



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

www.afscmemn.org

Corrections Members Vote on Offer

A state contract ratification vote takes place Dec. 3-6 for the 1,900 members in Corrections Unit 8. The Unit 8 Negotiations Assembly is unanimously recommending ratification of the tentative agreement.

Voting in person: Voting and information sessions are scheduled in Bearville (Togo), Faribault, Lino Lakes, Moose Lake, Red Wing, Rush City, Shakopee, St. Cloud, and Stillwater.

For the exact voting times and location in each city, go to www.afscmemn.org; click "Bargaining Updates," then "Corrections Unit 8," then "Onsite Voting Locations."

Voting by mail: Members who previously requested a mail ballot must make sure they return their ballot so Council 5 receives it no later than Thursday Dec. 6. Ballots will be counted on Dec. 7.

Vote 'Seide' for HealthPartners Board

AFSCME members with HealthPartners insurance are urged to vote in the organization's election for its board of directors.

We recommend re-electing Council 5 executive director Eliot Seide, so he can continue as a strong advocate for consumers and for quality, affordable health care. Ballots and instructions are scheduled to be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 30. Voters have until Dec. 17 to return their ballot by mail. You can also vote online at www.healthpartners.com/public/about/board/elections. (Full instructions for voting online can be found in the ballot envelope.)

Don't Forget: Boycott Crystal Sugar

With holiday baking season coming on fast, don't forget to boycott Crystal Sugar. In addition to its name brand, the sugar-beet co-op also produces private-label and store brands for many major grocery chains, including Target. Don't buy these brands, either.

The best way to avoid buying any Crystal Sugar product is to buy cane sugar instead (such as C&H or Domino). The nationwide boycott continues until American Crystal Sugar ends its 16-month lockout of 1,300 workers.

Make Christmas Happen

You can donate gifts, toys, household goods, or cash for families of locked-out sugar workers in Minnesota, Iowa, and North Dakota as part of labor's Operation Christmas Solidarity.

Donations can be mailed or delivered by Dec. 17 to the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, 411 Main St. #202, St. Paul, MN 55102. (Make checks payable to Labor Studies and Resource Center; put "Operation Christmas Solidarity" in the memo line.)

Help put food on the table: You can help feed families in need through the Labor of Love campaign, coordinated by St. Paul AFL-CIO Community Services. Donations will purchase gift cards that families can use at union grocers. Please make your contribution by Dec. 3.

Make your check payable to Labor Studies Resource Center and mail it to: Labor of Love, 411 Main St. #202, St. Paul, MN 55102.

Next Wave Plans Holiday Bash

Council 5's Next Wave is holding a holiday party on Saturday Dec. 8. Festivities begin at 7 p.m. at the Uptown Green Mill, 2625 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, lower level. You can RSVP at next.wave.minnesota@gmail.com or on Facebook at "Next Wave Minnesota." Guests are encouraged to bring monetary contributions for locked-out sugar workers and their families.

SEPC Seeks Trustee Candidates

Nominations are being accepted until Dec. 21 to fill the rest of a two-year term for trustee on the State Employee Policy Committee. The term lasts until spring 2014.

Send nominations to Council 5 state director Jo Pels at jo.pels@afscmemn.org, or to SEPC president John Hillyard at johnhillyard@aol.com.

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Sale Features Union-Made Goods

When we do holiday shopping this year, we can make sure the workers who made our gifts weren't exploited along the way. That's why the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition is hosting a holiday sale that features only union-made and fair-trade items.

The sale takes place Sunday Dec. 2, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., at the CWA Local 7200 hall, 3521 E. Lake St., Minneapolis. Clothes, crafts, and other items will be from Minnesota's own Union House and Ten Thousand Villages.

The event the Fair Trade Coalition, which promotes trade policies supporting social, environmental, and workplace justice.

Learn Truths about Secure Retirement

A new union video stands up to the attacks on our nation's retirement system and sets the facts straight – for workers who are counting the days till retirement, and also for young workers who won't retire for decades.

The video highlights straight-forward solutions, including a simple fix to Social Security to guarantee that a worker who is 25 years old today will still be able to collect full benefits 50 years from now.

To arrange a showing at your local meeting or workplace, contact Council 5's Retirees United at retirees@afscmemn.org.

SEPC Seeks State Contract Proposals

Dec. 3 is the deadline to submit contract and inequity proposals for negotiations on the 2013-2015 State of Minnesota collective bargaining agreement. All proposals must come directly from a Local and be signed by the Local president.

SEPC delegates: Dec. 14 is the deadline for locals to submit updated lists of delegates and alternates to the State Employee Policy Committee. These lists take effect at the Feb. 4 Negotiations Assembly meeting in Bloomington.

Download forms: To submit a proposal or to update your delegate credentials, go to www.afscmemn.org; click "Bargaining Updates," then "State of Minnesota 2013-15." Download the appropriate form.

Who Is Congress Listening To?

The elections are over. Our fight is not.

Corporations and right-wing billionaires are trying to strong-arm Congress over the Jan. 1 fiscal deadline. They want to raise taxes on the middle class; keep the Bush tax giveaways for themselves; and slash Social Security, Medicare, and other benefits that ordinary people rely on. We can't let them get away with it.

What you can do: Tell our U.S. senators that we expect them to protect – not attack – the middle class. Go to www.afscme.org/future and send *your* message.