



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, June 16, 2015

afscmemn.org

Budget Deal Averts Shutdown ...

The 2,000 AFSCME members who received layoff notices can exhale. There will be no state shutdown on July 1. Despite a \$2 billion budget surplus, the Senate and the House had to go into special session before they could hammer out a deal with Gov. Dayton on the final state budget bills. At 2 a.m. June 13, they finally got their job done. That means the nearly 9,500 state employees who were facing a potential lockout can keep doing their jobs, too.

... Now It's Time for a Contract

Negotiators will be at the bargaining table every day from June 22 -25, trying to get a fair contract for the 17,465 AFSCME members who work for the state. It's an uphill battle: The state is still seeking concessions on health insurance, overtime pay, and medical leave. During "push week," your negotiators ask you to show your support and unity by:

- Wearing green every day.
- Displaying your Respect/Disrespect signs.
- Talking with coworkers about what respect looks like.

To keep up to date during "push week," stay in touch with your delegates to the Negotiations Assembly or with other local leaders at your worksite.

MPR Features Safe Staffing Campaign

The Safe Staffing fight being waged by AFSCME's DHS locals gains even more visibility this Thursday, June 18, on Minnesota Public Radio.

Jackie Spanjers, president of Local 1307 at Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center, will hash out issues with DHS commissioner Lucinda Jesson. Spanjers will discuss the surge in violent assaults on staff and the contributing role played by DHS policies and state laws like the "48-hour rule."

Details: The discussion is scheduled for 11 a.m. on MRP News with Tom Weber. Tune in to 91.1 FM in the Twin Cities. To listen in other parts of the state, find your closest MPR station at <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/radio/stations>.

Derail Fast Track – Again

Putting international trade deals under "fast track" rules makes it impossible for Congress to fix bad policies. It undermines American independence. "Fast track" shoves democracy to the side. That clears the way for giant corporations to:

- Outsource American jobs to low-wage countries.
- Drive down wages for the American workers who still have jobs.
- Privatize public services.

That's why Wall Street is strong-arming the House to reverse course – just like the Senate did – cave in, and give the president "fast track" authority.

Had enough? Contact your Congress(wo)man.

Urge them to vote against "fast track" – which is known officially as trade promotion authority.

To be patched through, call 1-855-712-7845.

Amazing Results

DHS Local 2181 raised an astounding \$37,484 through its benefit for the Macy Kujava family on May 16 in Brainerd.

Kujava, a Local 2181 steward, and her 4-year-old daughter, Sophia, suffered severe injuries when their car was hit head-on by a pickup truck in January. Their road to recovery continues to be lengthy and expensive: Sophia is back home, but Macy remains in a coma in a medical facility in Brainerd.

You can still make a monetary donation to the "Macy Kujava Benefit Fund" account at any Bremer Bank location in Minnesota. To find a branch near you, go to www.bremer.com/Home/Locations.aspx.

Another Woman of Distinction

Chris Brazelton, a child support officer in Hennepin County Human Services Local 34, was among nine honorees inducted into the Minnesota DFL's Women's Hall of Fame on June 14. Congratulations!

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Picnic Seeks Donations, Volunteers

The 2015 AFSCME Family Picnic needs donations. This annual rank-and-file picnic relies on contributions from AFSCME locals and volunteers to make the day a success. Organizers are asking for:

- Pledges for potluck food and desserts.
- Volunteers to staff the picnic.
- Cash donations to buy meals to grill, buy discounted Water Park tickets, and pay for the Pavilion.

To learn more, contact Duane Gatzke at 651-472-2787 or kkirk77dq@comcast.net. Make checks payable to: "AFSCME Family Picnic / Duane R. Gatzke."

The picnic is Sunday Aug. 16 at Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood.

It's Time to Reward Great Effort

Council 5 is accepting nominations for its annual Achievement Awards. The awards honor individual members, an AFSCME local, or a group of members or locals who made outstanding contributions in the last year in these four areas:

- Communications
- Local union development
- Organizing
- Political activism

All nominations must be received by Friday Aug. 7. For details on each award, and where to submit nominations, see afscmemn.org.

Making Economics Make Sense

A free "Common Sense Economics" workshop takes place Wednesday June 24 in St. Paul. The session explores what's behind growing economic inequality, why the way things are is not the way they have to stay, and how workers can make sure the rules of the economy work for more Americans.

Details: Events start at 7 p.m. at the East Side Freedom Library, 1105 Greenbrier St., Saint Paul. The program is sponsored by the library and the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation.

Movie Shows Solidarity's True Colors

When British miners went on strike in 1984 against Margaret Thatcher's union-busting policies, strikers in the Welsh village of Onllwyn gained unusual allies. "Pride," a 2014 release, is based on the true story of gay and lesbian activists who supported the miners and their families.

Details: Labor Movie Night begins at 6 p.m. Friday June 19 at the Minneapolis Labor Center, 312 Central Ave. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

Unions Join Twin Cities Pride Parade

Wear green and join the Minnesota AFL-CIO in walking this year's Twin Cities Pride Parade. The parade is Sunday June 28, beginning at 11 a.m. in downtown Minneapolis.

For details or to RSVP, go to Facebook and search for "Minnesota AFL-CIO at the 2015 GLBT Pride Parade."

Locals Ratify Contracts

Duluth Public Schools. Food service workers in this unit of Local 66 ratified a three-year contract through June 30, 2016. Pay increases 26 cents an hour, retroactive to July 1, 2014, and another 26 cents an hour beginning this July 1. The contract also adds Labor Day as a paid holiday and expands sick leave.

Lake Superior Public Schools. Administrative assistants in this unit of Local 66 ratified a two-year contract through June 30, 2017. Pay increases by 2 percent on July 1 and another 2 percent on July 1, 2016. In addition, the employer raises its deferred compensation contribution by \$200, and increases the total deferred compensation pool by \$1,500 a year.

City of Stillwater. Members in the unit of Local 517 ratified a two-year contract through 2016. Pay increases by 3 percent, retroactive to Jan. 1, and by another 3 percent on Jan. 1, 2016. In addition, the employer increases its health-insurance contribution each year, and will pay up to \$160 for safety shoes for eligible workers.