

County Board asked to set sufficient maximum levy

On Tuesday, August 29 at their 1:30 meeting, the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners will be setting the "maximum levy" for property taxes in 2007. In December they will set the final levy, but it cannot be more than the "maximum levy" set in August.

available when we begin bargaining in 2007.

The presidents of the AFSCME locals will be meeting with the commissioners individually to present our concerns and to encourage them to vote for a sufficient maximum levy. Members are also being asked to attend the meeting on the 29th to show support for the union's efforts. Local 2822 will pay lost time for up to four hours for fifteen members to attend. Anyone wishing to attend and receive lost time should contact Molly Malecki at *Mmafscme2822@aol.com*.

The AFSCME locals at Hennepin County are requesting that the Board set a maximum levy that will fill the holes left by the federal and state cuts to services and to cover the rate of inflation for Governments. As employees of Hennepin County we also need to be concerned about lay-offs and about sufficient funds being

September Membership Meeting
Tuesday, September 5
7:00 p.m.
Brookdale Library

Special order of business:
 Election of delegates to Council 5 Convention

October Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 3, 2006
Southdale Library

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

Minnesota AFL-CIO passes special dues increase

By Walter Hanson

On Friday May 19, 2006, I served as the Local 2822 delegate to the Minnesota AFL-CIO Special Convention, that passed a \$.25 per month dues increase. Some points about this dues increase are:

- ?? Local 2822 dues will not go up immediately. The \$.25 will come out of the dues already submitted to the International as part of our per capita dues.
- ?? One of the problems that caused the need for the dues increase is "The Change to Win" unions that have left the MN AFL-CIO. The leadership of the MN AFL-CIO pledged to work to bring those unions back into the fold.
- ?? The major purpose of the dues increase is to hire six staff people for what is called ALC's (Area Labor Councils). The ALC person's job will

Council 5 Convention

The Second Annual Council 5 Convention is set for Thursday, October 5 through Saturday, October 7 at the Sheraton-Bloomington Hotel. Events will include elections for Council 5 offices and executive board, addresses by major endorsed candidates for political office, and valuable seminars and celebration of the new council's continuing successes.

Council 5's organizing successes were celebrated at the Minnesota AFL-CIO Convention. Council 5 added 5,358 new members this past year. Our council now includes the clerical workers at HCMC, nurses at Mercy Hospital in Moose Lake, and child care providers in Hennepin, Ramsey, St. Louis and Benton counties.

Council 5 also reached its goal of 10% membership in PEOPLE five months early. The goal was set at the inaugural convention last fall. PEOPLE stands for

Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality. It is the political arm of the union. Getting more members involved in the political process, and expanding Council 5's PEOPLE war chest makes us much stronger going into this year's elections. Council 5 is one of the few councils in the country that has met the 10% goal, a fact recognized at the AFSCME International Convention in Chicago with a beautiful trophy.

Local 2822 is entitled to send 50 delegates to the convention. The Executive board is recommending sending 20 delegates and paying lost time. Election of delegates will be at the September 5 Membership Meeting at the Brookdale Library at 7:00 pm. Any full dues paying member who would like to attend the Convention should either come to that meeting or call a steward or officer. This is a wonderful opportunity to be in on the action of how the Council is run and to have input into the decisions of the Council.

What I learned on my summer vacation, or 5 hot summer days in Chicago at the Midwest School for Women Workers

By Lynn Stetler

Here are some high lights from the Midwest School for Women Workers at the University of Illinois in Chicago. I attended this conference with about 50 other women (and two men) in Chicago, July 16-21. The majority of the attendees including the instructors stayed in a dorm for the week.

It was fabulous to have each attendee introduce themselves after dinner the first night and tell us a little bit about themselves. We came from AFSCME, CWA (Communication Workers of America, Unite HERE (Hotel Employees, Restaurant Employees), SEIU(Service Employees International Union), a theatrical union in Chicago, Teamsters and others. We were first timers and old timers, we were young and we were old, we were white and we were people of color. We were all excited to be together and eager to learn.

There were many classes to choose from, all taught by women with incredible credentials, who seemed as excited to teach as we were to learn. I attended a week-long leadership class which was absolutely life changing for me. I learned about Labor law, FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act), Labor history, how to hold politicians accountable, and what to do if you are interested in running for office.

I learned that these women (and two men) like to party at night and talk about their union lives and work lives as much as I did. I learned that they have dreams about changing and improving their work lives and union lives. I learned that everything I heard about eating in a university cafeteria was pretty much true and that dorm life was ok for 5 days but probably not much longer. I learned that doing homework is still hard. I learned that though I may never see these women again, I will always remember them. I don't remember laughing so hard or learning so hard before.

I learned that I had really missed out by not attending this school before. Thanks so much to the Local for sending me.

A few things to convey

Jennifer McNair

I would like to tell everyone if you are having a problem at work "DO NOT QUIT!" If you do, the union cannot help you. Contact a steward first.

I also would like to tell you that if you have to utilize the "Family Medical Leave Act" there is an important qualifier that people miss when reading over this act. It is the number of qualifying hours to be protected by FMLA. This is the number of total hours worked before submitting your FMLA paperwork. Although they (Hennepin County) "do not strictly adhere to this", their words not mine, the number is 1250 actual hours worked. This excludes holidays, vacations, sick days and medical leaves. Please be aware of this.

My last thing, I would like to say a few words about the Leadership Conference I attended a few weeks back. The union is trying to change into the 21st Century. We can see this in the changes at Council 5, within our local, and, most importantly, in TRYING to change who runs our government. We all need to remember how critical it is to get out and vote, since we have the opportunity to vote our "bosses" into their jobs. This is why we have the candidate endorsements, P.E.O.P.L.E., and the new revamping at Council 5. What I saw was our Council 5, in particular, trying to put us on the same playing field as everyone else. It was good to see.

(Dues continued from page 1)

be to coordinate the unions in a particular geographic area to increase union power in that area.

An example that was given: there is a strike in Hibbing and you're trying to get people to support the strikers. It's pretty hard to get people up from Minneapolis, but the person from the Hibbing Area Labor Council can call all the local unions for that area and get them to give their support.

Another activity of the ALC staff person is political—working to get union members to register to vote and to help them get out to vote. One of the reasons for the special convention was to get the program up and running now, since the elections of 2006 are so important.

Questions raised during the convention

expressed concern about possible local control. Will the unions of the Area

Labor Council be able to name the person? Will they be able to set the job description they want and fire the person if they aren't doing a good job? MN AFL-CIO leadership said they understood the concerns. Part of the problem is that MN AFL-CIO is working on a reorganization plan and while ALC's will be a key part of it, all the details haven't been worked out. At the regular August 2006 convention more work will be done on the reorganization.

Update August 7-9, MN AFL-CIO Convention

The MN AFL-CIO Convention voted to continue the new program of ALC's (Area Labor Councils) with a paid staff person who is meant to coordinate activities including political actions, which was adopted in the Special Convention in May 2006.

The most specific action was to give a "no" vote to a resolution that was meant to repeal the \$.25 dues increase adopted to fund the paid staff people of the ALC.

The seven (one of the ALC's apparently has co-paid staff people doing the job) have so far been doing a good job according to the leadership of the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

A better sign to show how well this program is working is, unlike the special convention where several members were giving speeches of concern about local control, no one complained about lack of local control.

No further action was taken regarding the ALC's, in part because, apparently, there is no problem right now.

Angela Hallquist Mangen promoted

Local 2822 congratulates steward Angela Hallquist Mangen on her promotion to Service Center Supervisor at the Ridgedale Service Center.

As mentioned last month, with Julie Yakin's promotion, being involved in the union is not an impediment to advancing at Hennepin County.

37th AFSCME International Convention

A young man's view

By Neng Lor

AFSCME's International Convention was terrific, what an awesome and exciting organization! AFSCME had many great speakers; such as New York's Senator Hillary Clinton, talk show host Ed Schultz, actor Jimmy Schmits and the list goes on. AFSCME also had many exiting events, such as workshops, raffle drawings, and a huge rally for soon to be brothers and sisters working at Resurrection Hospital. I would continue on about the excitement and joy but you ought to be present to witness and experience it.

In attendance were many first timers (like myself), retirees, members aged 45 to 54, and surprisingly 8% of the attendees have been with the union for over 30 years, the chart below identifies those who were present.

Age	Race	Yrs. In Union
25 and under 1%	African-American 32%	Under 1 year 1%
25-34 4%	Asian/Pacific Islander 2%	2-5 years 9%
35-44 20%	Caucasian 53%	6-10 years 17%
45-54 43%	Hispanic/Latino 7%	11-20 years 37%
55-64 28%	Native American 2%	21-30 years 27%
65 and better 5%	Other Race 4%	30+ years 8%

I, unfortunately hit nearly all of the lowest percentages for: ages 25 and younger, Asian/Pacific Islander at 2%, and less than one year with the union.

Every union and organization, whether it is work related or not, thrives on active members. Our members consist of mostly baby boomers who are near retirement. And when retirement comes for our experienced baby boomer and "better" union members, what we fear just might become reality as our contract is already being threatened.

Imagine we're without a union, imagine we're in a private sector, and imagine if this private organization without a union doesn't have an option for collective bargaining. Would you still want to work today? Are you curious or afraid that you'll never receive the health care coverage you and/or your family need, the retirement you've been building today,

the benefits your union members stayed up over twenty-four hours negotiating for?

More union activism is needed. Being an active union member does not mean you are management's rival and it doesn't mean that you'll never get to be a supervisor or manager. Being active with the union means you'll know how to prepare for your future and think positively about retirement after your many deserving years of spectacular work. We have to build our union. As we slowly lose our members to retirement, we are gradually losing our benefits with them. If we are active now we can try to keep our membership at the same level for all categories. And as our experienced members and coworkers did for us many years ago and continue to do so, let us do it for our members and coworkers that will be with us for the many years ahead.

New activist's view

By Lori Berzins

We, our Local 2822, are a vital part of a machine! Unfortunately, I have recently learned, a political machine. I say unfortunately because most of us are not politically active or even aware of the candidates or their agendas. A lot of us are just simply disgusted with the way this country is being run and are feeling powerless.

"Public employees are under attack!" was one of the headlines of this year's convention. The 21st Century Initiative is intended to be a powerful, progressive attack for the rights of workers across this nation. Yes, there will be dues increases. It will be our responsibility to see that we utilize and put into action the backing that the International AFSCME is promising to us. It will be OUR responsibility to strengthen, not only our local, but hard working people all across this country. Union workers are extremely affected by politics at ALL levels: federal, state, county and municipal. (Did you know that a governor has the power to take away worker's rights to collective bargaining? This has happened in three different states, Indiana, Missouri and Kansas) We MUST get out and vote for candidates who support our rights and needs, candidates who are willing to fight for us. First, attend the monthly general assembly meetings! Second, If you do not attend monthly meetings or follow

politics, when an election is approaching, PLEASE attend your local's meeting and find out who we are endorsing and why.

It was so exhilarating, empowering and hopeful to see the thousands of delegates in Chicago standing up and speaking for me, you and all the public service workers across this nation. People all across this nation ARE very concerned and care greatly about OUR future as public employees. AFSCME International is listening to us and will listen to us!

I am submitting this article as a very newly active member of our labor union. I am very ashamed to admit that I have been a member of Local 2822 since 1989 but did not attend my first Local 2822 membership meeting until March of this year! Although my father had encouraged me to, at least, attend the monthly held meetings, my thought was "I pay my dues, they will take care of me." Since attending meetings, and even more so by attending AFSCME's national convention, I am learning that this is just not how it works. Although contract negotiations and employee grievances are a very important function of labor unions there is just so much more to it all.

In March of this year I was recruited to act as a union steward for our members. I felt honored! I, somewhat hesitantly, agreed to take on the responsibility. I attended 2 days of steward training at Council 5 headquarters in South St. Paul. It is required that union stewards attend all monthly general assembly meetings and also the monthly steward meetings. The opportunity to learn seems almost limitless! I not only intend to continue my services as union steward (which I feel very passionate about!) but, I also plan to take that scary leap into understanding the political arena!

Lastly, as a union steward, I am asking that you, too, take the responsibility and initiative to familiarize yourself with your union contract rights!

As a union member, this nation needs you and your support. Please get out and vote! If you are a fair share member, please increase your power and become a full member! And, please support the PEOPLE organization! (Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality).

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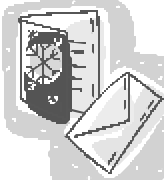
Bulletin Board

The New Voice deadline is September 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 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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Jody Goers	612-596-8080	Sheriff	Jail
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Lynn Stetler	952-847-8569 Urgent: 763-245-8285	Library	Ridgedale Library, Collection Management
Velva Stewart	612-596-0722	MS MHP	Grain Exchange Bldg
Theresa Smith	612-596-0826	Mental Health Clinic	1801 Nicollet Ave. S.
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:

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.