

## Two conventions in September Delegates to be elected in August



### August Membership Meeting

**Wednesday, August 6  
7:00 p.m.  
Southdale Library**

**Special order of business:**  
elections of delegates to the Minnesota AFL-CIO convention and the AFSCME Council 5 Convention

**September Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, Sept. 3, 7:00 p.m.  
Ridgedale Library**

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

Delegates to the Minnesota AFL-CIO Convention and to the AFSCME Council 5 Convention will be elected at the August 6, 2008 Membership Meeting at 7:00 PM at Southdale Library.

AFSCME Council 5 Convention will begin with registration on Wednesday, September 24 and conclude on Saturday, September 27. This convention will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota. The Executive Board has not, at this writing, recommended how many delegates to send to the convention. Our local is allowed 50 delegates, but this number has never been sent because of the large cost involved. The business of this convention will be to elect new officers and a new executive board for Council 5. There will also be resolutions to be considered that will

give direction to the Council for the coming year. There will be a **few** politicians, and there will be presentations of the achievements of the Council in the last year. Anyone interested in being a delegate should attend the membership meeting or, if unable to attend, contact an officer listed on back of this newsletter.

The 2008 Minnesota AFL-CIO 49th Constitutional Convention will be held Sunday, September 14 thru Tuesday, September 16 at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC). Local 2822 voted at the July 2, 2008 membership meeting to elect two delegates to this convention, paying lost time, hotel, mileage, per diem and registration. Anyone interested in being a delegate should contact an officer listed on the back page.

## Health Care Committee: changes and concerns

The Hennepin County Labor/Management Health Care Committee met on July 10, 2008 to discuss various aspects of health care and related issues. Local 2822 members who participate on this committee are Dirk Schot, Dawn Klingman and Molly Malecki. Also on the committee are members of other unions and associations at the county and Labor Relations and Benefits employees.

Topics covered at the July meeting included **Long Term Disability** for 2009. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent out, and Standard will be replacing Hart-

ford. There will be a reduction in premium of about 26%. That will be 10.2 hours per year as opposed to 12.9 hours for full time employees. The part-time employees' hours will reduce from 11.2 hours a year to 8.8 hours.

There will be a change in **Long Term Care** for 2009, also. Aetna has been the carrier for this, and they are going to discontinue group coverage. Those who are taking this coverage will be able to continue their coverage, but it will not be paid through payroll deduction because the county's group contract will have been cancelled. Instead, **employees will have to pay Aetna directly**. Coverage will remain the same, and any premium increase will be to all of Aetna's customers. Seven percent of benefit eligible em-

ployees are currently enrolled. Over the course of 2008 and 2009, the County Benefits Department will be researching other carriers including how group insurance will coordinate with a new Minnesota policy which, if the carriers adopt it, will provide more financial protection to plan participants. New federal regulations have gone into effect and the state also has new benefit requirements. The Benefits Department will be sending out more information early this fall as open enrollment approaches.

There will be changes in the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** for 2009. RFP's were sent out and nine vendors applied. The county selected Sand Creek

*(Health continued on page 2)*

## John Christensen honored

A framed certificate was presented to John Christensen at the July 2, 2008 Membership Meeting. It was in “Recognition of his outstanding dedication to Local 2822 and for inspiring enthusiasm in the members of Local 2822.”

Many members of the leadership, present and past, credit John personally with their initial involvement and continuing dedication to the union. John has not served in an official leadership role, but

he has most definitely led many to those positions. Many recall John being the only person who approached them at their first union meeting. Many recall John arranging car pools to membership meetings. John personally escorts new employees to the meetings.

John has done more than his share to make this local strong. And we thank you, John.

## Union workers make more money

From AFSCME Council 5 Website  
afscmemn.org

A new report affirms what we already know—workers who belong to unions earn more than those who don’t. In Minnesota, nearly 18 percent of the workforce is unionized, compared to about 12 percent nationally.

The study by the Center for Economic Policy Research finds that unionization raises the wage of the average Minnesota worker by 12 percent. **The lowest-paid workers make 20 percent more;** and the highest, four percent more. To read the report go to [afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org) and

click on article.

The report concludes that workers at the bottom of the pay scale benefit most because, without representation, they have the least influence in the workplace. We know that union membership is the best way to fight poverty.

The benefits of belonging are clear. Unionized workers earn more than non-union workers. They are more likely to have health insurance, a paid vacation and a secure pension. Their working conditions are usually better. And, they enjoy less-tangible benefits, like having dignity and a voice at work.

*(Health continued from page 1)*

which guaranteed a rate for seven years. The rate is 12% less than the current rate. They will also have hours at the Government Center at the Be Well Center. Sand Creek is a local agency.

The topic that took the majority of time for the committee was the results of the **HealthPartners health assessments** for the last four years. More than 6,000 people took the health assessment in 2004 and 2005. In 2006 and 2007 only 4,760 individuals completed the assessment. That reduction was concern for the county and the committee. It is not understood why less people took the assessment. Taking the assessment reduces co-pays for office visits by \$5.00. The assessment is a good way for HealthPartners to find at-risk individuals and to reach out to help them become healthier.

The data from the assessments found that in all four years a significant issue was being overweight or obese. Over the four years that category ranged from 63.3%,

in 2004, to 65.9%, in 2007, of the respondents. A related issue was unhealthy food choices, which ranged from 55.8% in 2004 to 45.1% in 2007. The other issue that the committee discussed at length was tobacco use. That percentage dropped from 14.2% in 2004 to 10.8% in 2007. The committee was shown statistics from JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) March 10, 2004 that the “Actual Cause of Death in the US in 1990 and 2000” was tobacco—19% and 18.1%.

The data led to a discussion on possible incentives to improve employees’ health and decrease their risk factors. The county has its HealthWorks WellWays programs and publications, and HealthPartners offers numerous classes and telephone guidance but this does not seem to do as much as hoped. The committee is open to ideas that would help us eat better, exercise more and stop smoking. We welcome any ideas. E-mail to any of us.

## Health Care for America Now!

From AFSCME Council 5 web site  
[afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org)

On July 8, in 52 cities across the nation, an unprecedented coalition of labor unions, community groups and women’s organizations launched a campaign to push for quality, affordable health care for every American. Between now and election day, Health Care for America Now will spend \$25 million in paid media and have 100 organizers mobilizing people in 45 states, including Minnesota. To watch the first TV commercial, click on the link at the [afscmemn.org](http://afscmemn.org) website.

The coalition includes AFSCME, ACORN, Americans United for Change, Campaign for America’s Future, Center for American Progress Action Fund, Center for Community Change, MoveOn, the National Education Association, National Women’s Law Center, Planned Parenthood, SEIU, UFCW, and USAction.

“Whether you’re insured or uninsured, our health care system is broken and cost is the problem,” explained Council 5 Director Eliot Seide at a news conference. “That’s why we’re working for a national solution that will control costs and guarantee quality, affordable health care for every American.”

**AFSCME  
booth at  
fair**



**Look for the Council 5  
kiosk at the new  
Labor Pavilion**

**Dan Patch Ave & Cooper St.  
(where the old House of  
Labor stood).**

**August 21 – September 1  
9: 00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
(Sun. – Thurs.)  
9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
(Fridays and Saturdays)**

## Performance reviews

### A look at the contract

By Marilyn Bell, Co-chief Steward

Picture this: You are sitting in your supervisor's office having your annual performance review. As the meeting progresses, you find yourself not agreeing with what has been written about your performance. You may, or may not, discuss this difference of opinion. In any case, the supervisor does not change the written review. At the end of the meeting, you are asked to sign it. What do you do? Do you have to sign it? Do you have the right to refuse signing it because you disagree with its content? What exactly are your options?

Article 28, Section 2 of our contract says: "After an evaluation is completed, the employee will be given a copy and provided an opportunity to respond to the evaluation in writing and have that response permanently attached to the evaluation. No changes may be made in the evaluation after the employee has received and signed his/her copy."

Most of the performance reviews I have seen include a disclaimer that appears above the employee signature area. It usually describes your acknowledgement of having read the review and having had the opportunity to discuss the contents with your supervisor, *even if you don't agree* with part(s) of the review.

So, here is what you do if this ever happens to you. First, sign the review. Then, write a response if you wish and send it directly to the county's Human Resource office. You do not need to provide your supervisor with a copy. Submit your response within two weeks of signing the review.

Watch for other articles in future newsletters regarding what is in our contract. If you would like to have a paper copy of the contract, contact any officer or steward listed on the back of this newsletter. Our contract is also on the Local 2822 website at <http://www.afscme2822.org> and on the Hennepin County Intranet site under Labor Relations



# THE ERA OF DOING MORE WITH LESS IS OVER



## The Problem...

Many county services are stretched to their **BREAKING POINT**. Hennepin County faces deeper cuts and a new three-year levy limit. There just isn't enough to cover current services, wages and benefits.

## The Solution...

We can speak with pride about the vital public services we deliver.  
We can reveal who's hurt when we're forced to do less with less  
We can collect our stories and influence important budget decisions.

## Share Your Story...

Tell us how real cuts will harm the real people you serve.  
[We need your story by July 31](#) to build a case for county services  
As the county puts its 2009 budget together

CALL – Pat Guernsey, 612-596-0493  
Jennifer Munt, 651-287-0575

EMAIL – [pj.guernsey@comcast.net](mailto:pj.guernsey@comcast.net)  
[Jennifer.munt@afsacmemn.org](mailto:Jennifer.munt@afsacmemn.org)



## Vacation donation request

We received the following request for vacation donation from Susannah J Olson.

One of my co-workers, Yvette Luter, an Office Specialist III, has been out for nearly a month now with a severe respiratory illness. She has depleted all of her sick and vacation time. Yvette has worked with the county approximately 15 years. Currently she works in the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation, assisting the Drug Court and Multiple DWI Court probation staff. Could we please request that people do-

nate vacation hours on her behalf?

The way to make vacation donations is very simple and only takes a few minutes. On the Hennepin County Intranet site, click Employee Services, Forms, Human Resources Forms, under Vacation Donation Authorization click see interactive version, click Vacation Waiver Donation and Authorization form, enter your I-Notes sign on, fill out form. When you click "Select Recipient" enter the name. Sign and submit. The details of how Vacation Donations work are listed at the end.

## Local 2822 Officers

<b>President</b> Lynn Stetler <i>lstetler@hclib.org</i>	952-847-8569 763-245-8285
<b>Vice president</b> Molly Malecki <i>molly.malecki@co.hennepin.mn.us</i>	612-543-0272
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<b>Membership Sec.</b> Janna Carlson <i>janna.carlson@co.hennepin.mn.us</i>	612-596-1660
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Bruce Scroggins <i>bhscroggins@hclib.org</i>	612-630-6392
<b>Delta Dental Trustee</b> Ann Baird <i>Ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us</i>	763-549-3498
<b>Good &amp; Welfare</b> Heather Clark <i>hclark@hclib.org</i>	952-847-8523

## 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:

**Janna Carlson**  
**Maple Grove Service Center**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Work Location \_\_\_\_\_

Mailcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- I'm especially interested in:  
 I want to sign up as a full member.  
 I want to sign up for Delta Dental.

# Bulletin Board

**The New Voice deadline is August 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.

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](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

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