questions. In the end, we were unanimous in our choice, which surprised and impressed both “sides,” and the Library Board team also made the same choice.

We are looking forward to working with our new director, Amy Ryan, who is currently the Director of the Division of Partnerships and Development at Minneapolis Public Library. She will begin her new job as Hennepin County Library in January 2005 pending County Board approval on June 29.

We also look forward to other locals being part of administrative interview teams, and increased labor/management collaboration within Hennepin County. And finally, we want to thank Richard and Sandy for their trust in us—to do a good job and represent the staff at the library.

## **AFL-CIO Convention**

The 47<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Convention of the Minnesota AFL-CIO will be held August 16, 17 and 18 at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, Minnesota. AFSCME is an affiliated member of the AFL-CIO. Local 2822 is entitled to seven delegates, but the Executive Board is recommending sending only four and paying lost time, per diem, mileage and registration.

Delegates will be elected at the July 6<sup>th</sup> membership meeting at the Brookdale Library. Anyone interested in being a delegate should attend that meeting or contact an officer or steward. The Executive Board has instituted a policy that prospective delegates must make a statement about why they want to attend the out of town conventions and what they hope to bring back to the local.

## **Lynn Stetler is new vice president**

Donovan Swain, who was elected vice president of Local 2822, is no longer able to serve in that position and submitted his letter of resignation. Lynn Stetler, who has been the recording secretary of the local, graciously agreed to fill that position.

Lynn has been serving as recording secretary since March of 2000. She has been a steward since 1998 and began serving on the Executive Board shortly after taking on that responsibility. Lynn has served on the negotiating teams for several rounds of negotiations. And she currently is an editor of this newsletter.

The local thanks Donovan for his years of service as trustee and vice president. We know he will continue to support the efforts of the local in achieving a fair and just work environment for all employees.

Replacing Lynn as recording secretary is Jeanne Whetstone. Jeanne has been a regular attendee of membership meetings for years. She recently had the opportunity to sit in for Lynn at a meeting, and she did a stellar job with the minutes. The Executive board welcomes her aboard.

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## **Sandy Berman Award seeking nominees for 2004**

By Lynn Stetler

It is time once again to begin the nomination process for the Sandy Berman Award for Social Responsibility in Library Services. Sandy Berman is the former Head Cataloger at Hennepin County Library who resigned in protest in 1999. He was a strong advocate for socially responsible activities throughout his career. Mr. Berman is the first recipient of the award that bears his name.

AFSCME Locals 2822 and 2864 are seeking nominations for the 2004 award, which will be presented in August or September. The award is given annually to an HCL staff member who has made “unique and invaluable contributions to humanity through their work in Hennepin County Library.” It is the intention of the award to recognize contributions that reach “above and beyond” one’s immediate job requirements, since we all, as library workers, perform socially responsible work on a daily basis.

Previous winners include Sue Tracy, Maria Menendez de Moschel, Gretchen Wronka and Virginia Morris. This year we are pleased that Molly Malecki (President, Local 2822), Solveig Nilsen (Chief Steward of Local 2864), and Sue Tracy, last year’s winner, have agreed to serve as the selection committee for this year’s award.

To nominate an employee, please send their name and a paragraph about the nominee’s accomplishments to one of the committee members. Nominations will be accepted through July 10. Feel free to contact Jan DeSirey or me with questions. Thank you!

*“I can't have information I know would be of interest to someone and not share it.”*  
--Sandy Berman

## **Zanona Anderson is new acting co-chief steward**

Zanona Anderson has accepted the responsibility of acting-co-chief steward to fill in for Shawneise Sudduth, who has taken a lost-time position with Council 14 to work on political campaigns until January 2005. Zanona is a new steward and will be working with Sheryn Cartlidge, who is the other co-chief steward. Zanona has stated that she wants to learn and will take on this task with enthusiasm.

Shawneise has served this local as a steward and as membership secretary. She became co-chief steward in January of 2004. She has been our representative to the Council 14 Executive Board and has served on the PEOPLE Committee, screening candidates for public office. She has a great deal of knowledge about local politics in particular and a large interest in state and federal politics. We may expect her to call us to help with door knocks, phone banks or other get-out-the-vote activities.

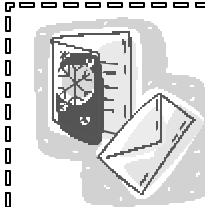
## Local 2822 Officers

<b>President</b> Molly Malecki	763-569-3683
<b>Vice-president</b> Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569
<b>Treasurer</b> Walter Hanson	763-569-3683
<b>Recording Sec.</b> Jeanne Whetstone	952-847-5455
<b>Co-chief Steward</b> Sheryn Cartlidge	612-596-1322
<b>Co-chief Steward (Acting)</b> Zanona Anderson	612-347-5356
<b>Membership Sec.</b> Merry Brigham	612-348-9358
<b>E-Board at Large</b>	
Terri Roddy	612-728-5941
Nichell DeCora	612-348-9162
Jennifer McNair	612-596-8000
Zanona Anderson	612-347-5356
<b>Delta Dental Trustee</b> Ann Baird	763-569-3683
<b>Good &amp; Welfare</b> Heather Clark	952-847-8650 <i>hclark@hclib.org</i>

# Bulletin Board

**The New Voice deadline is July 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 952-847-8650 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."

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**Editors**  
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**Circulation & distribution**  
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## Steward's List

Steward	Phone	Representing	Location
Sheryn Cartlidge	612-596-1322	CP/Call Center	Century Plaza
Zanona Anderson	612-347-5356	MHP	A.Y. McDonald Bldg.
Julie Axtell	612-348-6186	Taxpayer Services	Gov't Ctr. Service Ctr.
Nichelle DeCora	612-348-9162	CFASD	Planning and Development 23 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Gov't Center
Kerin Fahland	612-596-8000	Sheriff	Jail
Jodi Goers	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail
Angela Hallquist	952-830-4985	Service Center	Southdale Service Center
Walter Hanson	763-569-3683	Service Center	Brookdale Service Center
Janet Keefe	612-348-2564	EA/FAD	Century Plaza - 3rd Floor
Jennifer McNair	612-596-8000	Sheriff	Jail
Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569	Library	Ridgedale Lib./CAB/ Collection Management
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**

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