



# ACTION UPDATE

**One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers**

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

[www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org)

## More Walker Workers Join AFSCME

Congratulations and welcome to 70 workers at Walker Care Suites in Edina, who voted by a 2-1 margin to join AFSCME on Jan. 18. The assisted-living facility is part by the same organization that runs Walker Methodist Care Center in south Minneapolis, where 320 members of Local 3532 work.

Walker management pledged to remain neutral in the organizing drive – but didn't. Workers, however, stood strong against tactics such as mandatory meetings with managers, a barrage of anti-union literature, and pleas from managers to "give us another chance."

## State Contracts Move Forward

Bills are moving through the Legislature to finally ratify the 2011-2013 state contracts. That would give state workers their first pay raise in three-and-a-half years.

The joint Subcommittee on Employee Relations – now under DFL leadership – approved the contracts on Jan. 28. This is the same subcommittee that, under Republican control, rejected the contracts last August. The contracts now go through the regular committee process before receiving floor votes in the House and Senate, then being sent to the governor.

Once that happens, new provisions kick in, including the 2 percent pay raise workers were supposed to receive on Jan. 2. The AFSCME contracts, which cover more than 18,000 members, run through June 30.

## Special Elections Take Place Feb. 12

Special legislative elections are scheduled Feb. 12 in:

- House District 14A. Labor is endorsing **Joanne Dorsher** to replace Steve Gottwalt, who resigned. The district is eastern Stearns County, including Waite Park, St. Augusta, and much of St. Cloud.
- House District 19A. Labor is endorsing **Clark P. Johnson** to replace Terry Morrow, who resigned. The district is Nicollet County and parts of LeSueur and Blue Earth Counties. It includes St. Peter, Kasota, North Mankato, and parts of Mankato.

Polls are open on Tuesday Feb. 12 from 7 a.m.-8 p.m.

## Don't Miss Day on the Hill Feb. 26

With new DFL majorities in the Legislature, and a DFL governor, this is Minnesota's Moment. It's a chance to fix the budget without gimmicks, to raise revenue fairly, and to build an economy that gives everyone a chance to get ahead. But there are no guarantees. We must seize this opportunity while we have it. That's why we need *you* at Day on the Hill on Tuesday Feb. 26.

**Details:** Events begin at 9 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront in St. Paul. There's training in the morning, a rally at the Capitol at 12:30 p.m., and meetings with legislators in the afternoon.

Members and locals can register online: Go to [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org); click the "Day on the Hill" button in the left column. Registration is \$20, which includes lunch and a shuttle bus.

## Local Presidents Convene Feb. 8

Feb. 1 is the registration deadline for the next local presidents meeting, which takes place Feb. 8 from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Council 5's South St. Paul office. Topics include building power for better contracts, Day on the Hill, and our 2013 legislative agenda.

**To register:** Contact Amy Torgeson at 651-450-4990 or [council5@afscmemn.org](mailto:council5@afscmemn.org). Presidents who cannot attend should send another officer in their place.

## Learn All About 'Nellie'

The world premiere play about Minnesota union and civil rights activist Nellie Stone Johnson continues through Feb. 17 at the History Theatre in St. Paul.

Special "labor parties" take place Feb. 1 and Feb. 9. On those days, \$5 of every ticket will be donated to the Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to students of color in MnSCU. For times and ticket information, see [www.historytheatre.com](http://www.historytheatre.com); click "Shows," then click the "Nellie" link.

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## Locals Ratify Their Contracts

**City of St. Paul.** Members of Local 1842 and 2508 ratified a three-year contract through 2015. It includes pay raises of 1 percent in April 2013; 0.5 percent in October 2013; 2 percent in April 2014; and 2 percent in April 2015. The new agreement also changes how oral reprimands are handled, clarifies the status of provisional employees, and increases the number of employees eligible for a uniform allowance.

**City of Two Harbors.** Members of Local 1123 ratified a two-year contract for 2013 and 2014. It includes pay raises of 2 percent each January, plus an additional raise of 10 cents an hour next year. It also lets more employees cash out unused sick leave, but raises the maximum out-of-pocket costs for insurance.

**City of Wayzata.** Members of Local 224 ratified a one-year contract for 2013. It includes a 2 percent pay raise, and keeps city health-insurance contributions the same: 100 percent for individual coverage, approximately 83 percent for family coverage.

**YWCA of Duluth.** Members in this unit of Local 3558 ratified a two-year contract for 2013 and 2014. It provides raises of 25 cents an hour each year, adds four more hours of paid personal leave, adds three positions to the bargaining unit, adds prorated holiday pay for part-time employees, and gives some staff greater flexibility in using sick leave.

## Warm Hearts, Cold Everything Else

AFSCME members are taking the Polar Bear Plunge again this year, to benefit Special Olympics.

On Saturday, Feb. 9, members of MnDOT Local 868 make their icy immersion at 1:30 p.m. at Foster Arend Park in Rochester.

A week later, at 3 p.m. Feb. 16, Pam Sater and Shelby Hall, of Moose Lake DHS Local 1092, jump into Lake Superior from Canal Park in Duluth.

**To pledge:** For the Rochester jumpers, go to [www.plungemn.org/team/mndotdistrict6](http://www.plungemn.org/team/mndotdistrict6).

For the Duluth jumpers, go to [www.plungemn.org/team/thewalkingstiffs](http://www.plungemn.org/team/thewalkingstiffs).

## Film Chronicles Great Black Union

February's Labor Movie Night in Minneapolis features "10,000 Black Men Named George," about A. Phillip Randolph and the creation of the Sleeping Car Porters union. The film is Feb. 15, at 6 p.m., in Room 356 of the United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE. The movie is free, but donations are appreciated. Pizza and beer will be available.

Council 5 Next Wave and University of Minnesota Clerical Local 3800 are sponsoring the film series, which runs the third Friday of every month.

## Union Women Won't Retreat at Retreat

Strategies for finding your voice, finding your power, organizing, mobilizing, and advocating for family-friendly workplaces all are on the agenda of the next Minnesota Union Women's Retreat.

Featured speakers include Karen Lewis, who revitalized the Chicago Teachers Union and led last year's historic strike, and Elizabeth Cuero Badillo, a leader of the port workers union in Colombia, the most dangerous place on Earth to be a union activist.

The retreat, organized by the Labor Education Service at the University of Minnesota, takes place April 24-26 at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge in Deerwood. Conference fees range from \$393-\$497, which includes lodging, meals, and materials.

**Make arrangements:** The registration deadline is March 21; arrangements for scholarships, child care, interpreters, and accessibility or dietary accommodations must be made by March 1.

For complete details and to register online, go to [www.carlsonschool.umn.edu/labor-education-service](http://www.carlsonschool.umn.edu/labor-education-service).

## Save the Dates

- AFSCME Family Child Care Conference: May 3-5, Madison, Wis.
- AFSCME Next Wave Conference: July 12-14, Detroit (Marriott Renaissance Center)
- AFSCME Women's Conference: Sept. 20-22, Denver (Hyatt Regency)