

## Contract change to be voted on at August Membership Meeting

There will be a vote to approve the addition of a Letter of Understanding to our current contract. This change will affect **part-time employees** the most. The vote will take place at the August 5<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Central Library in downtown Minneapolis. The changes relate to vacation accrual, sick leave, Early Retiree Health Insurance eligibility, Health Care Savings Plan-county contribution, stability pay and probationary period.

The Letter of Understanding to be voted upon begins, "Whereas the County is transitioning from the current payroll system to a new payroll system in late 2009 that **does not track continuous hours for employees but rather tracks years of service...**"

What does that mean, you may wonder? It means that your vacation accrual will be based on **how many years** you have worked at Hennepin County, not based on **how many hours worked**. For example: Article 11, section 2 of our contract currently states that if an employee has "more than five (5) years but less than eight (8) years (**16,640 com-**

**pensated** regular hours) the annual vacation accrual rate is 120 hours." The proposed change will delete "(16,640 compensated regular hours)."

Throughout the contract all references to "**compensated hours worked**" will be deleted. This includes the probationary period for new hires, rehires and reinstated employees, transfers and promotions. (*Article 3, Q 1, 2*) Probation is six months.

Sick leave language is also changed. The new language reads: Sick leave shall be earned by employees at the rate of **.046154** hours for each **hour** of service except that newly hired, re-employed or reinstated employees who have less than six (6) months of service shall earn sick leave benefits at the rate of **.030769** hours for each **hour** of service. (*Article 12, section 1*)

Eligibility for Early Retiree Health Insurance Program (ERHIP) is changed to "**Non-Continuous Years of Service**" again dropping the term hours. (*Article 22, subd. 2 A*)

The next two exciting changes relate to the Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP)

and to stability pay. Both of those are dropping the **compensated hour's requirement**. So an employee who opted for the HCSP will have \$500.00 contributed to their account in five years rather than in eight or ten, which was the case for many part-time employees. (Article 22, section 11, subd. 4) Stability pay will begin after the employee has "completed five (5) years service in the County as of December 1 of the current year." Stability paid to retirees or survivors will be "prorated on the number of **payroll periods** worked during the calendar year." (*Article 24, sections 1, 3, 4*)

The preceding is a summary of the changes. Anyone interested in seeing the entire document should contact [Mmafscme2822@aol.com](mailto:Mmafscme2822@aol.com). It will be available at the membership meeting. There will also be a discussion of the various aspects of this proposal. This is considered a change to our contract, so there will be a vote at the meeting. Our full contract is on our website: [AFSCME 2822.com](http://www.afscme2822.com) or on HC Net under Labor Relations.

August						
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### August Membership Meeting

Wednesday, August 5  
7:00 p.m.  
Central Library

### Special order of business:

Vote to change current contract

### September Membership Meeting

Wednesday, September 2  
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>

## We're doing our part

By Lynn Stetler, president, Hopkins Library

You're going to hear this phrase a lot over the next months as we work towards a new contract agreement. The news that the county reached its goal of saving money by asking employees to take voluntary furloughs was a success—just as union leaders predicted. Thanks for doing your part.

We continue to have Master Team



meetings to prepare for contract negotiations which will begin in September. And we still want to hear from you. In the past, we have sent out a survey asking for your major concerns. This year is different and the survey will be different also. Watch for it to be available shortly.

An Action Team has been in place during most past negotiations to support the work of the Table Team. We continue to solicit interested members to help support the work of the Table Team. If you are interested in helping

out in any way, please contact us at [Mmafscme2822@aol.com](mailto:Mmafscme2822@aol.com). And we still want to hear your stories about how you're doing your work in these difficult times. How have things changed? What are the new demands you face each day? We continue to feel that doing less with less is becoming more and more difficult and not a good way to do the business of the county. Please send us your stories to the above mentioned e-mail address. We'll be meeting with the county commissioners at the end of August—we need to hear from you. Negotiations begin on September 8.

We're doing part—tell us more about how you are doing this.

Take good care.

## Health care issues

By Molly Malecki, vice-president, Brookdale Service Center

How much do you want to pay for health insurance and how do you want to pay it? That was the basic question the Labor/Management Health Care Committee wrestled with for two hours on July 9<sup>th</sup>. No conclusion was reached and many questions still have to be answered. Last year Health Partners gave Hennepin County a rate cap of 9.58% for 2010. Currently the county is paying \$96 million for employee health insurance; the 9.58% increase will cost over \$104 million.

Once again we will have to decide among premium increase, and/or deductibles, and/or increased office copays, and/or increased prescription prices. Health Partners gave us figures that would reduce the premium to the county, but would increase other factors to the employees. They presented scenarios that could limit the premium increase to 2.88%. Of course that would lead to higher out of pocket expenses for those who use medical services. These are going to be extremely painful

decisions given the state of the upcoming budget for Hennepin County.

In another portion of the meeting we discussed "Healthy Incentives". As has been written before, one way to keep health care costs down is to become healthier. We discussed ideas that might help employees choose to make healthier choices and how the county might financially incent them. One idea is the reduced co-pay for taking the Health Assessment and then following through on suggestions from the provider.

HealthPartners' "An Ounce of Prevention is worth a Pound of..." is a power point presentation that is on the Human Resources website. There will be presentations by the HealthPartners account manager for us to learn about the ins and outs of your benefits, ways to save money, and using benefits/doctor visits T. There will be free handouts: Self-Care Manual and Preventive Checklist. They are scheduled so you can bring your lunch from 12:00 to 1:00:

**Thursday, 7/30/09**  
Government Center Auditorium

**Tuesday, 8/4/2009**  
Health Services Building #112

**Tuesday, 8/18/2009**  
Family Justice Center #172

**Wednesday, 8/19/2009**  
Govt. Center/Auditorium

**Tuesday, 8/25/2009**  
Ridgedale Library/Robert Rolf Room

**Thursday, 9/3/09**  
Medina/Large Conference Room

### In labor history

#### August 3, 1981

Federal air traffic controllers began a nationwide strike after their union rejected the government's final offer for a new contract. Most of the 13,000 striking controllers defied the back-to-work order, and were dismissed by President Reagan on August 5.

Facing mandatory retirement at age 56, most of the 11,000 controllers hired to replace them are now set to retire.

## Next Wave Conference

By Paul Kuechenmeister, steward, Jail

*As a union we have always overcome whatever challenges come our way. Today, we are confronted with an altogether different sort of challenge — more than half of AFSCME members are eligible to retire in the next 10 years.* That's where AFSCME Next Wave comes in. Next Wave chapters are important in providing the tools and connections to get younger members active and ready for future union leadership.

I was recently given the opportunity to attend the 2009 Next Wave conference in Chicago, and what an experience that was! We had over 500 members from around the country in one location to create excitement about the program, get young people involved and provide encouragement to members who are in leadership positions or considering becoming more involved in the union.

The contacts that I've made from this conference are amazing. Our union really is a strong one and so many peo-

### Progressive dues redux

Never mind. Last month's article on the progressive dues became obsolete while the newsletter was being printed. There will be progressive dues, but it will not happen as written.

Instead of a Council 5 committee determining how to create it for all locals, each local will create its own progressive dues structure. Indeed, all locals will have a progressive dues structure, but it will be of their own designs. This has to be accomplished by 2011, so in 2010, with assistance from Council 5, Local 2822 will be working on this.

The purpose of progressive dues is to have dues tied to member's ability to pay. Rather than everyone paying the same flat fee, dues would be based on an individual's level of pay.

ple are willing to help each other out. We need to keep it that way, and I encourage everyone, old and young, to become involved with the union. We need to ensure that everything that has been fought for to get where we are today not only stays that way, but go further and make our union even stronger.

Many workshops were held, a few of which included understanding the financial crisis and what it means for young workers, holding elected officials accountable and effective lobbying.

A few of my more memorable events were being addressed by William Lucy (AFSCME International Secretary-Treasurer) who joined the international staff in 1966, being addressed by Gerald McEntee (AFSCME International President), and attending an action in support of AFSCME organizing campaign for Resurrection Health Care Workers. We marched in support of the employees at Resurrection who have been trying for 6 years to organize and

have been met with fierce opposition and even discipline.

I know many people ask the question, "What does the union do for me?" The answer, in my opinion, is simple... the union, is YOU. So then, the question is what do I do for myself? Take a look at your paycheck and benefits and you'll see what we have done for ourselves so far. We are only as strong as our members. Take pride in the great organization that you are part of and become involved. Something as simple as calling your representatives in support of issues that the union supports is an excellent way to start. For any young members wishing to get involved in union leadership, all you need to do is attend a membership meeting where your current leaders will help you get started. Of course you can always email me at [paul.kuechenmeister@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:paul.kuechenmeister@co.hennepin.mn.us)

*¡SI, SE PUEDE! / YES, WE CAN! - César Chávez*

### When you need a steward

The list of our stewards is available on the back page of each newsletter as well as the list of our Executive Board members.

Please remember that we may not be able to answer our phones immediately and you should be prepared to leave a message as we are doing our county jobs in addition to our union jobs. You should also be aware that all Stewards go through the same training. If you speak to one Steward and hear a response that you don't like, you shouldn't continue down the list looking for a response you like better. Your first call for help should be to our chief stewards, Theresa Smith and Marilyn Bell. They in turn will recommend another steward if necessary to handle your case.

### No picnic

Several members have asked about this year's AFSCME/Hennepin County picnic. In February the Hennepin County Policy Committee voted to not have a picnic this summer. The Policy Committee is a group, elected at the Council 5 Convention, with representatives of the six AFSCME locals at Hennepin County.

Several reasons were given including, no one offered to chair it, too busy with negotiations, and costs too much for some locals. For next year, here is an opportunity for members to come together and make the picnic happen.

Lots of families enjoyed the fun—no cost, just fun.

## 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."



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

**A New Voice deadline is August 5.** 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.



Editor: Molly Malecki

Circulation & distribution:  
 Annette Tiedens

## Local 2822 Officers

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<b>Delta Dental Trustee</b>	Ann Baird <i>Ann.baird@co.hennepin.mn.us</i>	612-543-0270
<b>Good &amp; Welfare</b>	Heather Clark <i>hclark@hclib.org</i>	952-847-8523

## Steward's List

Steward	Phone and e-mail	Department and location
Theresa Smith Co-chief Steward	612-596-0826 Cell: 763-267-2077 <i>theresa.smith@co.hennepin.mn.us</i>	Human Services & Public Health Health Services Bldg
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