



July Membership Meeting
Tuesday, July 10
7:00 p.m.
Ridgedale Library

August Membership Meeting
Wednesday, August 8, 7:00 p.m.
Southdale Library

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

Preparations for negotiations begin

Local 2822 member surveys are in and tallied. The Master Teams of the six AFSCME locals in Hennepin County have met and have formulated our proposals for this round of negotiations. July 30 marks the beginning of negotiations with the employer. More information about our proposals will be coming to you by way of the Table Talk, which is the official communication vehicle regarding negotiations.

We appreciate all of you who filled out surveys to let us know your priorities and to let us know how you are willing to help achieve those priorities.

Brenda Wood from Local 552, Probation and Parole, has agreed to be the chairperson of the Action Team. The names of those who volunteered to serve on this team have been forwarded to her.

This year the Action Team is planning a picnic at French Park in Plymouth on July 21 to kick off the beginning of negotiations. This will be a family event to energize our members for what lies ahead.

Those of you who volunteered to regularly contact workers, phone bank members, attend County Board meetings, write to Commissioners and be on the Strike Team can expect to be contacted when you are needed. If you haven't signed up to help yet, don't hesitate to let us know what you are willing to do. Contact and officer or steward listed on the last page.

An especially big "thank you" goes to Jeanne Whetstone for tallying all of the surveys and collating them into lists that will help us know who to contact for help.

Employee Free Choice Act

Walker Nursing Home workers will begin contract negotiations

From Council 5 Website: Workers at Walker Methodist Health Center have waited nearly **four years** for certification of their vote to form a union with AFSCME Council 5. They got the green light this week with a decision by the National Labor Relations Board. Now their union, employer and Methodist supporters are expressing optimism about negotiating in good faith to ensure justice for workers and quality care for residents of the south Minneapolis nursing home

From E-mail President Malecki received from AFSCME International Union:

Over the next few weeks, it is absolutely critical to keep up the pressure as the bill's opponents ratchet up their misleading attacks (on the **Employee Free**

(Employee continued on page 2)

Union? What union?

If you are a new Hennepin County employee, or not so new, and have not been approached by someone to tell you about your union, please contact Ann Baird by e-mail at Ann.Baird@co.hennepin.mn.us. Ann is the membership secretary of Local 2822 and will get a folder of information to you.

What union? If you are a "clerical or related" worker you belong to AFSCME Local 2822. AFSCME? What does that mean? The American Federation of State County and Municipal Em-

ployees. This is an international union of 1.3 million members. There are six AFSCME local unions at Hennepin County, including social services, probation and parole, professional, County Attorney and Public Defenders and the Work House. Local 2822 has approximately 1200 members.

There is a lot of information in our "New Member" folder about the union. Also take a look at our website:

www.AFSCME2822.org/ where you can find out more about Local 2822, AFSCME Council 5 and the International Union. We definitely want to hear from you.

Library merger? Yes, no, probably

An immense amount of work has gone on to merge the Minneapolis Public Library System with the Hennepin County Library system. It began with Hennepin County offering to take over the Minneapolis Public Library System and the creation of committees from both the county and the city to develop plans. There were meetings of members of the AFSCME locals that would be involved (impacted) by such a merger. AFSCME Council 5 issued a statement of its position on the merger and sent lobbyists to the legislature to protect its workers. The legislature had to develop legislation to allow the merger to happen. The members of AFSCME Local 99, the MPLS workers, spent hours in impact bargaining with their employer and their soon-to-become employer hashing out an agreement where none of the MPL members would lose money or benefits in the transition. The legislation passed the legislature. The governor vetoed the 4.1 million dollar funding for the merger. Take a deep breath.

The next day, Kit Hadley, the Director

(*Employee continued from page 1*)
Choice Act).

The truth is, America's working people are struggling to make ends meet, and our middle class is disappearing. The best opportunity we have to get ahead economically is by uniting with co-workers to bargain with our employers for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

But the current system for forming unions and bargaining **in the private sector** is broken.

Every day, corporations intimidate, harass, coerce and even fire people who try to organize unions and bargain. This is an urgent crisis, blocking our free will and our ability to get ahead.

Passage of the **Employee Free Choice Act** would give workers greater freedom to decide whether to join a union and bargain with employers. It will also help protect public-sector jobs from privatiza-

tion by reducing the financial advantage of non-union contractors who pay low wages and provide no benefits.

of MPL, Randy Johnson, chair of the Hennepin County Board, and Richard Johnson, Acting Hennepin County Administrator, all stated that they felt the merger can go ahead. The 4.1 million dollars was to pay for technical changes, for example, the differing computer systems in the two library systems.

The key players in this merger hope that the merger will be accomplished by January 1, 2008. All MPL workers will then be Hennepin County employees. In the meantime, Hennepin County Human Resources Department is going to evaluate each job at MPL and classify it into the Hennepin County System. This will involve all MPL workers who wish to fill out a PDQ and for Human Resources to evaluate them. There will be an opportunity for an employee to appeal their classification.

Should the merger ultimately proceed, Local 2822 will add approximately 175 new members. We have already welcomed them aboard by inviting them to sit in our Master Team meetings for negotiations, as they will be working under whatever contract we agree to ratify.

tion by reducing the financial advantage of non-union contractors who pay low wages and provide no benefits.

From the Minnesota AFL-CIO web site: Union members intercepted Minnesota Sen. Norm Coleman as he headed for a speaking engagement at the Humphrey Institute on the U of M Campus, Monday. When asked to support the Employee Free Choice Act, the Senator said he could not support the proposed law which would strengthen workers' rights to form and join unions. Minnesota AFL-CIO Mobilizing and Organizing Director Candace Lund said that Coleman's stance is based on a "deliberate misunderstanding of the bill". She explains that the law would allow workers to choose a secret-ballot election or a majority sign-up process when deciding on a union. Business groups--and Sen. Coleman--claim the bill would ban those elections. Not true.

Contact Senator Coleman at
Opinion@coleman.senate.gov

Health care: Control cost

The Labor/Management Health Care Committee continues to meet and study the health care cost issue. On May 17, the County's consultant, Deloitte's Pete Roverud, made a presentation of "Alternative Ideas to Help Control Costs." Unfortunately none of the ideas made us spring from our chairs and say, "Go for it." Some of the ideas boil down to cost-shifting—employer pays less in premiums; employee pays more in deductible and co-pays.

Mr. Roverud reported that Health and retirement benefit costs have increased at more than three times the rate of wages and other benefit costs since 1991. One of the most interesting facts he presented was from IFTF, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health and Health Care 2010. The Determinants of Health Status are: Access to Care-10%, Genetics-20%, Environment-20% and **BEHAVIOR-50%**. So a large part of the committee's discussion was about changing behavior to improve health care cost.

Some of the ideas to get people to change their behavior included offering health and wellness programs and providing employees with incentives to participate in such programs; reduce or eliminate co-payments for drugs for certain chronic conditions; create incentive options for good behavior; create creative penalties for bad behavior; improve engagement in Disease Management (DM) programs. Fewer employees and their adult dependents took the Health Partners health risk assessment in 2006 than took it in 2005. Was it because the incentive was not great enough? (\$5.00 off co-pay)

There are several more of these meetings scheduled for 2007. We will have more ideas presented, although what is listed here is not all that was offered. It is a very complex issue that is getting more and more expensive. We will keep working on it.

Delta Dental bytes

Ann Baird
Delta Dental Trustee

This Delta Dental plan is a benefit offered to certain AFSCME Local Unions at Hennepin County. **It is offered through and administered by AFSCME Council 5.** This is not the plan offered to County employees through the County Benefits Department. Local 2822 participates in this plan along with several other AFSCME Locals—but not all AFSCME locals elected to participate in this plan.

The following are some of the most frequently asked questions regarding the Delta Dental insurance plan. .

How do I enroll in Delta Dental?

You must obtain, sign and submit an application to AFSCME Council 5 Office. Do not submit the form to Hennepin County or to Delta Dental. If you received the “New Member” folder, an application is in there. Applications are routinely mailed to eligible employees from the Council 5 Office as soon as Hennepin County makes the Council aware of a new hire. You may also obtain an application from Ann Baird at 612-543-0272 (leave a message). All applications must be submitted to Council 5.

When must I apply?

You must apply within 60 days of eligibility. You are eligible for coverage on the first day of the month following one full calendar month of continuous employment in a **PERMANENT, BENEFIT-EARNING** position. This includes part-time employees who work as little as 20 hours per week. **Example: start date is 5/15, eligible 7/1,** application must be submitted within 60 days of 7/1. For current employees who have never filed an application, open enrollment is held annually and coincides with County open enrollment in November.

Why can't the county's Benefits Department help me?

This is a union program administered by AFSCME Council 5, not by Hennepin County.

Who is entitled to Delta Dental benefits?

PERMANENT, BENEFIT-EARNING employees, their spouses and unmarried, dependent children from birth until age nineteen may be enrolled in Delta Dental. In certain circumstances coverage may continue after age nineteen. Refer to pages 12 & 13 of the "Delta Plan Summary". Need a copy? Contact Ann Baird at 612-543-0272 (leave a message) or e-mail ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us

Is there a charge?

You will see no payroll deduction for Delta Dental coverage. The plan is paid through a Union Trust Fund. This is a negotiated benefit where, in some contract years the county pays and in other years the employees pay a certain number of cents per hour.

Is there a list of dentists that participate in this plan?

It's always a good idea to ask your dentist if he/she is a "participating dentist". You may also check this web site www.deltadentalmn.org (utilize the Delta Preferred option and Delta Premier Networks) to find a dentist or call 1-800-448-3815. Some dentists say they are "participating", but they actually mean they honor Delta Dental as an insurer. Their fees may be covered by Delta Dental at a different level. It is a good idea to request your dentist get pre-authorization from Delta Dental prior to having work done.

If I switch jobs and leave Local 2822 to take another job within the county, can I keep my dental benefits?

If a member switches to a job that has the same Delta Dental Plan through AFSCME Council 5, coverage will follow. If a member promotes or

transfers to a job that is not covered, coverage will terminate on the last day of the month employment ends. Members who quit and **LEAVE** Hennepin County may be eligible for up to 18 months under COBRA. Contact Cindy Pince at 651-287-0564 or Chris Dohmeier at 651-287-0527 for a form.

I'm retiring from the county, how long can I continue to use the dental plan?

Members can continue the plan through MN Retirees Continuation Coverage indefinitely. You must pay the premium each month. If you miss a payment, you are automatically dropped from the plan. Normally, information and an application are mailed to the retiree from the Council 5 office as soon as the Council learns of the impending retirement. If you don't receive it, contact **Cindy Pince at 651-287-0564.**

What is our group number?

538-0004—Comprehensive Enhanced, formerly known as Delta Premier.

How do I obtain a card?

Cards are generated directly from Delta Dental. If you have not received a card or have lost your card, call Delta Dental directly at 1-800-448-3815. AFSCME Council 5 does not deal with membership cards.

Contact Council 5 for address changes

If you have changed your name or address in the last six months or anytime from now on, please contact:
Council 5 receptionist,
Maya Hendricks
at 651-450-4990.

You don't want to miss any union mailings or updates on negotiations.

Local 2822 Officers

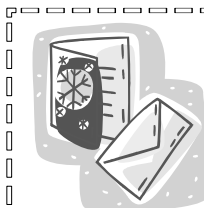
President Molly Malecki <i>Mmafscme2822@aol.com</i>	612-543-0272 Urgent: 612-543-0270
Vice-president Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569 Urgent: 763-245-8285
Treasurer Walter Hanson	612-543-0272 Urgent: 612-543-0270
Recording Sec. Jeanne Whetstone	952-847-5455
Co-chief Steward Theresa Smith	763-245-8308
Co-chief Steward Vacant	
Membership Sec. Ann Baird	612-543-0272
E-Board at Large Janna Carlson	612-596-1660
Keven Larson	952-847-5563
Neng Lor	612-596-1660
Genae Nicole	612-347-3928
Delta Dental Trustee Ann Baird	763-549-3498
Good & Welfare Heather Clark <i>hclark@hclib.org</i>	952-847-8523

Bulletin Board

The New Voice deadline is July 10. 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

Editors

Molly Malecki & Lynn Stetler

Circulation & distribution

Annette Tiedens

Steward's List

Steward	Phone	Department	Location
Theresa Smith Co-chief Steward	763-245-8308	Mental Health	Health Services Bldg (HSB)
Janna Carlson	612-596-1660	Service Center	Maple Grove Service Center
Jody Goers	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail
Walter Hanson	763-612-543-0272 Urgent: 612-543-0270	Service Center	Brookdale Service Center
Neng Lor	612-596-1660	Service Center	Maple Grove Service Center
Genae Nicole	612-347-3928	MS MHP	A.Y. McDonald Bldg
Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569 Urgent: 763-245-8285	Library	Ridgedale Library, Collection Management
Velva Stewart	612-596-0722	MS MHP	Grain Exchange Bldg
Bridget Walker	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail

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:

Ann Baird
Brookdale Service Center
Mail Code N710

Name _____

Job Title _____

Work Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I'm especially interested in:

I want to sign up as a full member.