



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

www.afscmemn.org

State Contract Vote Gets Under Way

Members in state executive branch agencies can vote the week of Aug. 5 on tentative contract agreements for 2013-2015. One proposal covers 16,200 workers in Units 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7; a second proposal covers about 1,900 workers in Corrections Unit 8.

Council 5's Delegate Assembly is recommending ratification of both tentative agreements. Details about the proposed contracts will be available at more than 70 voting sites throughout the state Aug. 5-9.

Voting information is available on Council 5's website.

Go to www.afscmemn.org; click "Bargaining Updates," then "State of Minnesota 2013-15." You'll find:

- Exact days, times and locations of voting near you
- Highlights of the tentative agreements

Child-Care Providers Win in Court

A federal judge dismissed two right-wing lawsuits July 28 and gave the go-ahead for in-home child-care providers to unionize in Minnesota.

Chief Judge Michael Davis also refused to issue an injunction that would block a union election.

The judge's rulings uphold a state law that allows a vote among 12,700 licensed and legally unlicensed providers who receive state subsidies. Council 5 has been working with providers for eight years to help them gain a voice in lifting their profession and the quality of care they provide.

Bloomington Workers Win Court Ruling

A state Appeals Court has upheld the choice of Bloomington parks workers to join AFSCME. A three-judge panel unanimously rejected the city's claim and agreed that the parks workers are an appropriate bargaining unit and can unionize.

The ruling is the latest in a string of defeats for the city, which has been fighting its parks workers since they filed for a union election in April 2012. The stall tactics have cost Bloomington taxpayers more than \$82,000 in outside legal bills.

The workers are now trying to wrap up negotiations on their first contract.

It's Picnic Time Already!

The annual AFSCME Family Picnic takes place Sunday Aug. 4, from 1-5 p.m., at Battle Creek Park in Maplewood. The picnic – organized by AFSCME volunteers – features grilled burgers and hot dogs, potluck side dishes, soft drinks, games, fun, and fellowship for members, retirees, and their families.

The park, at McKnight and Upper Afton Roads, includes a pavilion, playground, and pool with water slides. Aquatic passes are available for the first 80 children.

Want to volunteer? Contact Duane Gatzke at kkirk77dg@comcast.net.

Volunteer – and More – at the Fair

The State Fair is less than a month away. Join other AFSCME members and retirees in volunteering for the Council 5 kiosk at the AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion. We'll be promoting a better life for all of us, starting with raising the minimum wage to \$9.50/hour by 2015. The Fair runs Aug. 22-Sept. 2. Shifts are available most evenings (4-7:30 p.m.). If there's a day that works for you, contact Michael Kuchta at 651-287-0537 or michael.kuchta@afscmemn.org. Volunteers get an AFSCME T-shirt and a free ticket to the Fair.

Picnic Toasts 10 Years of Action

River Valley Action celebrates its 10th anniversary with a community picnic Aug. 7 from 6-8 p.m. at Pioneer Park, 515 N. 2nd St., Stillwater.

The group – started with seed money from labor unions – has been a progressive voice in the St. Croix Valley on fair taxes, public services, sustainable transportation, environmental protection, and more.

The picnic, on the bluff overlooking the St. Croix River, features free food, beverages, and music. State auditor Rebecca Otto is among featured guests.

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Local Members Ratify Contracts

Human Development Center. Members in this unit of Local 3558 ratified a three-year contract through 2015. It includes pay raises totaling 6 percent, and improves language in a range of areas, including step increases; probation; transfers; layoffs; and sick leave, union leave, and funeral leave.

Minneapolis Building Commission. Members in this Local 9 unit ratified a three-year agreement through 2013. The agreement verifies step and longevity increases due in 2011 and 2012; provides a 2.5 percent pay raise retroactive to January 2013; increases longevity pay by 1.025 percent this year; and increases eligibility for funeral leave.

Minneapolis Emergency Communications 911. Members in this Local 9 unit ratified a wage reopener. The agreement reinstates steps in 2013, and provides 2 percent raises in base pay, longevity pay, and shift differential, retroactive to April 1.

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. Members in this Local 9 unit ratified a one-year contract for 2013. The contract provides 2 percent pay raises retroactive to Jan. 1; adds no-strike/no-lockout protections; and changes requirements in such areas as scheduling, layoffs, and holiday pay.

City of Plymouth. Members of Local 3445 ratified a three-year contract through 2015. The agreement includes a 2 percent pay raise, plus an additional increase of 10 cents an hour, in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The 2013 increases are retroactive to Jan. 1.

Regions Hospital. Members of Local 722 in the service support unit ratified a two-year contract through June 30, 2015. The contract includes 2 percent pay raises in 2013 and 2014, an additional 1 percent "market adjustment" this year for 110 custodial workers, and performance pay raises of up to 1 percent more. The contract also holds the line on health costs, and makes a number of language improvements.

Get Your Voice in Shape

Labor music moves front and center when the "Almanac Trail Concert Tour" stops in Minneapolis Aug. 8. Rik Palieri and George Mann team with local musicians to resurrect the legendary 1940s tour by Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and others that spread the union gospel and gave folk music new relevance.

Details: The evening of story and song begins at 7:30 p.m. at Minneapolis Eagles 34, 2507 E. 25th St. Admission is free, thanks to support from CWA's Minnesota State Council.

One Last Chance to Honor Great Work

Aug. 16 is the deadline to submit nominations for Council 5's annual Achievement Awards. The awards honor outstanding activism by individuals and locals. Awards are given for political activism, organizing, local union development, and communications during 2012.

For full details on each award and how to submit nominations, see the story at www.afscmemn.org.

3 Local Activists Die

- Services were held July 26 for **Todd Nelson**, a delegate assembly representative from Moose Lake DOC Local 3887, and a corrections officer at the Moose Lake prison. Nelson was killed July 19 in a car crash in Blackhoof Township.
- Services were held July 25 for **James Stevenson Jr.**, a steward in Hennepin County Local 34 and crew leader for the county's Sentencing to Service program. Stevenson died unexpectedly of natural causes on July 15.
- Services were held July 10 for **Billie Borchardt**, an AFSCME activist and secretary of Rush City DOC Local 1539. Borchardt, a corrections officer at Rush City, was killed June 27 in a multi-car accident on Highway 65 near Grandy.