

**September Membership Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 11  
7:00 p.m.  
Ridgedale Library**

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**October Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, October 2, 7:00 p.m.  
Brookdale Library**

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

## Union opening remarks

By Steve Marincel  
Local 2822 Field Representative,  
AFSCME Council 5  
July 30, 2007

Hennepin County has a state and national reputation as an excellent full service county. This excellence is created everyday. What makes this happen? It is the employees, our members, who work for Hennepin County. They produce the highest quality work possible, and they do it as efficiently as the laws and rules they must operate under allow. There is no more skilled and dedicated workforce anywhere.

Our members operate a first class

*(Remarks continued on page 2)*

## Management presents its proposal

On July 30 the six AFSCME locals at Hennepin County presented management with our proposals for the next contract. On August 13 management presented its opening proposal to us.

Keep in mind this is management's initial proposal. We have seven more sessions to work this out. But here are some of the things they want to take away:

- Part time employee's health insurance—only those hired for 64 hours or more will be covered—new hires.
- PTO—paid time off—instead of vacation and sick leave, those choosing that would have two or four fewer days per year.
- PTO hours may be accumulated to a total of 480 hours. Currently one can accrue and take as a severance package 800 hours.
- Putting your stability check into a Health Care Savings account.
- Employees choosing single coverage will make a contribution toward such coverage—amount to be determined.

Here is what they offered:

- 2008—1% or \$.15/hour whichever is greater to all steps in the current ranges, except for the maximum steps in each range.
- Increase the maximum step for each range by 1.25%
- 2009—repeat the above.

The entire management proposal can be seen on Labor Relations website.

The union's opening proposal can be seen at AFSCMEMN.org, click on "Bargaining."

There are several things you can do to help us get a good contract:

- Become a full dues paying member.
- Wear AFSCME green and stickers on negotiation days: 8/27, 9/10, 9/24, 10/8, 10/22, 11/5, 11/22
- Write County Commissioners about your excellent work and encourage them to set a levy high enough for you to continue your excellent work and even be fairly compensated for it.
- Phone bank AFSCME members on August 27 and 28 from 5:30-8:30 at the council office, contact president Malecki for details [mmafscme2822@aol.com](mailto:mmafscme2822@aol.com). A light dinner will be provided. (Come when you can, leave when you must.)
- Rally during lunch on September 18. Government Center Plaza. We are 4000 member strong and everyone's presence is vital to demonstrate that we care about our contract.
- Join the Action Team or the Strike Committee. To volunteer for the Action Team, contact Brenda Wood at: [cbwoodfamily@charter.net](mailto:cbwoodfamily@charter.net). To volunteer for the Strike Committee contact Roy Elliott at: [relliotthenncty@yahoo.com](mailto:relliotthenncty@yahoo.com).

(Remarks continued from page 1)

county. This is in spite of the fact that, when comparing Hennepin with other Minnesota counties, Hennepin has more of the same problems, more serious problems and more different kinds of problems for its employees to contend with. Unfortunately, our members' compensation is not first-rate. Wages do not reflect the higher level of quality and efficiency at which our members are required to perform. And the health benefits they receive continue to take more and more money out of their pockets.

In recent times Hennepin County has invested heavily in the County's infrastructure, whether is in buildings (e.g. new and remodeled libraries), computer resources, roads, public transportation or things like radio communications for law enforcement. (In addition, it has recently chosen to invest County-raised special tax dollars in a new baseball stadium.) Referring to the infrastructure, the County has been able to do this investing at lower cost because of the County's AAA Bond rating. We want to respectfully remind you that if the County wishes to maintain its AAA Bond rating, as we have

so often heard across this bargaining table and on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor of the Government Center, then the County's leaders need to recognize that it is the high quality and efficient work that its employees perform day-in and day-out that ultimately makes the current AAA Bond rating possible.

Hennepin County is now at a crossroads. As our AFSCME brothers and sisters stated in their State contract negotiations this year, "**It's our time.**" It is time for the County to heavily invest in the greatest asset the County possesses, our members, your employees. Our members continue to do their part by doing more and more with less and less, i.e. an ever expanding workload and often a shrinking number of employees to do it, resulting in more stress for the remaining employees. It is time for you, the County, to show your employees, **by how you compensate them**, that you truly recognize that your employees are first rate.

**A Full Service County Made Excellent** is what Hennepin County is. We want a fair wage and an affordable health benefit that reflects the County's excellence and our excellence as employees represented by our Union, AFSCME.

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## Vacation donation

Jackie Long, an OSIII, who works in the Probation Department, has to have surgery on her back on August 10th. She is a mom with 2 young children and was on an extended maternity leave and has not accrued much vacation or sick leave since she has been back. Depending on how long Jackie's recovery is, she may need vacation donations. She has signed up to receive it if it becomes necessary.

Employees can donate as little as one hour of vacation. It will not be taken from your vacation accrual until it is used. So although you donate some vacation it may not be used if the employee doesn't need it or if there are enough other donations that they don't get to yours. You will not be notified if your donation is used. And the person

receiving the donation will not know who donated.

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 to see interactive version, click Vacation Waiver Donation and Authorization form, enter your I-Notes sign on, and 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 of that page.

## Bridge collapses AFSCME workers are there

From Council 5 Website

The bridge collapse has horrified us. In America, bridges should not collapse. Today our union mourns the tragedy along with the families of those who are dead, missing and hurt.

AFSCME members were on the bridge when it collapsed and we're making sure that our inspectors are safe. We already know that one inspector was injured and hospitalized for surgery.

With closure of the largest north-south highway into downtown, our Highway Helpers and Commercial Vehicle Inspectors are doing an amazing job of traffic and crowd control. Our members who work for the Department of Transportation are committed to moving commuters safely. We welcome federal disaster relief so we can help get 35W moving again.

AFSCME members are some of the everyday heroes who brought calm to this disaster. We saved lives as part of the medical teams at HCMC, Fairview and Regions hospitals. Our 911 and radio control operators took calls from motorists plunging into the river and dispatched first responders. Our members in Emergency Management/Homeland Security have been working around the clock behind the scenes.

More AFSCME members continue to be mobilized. Blood services are being provided by our members with the St. Paul Red Cross. Bottled water is being delivered to the disaster site by our correctional officers. Our members are also part of a Critical Incident Stress Management Team that will debrief first responders and provide psychological first aid to victims.

"Everyone did what was needed without hesitation," said Jim Ullmer of Local 3142. "This tragedy has brought out the best in AFSCME members and Minnesotans."

# Opportunity as recognition

By Jenna Carlson

I recently read an article by a management consultant, Cindy Venrue, called "Opportunity as Recognition." The author had surveyed employees about meaningful recognition. The examples they provided most frequently were examples of opportunities they had been given, because these opportunities, albeit more work, also stated, "we believe in you! You have proven yourself."

She went on to state that opportunity is one of the four key elements of recognition that works along with respect, praise and thanks. Respect is the core element and the least tangible. Praise and thanks are demonstrations of immediate appreciation, but opportunity "provides substantial proof that the individual is valued."

Valued opportunities can take many forms: promotion, training, coaching. Training is proof that the individual is worth investing in. Many describe new assignments and new responsibilities as valued opportunities.

I have worked for the Service Center for twenty years. I remember, when I first started as a permanent employee, a union steward gave me the opportunity to be a full member of Local 2822. I asked what the benefit of that full membership was. He said I got the opportunity "to vote." So each contract and election I would go to "vote". Otherwise I treated my membership as an insurance policy. About fifteen years passed. My employer offered me an opportunity to have a full time position as opposed to being part time. I became a robot. There was virtually no growth. The only recognition was a "gig" (photocopied mistakes in my mailbox—more recently sent to me in e-mail). More time passed and I was given the opportunity to be a Senior Service Center Representative. The "robot" took it. Any further education classes or opportunities for recognition were denied.

One day I got a new supervisor who fought the powers that be to give me an opportunity. I got to go to classes (training). OK, now that is twenty years that have passed.

About nine months ago a co-worker, a union steward, asked if I had thought about being a union steward. Opportunity! The union was recognizing me without my doing anything. They trained me. They validated me. Next I was elected to the Local 2822 Executive Board. Then I was invited to be on the contract negotiations table team. Now they've given me the opportunity to go to class to learn about organizing. That's what I call recognition. I have been recognized more in nine months by my union than I have been by my employer in twenty years.

If you want to go places and have opportunities made available to you, let me know! I am hoping to be stopping into your office soon. Get some recognition. In your career life, take some opportunities your union offers. Use your talents; develop a skill.

Our Local is in contract negotiations right now. Sign a new-member card, if you are not paying full union dues. Help the action committee. Join the strike team. Volunteer for a phone bank. Rally. The opportunities are endless. Be recognized for a change! You will be surprised at the renewed energy you bring to your life.

## Dignity and respect It can be done

Following an incident in an office in the Human Services and Public Health Department (HSPHD), Patrice Hughes, the Human Service Program Manager, became aware of severe dignity and respect issues in that office. The clerical employees were allowed to explain how they were treated by supervisors and individuals in other job classes in that office.

In response, Ms Hughes sent the following (edited to prevent embarrassment to the parties involved)

e-mail to the clerical staff:

"I'd like to thank each of you for your participation in the debriefing session on last Thursday. I hope you found it helpful. It meant very much to me to know that you were comfortable with allowing me to be present during the session. I must say, I was appalled at the conditions in which many of you work and the fact that many of you have had to experience such disrespect. I'm sure I don't have to tell you that, in general, you have the right to be treated with both dignity and respect and that Hennepin County takes this very seriously.

"I am optimistic that you will begin to see a change in the way you are treated by (other) staff in the near future. I sent an e-mail to (manager of other staff) letting him know that Support Staff will no longer tolerate any form of disrespect from the (other) staff, or anyone else, for that matter. I informed him that I have asked you to begin, immediately, documenting any such incidents, in writing. In addition I told him that there is to be no retaliation and that if any of you perceive retaliation, you will document that, as well. Each incident will be dealt with, appropriately."

Obviously everyone will work better at that location if everyone is treated with dignity and respect. If there are similar issues in your work area, contact a steward and see if a meeting can be set up to clear the air and create a respectful work environment.

### Get Out of Debt

Check out the  
AFSCME Advantage/Union Plus  
Credit Counseling Program  
—a benefit specially designed  
to help union members  
get out of debt.

Go on line to:  
[http://www.afscme.org/  
members/1231.cfm](http://www.afscme.org/members/1231.cfm) Union Plus  
Credit Counseling

## Local 2822 Officers

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


# Bulletin Board

**The New Voice deadline is September 11.** 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](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

**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.