

ISSUE

02

SEPTEMBER  
2024

QUARTERLY  
NEWSLETTER

# Local 221

MnDOT Central Office | Metro District



## General Membership Meetings

Union Members are welcome to attend the monthly General Membership meetings.

Dinner starts at 5:30 pm  
Meeting starts at 6:00 pm

### HILTON DOUBLETREE HOTEL

2540 Cleveland Avenue  
Roseville, MN 55113

### UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Fourth Thursday of the Month

Thursday, Aug 22, 2024

Thursday, Sept 19, 2024

(week early due to C5 convention)

Thursday, Oct 24, 2024

## Facebook

[Afcscme Local 221 - MnDOT Metro |](#)

[Facebook](#)

## Local 221 Website

<https://www.afscmemn.org/local-221->

[mndot-central-office-metro](#)

## AFSCME Council 5 Website

<https://www.afscmemn.org/>

## this issue

Workers Memorial Day **P.1**

Michael Gau Memorial Bridge Dedication **P.3**

Washington DC Day on the Hill **P.5**

RISE Community Outreach Program **P.6**

## Workers Memorial Day

### These Chairs

We shall remember these chairs.  
These chairs are used for many things;  
meetings, lunchrooms, retirement  
gatherings,  
All of these chairs were filled.

Today's function is unlike any other.  
It is April 29, 2024  
Workers Memorial Day,  
Today we reflect and remember those  
who have passed way too soon.

These Chairs  
would be filled with  
Transportation industry employees.  
These Chairs  
are reserved for the workers who  
never went home that day.

These Chairs  
Are reserved for husbands, wives,  
mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters,  
aunts, uncles, and grandparents  
who are not  
here with us anymore.

These vests and hard hats were  
carefully placed upon the empty chairs.  
The speakers spoke;  
photos were taken.  
Those in attendance  
filed quietly past the empty chairs.

The crowd dispersed;  
the stage removed.  
But These Chairs are reserved  
for those who would never show up.

Oh, how we shall remember  
These Chairs.

By Darren Trast; based on the poem "These Chairs" by Dale Plemmons, District 7 Safety Administrator.

This year's Workers Memorial Day was held at the Golden Valley maintenance shop on April 29, 2024.

## Transportation Worker Memorial



The memorial is in the Transportation Building lobby at 395 John Ireland Blvd. in Saint Paul.



“ Design concepts were considered at a Worker Memorial Day event April 28, 1999, in Rochester as part of a contest involving MnDOT employees. Trent Weber’s concept was selected.

“I chose a bridge motif because it represents how we help connect our state’s vast boundaries. A bridge that leads us into the future but also connects us to our past. We must never forget those who lost their lives,” Weber said. “

“ The memorial was fabricated and erected in the spring of 2000 and it was dedicated on April 28, 2000. Then Transportation Commissioner Elwin Tinklenberg spoke at the dedication. Here are a few of Commissioner Tinklenberg’s comments:

“Workers Memorial Day is not just about people who died – it’s about people who lived a life of public service ... a life lived in public services is a valuable life – an honorable life, a life worth recognizing and remembering ... The monument we are about to unveil (is) a memorial to the friends, co-workers and loved ones we have lost. The bridge centerpiece’s missing support reminds the viewer to remember the lost worker.” “

For more information go to the [MnDOT Transportation Worker Memorial](https://www.dot.state.mn.us/workermemorial/index.html) page at <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/workermemorial/index.html>

## Local 221 Leadership

### Line Officers

#### PRESIDENT

[Afscmeprs1221@gmail.com](mailto:Afscmeprs1221@gmail.com)  
Darren Trast TG Maryland Days  
VP HEPC

#### VICE PRESIDENT 1

[Afscmevp11221@gmail.com](mailto:Afscmevp11221@gmail.com)  
Drew Sykes TG Maryland Nights

#### VICE PRESIDENT 2

[Afscmevp21221@gmail.com](mailto:Afscmevp21221@gmail.com)  
Jean Zimmerman TGS Waters Edge  
Traffic Engineering / Sign Design

#### TREASURER

[AfscmeTrs1221@gmail.com](mailto:AfscmeTrs1221@gmail.com)  
Bryan Kirsch TG Eden Prairie Days

#### SECRETARY

[Afscmesec1221@gmail.com](mailto:Afscmesec1221@gmail.com)  
Wade Erstad TGS Eden Prairie Nights  
TSS Review Committee Member

### Executive Board

Joe Sockel TG Forest Lake  
Scott Zellmer TG Oakdale Days  
J. Hinrichs TGS TAPP Arden Hills  
Louis McNutt HEM Maple Grove Days  
Mike Novlan TGS Spring Lake Park  
Rebecca Haflund TG Camden Nights

### Trustees

Kelly Chirpich TG Golden Valley  
Leslie Vaughn TG GV Sign Shop  
Web Administrator  
Crystal Gaebler TG Cedar Nights

## Michael Gau Memorial Bridge Dedication



Thanks to the efforts of Rep. Ginny Klevorn (42B), the State Legislature enacted HF 3437 designating the Rockford Road Bridge over Hwy 169 in Plymouth as the *Michael Gau Memorial Bridge*.

The dedication ceremony was held on Saturday, June 8, 2024.

Speakers included :



- ◇ Resident Engineer GV Central Construction Tim Nelson
- ◇ MnDOT Commissioner Nancy Daubenberger
- ◇ Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan
- ◇ Rep. Ginny Klevorn
- ◇ Plymouth Mayor Jeffrey Wosje
- ◇ AFSCME Director Bart Anderson
- ◇ MnDOT/Former Belle Plaine Fire Department Brian Siekmann

The dedication signs at the bridge were installed by the Golden Valley Sign Shop.



Mike was on the Construction crew overseeing the bridge re-build project on August 30, 2023 when he was killed on the job site.

Michael "Mike" Gerard Gau was a dedicated public servant with 14 years of service at MnDOT and 23 years volunteering on the Belle Plaine Fire Department.

Born in St. Cloud, Mike grew up in the Jordan/Belle Plaine areas and graduated from Belle Plaine High School in 1987. Mike is survived by his wife Jenny, three children, and 6 grandchildren.

Stewards

Chief Steward Central Region

PRS Darren Trast Maryland

Chief Stewards

VP2 Jean Zimmerman Waters Edge

TRS Bryan Kirsch Eden Prairie

SEC Wade Erstad Eden Prairie

Louis McNutt Maple Grove

Joe Sockel Forest Lake

Scott Zellmer Oakdale

Stewards

VP1 Drew Sykes Maryland

J. Hinrichs Arden Hills

Chad Curtis Camden Nights

Terry Kapfer Forest Lake

Kevin Rosassen Maplewood

Informational Stewards

Mike Novlan Spring Lake Park

J. Hinrichs Arden Hills

Kelly Chirpich Golden Valley

Leslie Vaughn Golden Valley

Ken Kogler Oakdale

Dan Trog Oakdale

Rebecca Haflund Camden

Crystal Gaebler Cedar

Joe Anderson North Branch

Brian Johnson Roseville

Email general or grievance

questions to:

[AfscmeLocal221Steward@gmail.com](mailto:AfscmeLocal221Steward@gmail.com)

the UNION difference

Corporate-funded organizations are trying to get AFSCME members to give up their membership and lose their voice on the job. Declare: I'm Sticking With My Union!

By giving up your Union membership, they know you lose member-only benefits such as:

- A powerful, unified voice in your workplace.
- Ability to vote on your contract.
- Ability to participate and vote for your local Union leadership.
- Collective power to get the strongest wage increases and benefits as possible.
- Solidarity and "people power" in the halls of power to fight for working people.

Corporate-funded organizations like the Freedom Foundation want you to give up your rights in the workplace, so corporations and our employers can take advantage of us as workers. The Freedom Foundation, and its allies, work across the country to reverse policies and laws that benefit working people and directly benefit employers' being able to take advantage of workers.

With your Union membership, you are protected by a collective bargaining agreement with due process rights, the right to representation, and a work family that has your back!

Our Union Membership Proves

The Union Difference !

Darren Trast  
President, Local 221

Vice President,  
Highway Employee Policy Committee  
TG, Maryland Truck Station



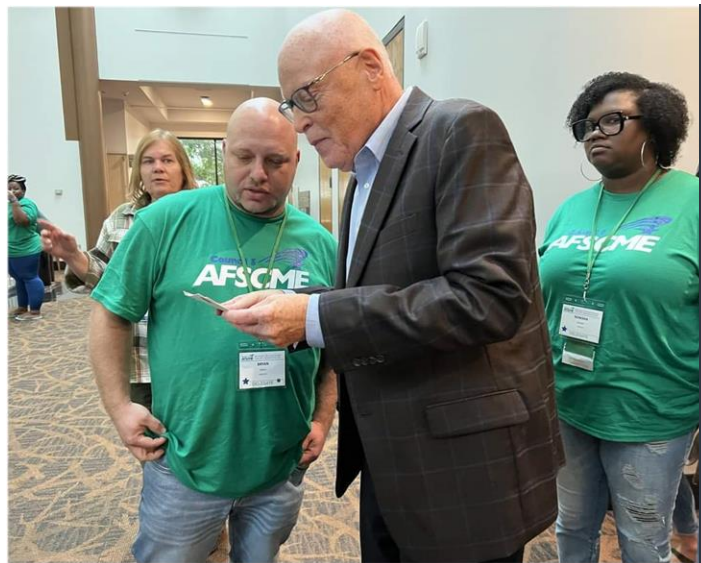


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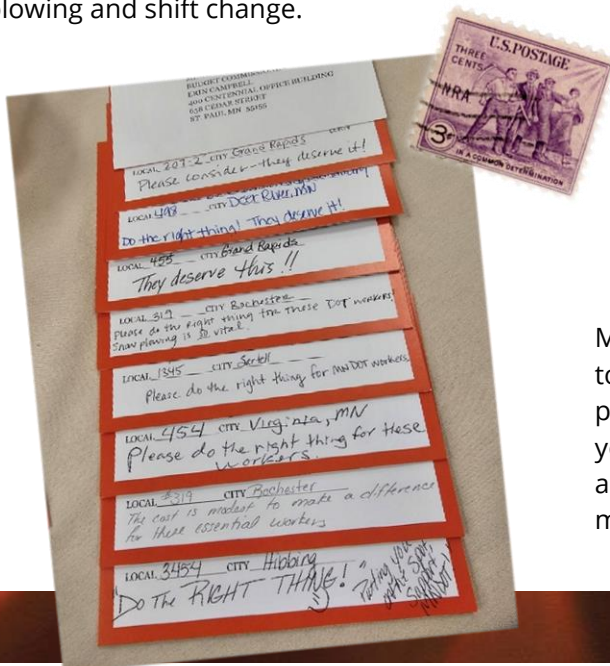
**Jeff McDonald** – HEPC Baxter **Mike Novlan** - E-board 221 **Darren Trast** - President 221 **Bryan Kirsch** - Treasurer 221 **Lee Saunders** - AFSCME Int'l President  
**Louis McNutt** - E-board 221 / C5 Secretary **Scott Zellmer** - E-board 221 **Rebecca Haflund** - E-board 221 **Wade Erstad** – Secretary 221 **Jeremy Birr** - HEPC Hibbing

## Day on the Hill in Washington, DC

While in Washington DC attending the NASHTU conference, Our delegates started at the *Day on the Hill* in Washington DC on Tuesday June 4th, 2024. Local 221 was able to have a sit-down conversation with AFSCME International President Lee Saunders and present him with a framed picture of the “postcard campaign” we did last year for the \$1/hr for plowing and shift change.



Months previously while in Duluth, Bryan Kirsch was able to meet with Lee Saunders and explain our “old school” postcard campaign and get his signature. Because of your local AFSCME Local 221 Leadership, Executive Board, and Stewards, we are able to do the work and bring our members’ voice forward.



# RISE Community Outreach Program

RISE Twin Cities is a non-profit community outreach program that helps people get on their feet, learn a trade, and develop life skills. Please [ctrl+click on the link to learn more](#).

[Twin Cities Rise](#)



MNDOT is a partner, and President Darren Trast attended a community partner award and thank you ceremony on behalf of AFSCME and MNDOT.

RISE has MNDOT trucks, from the Maryland truck station, to do a “touch a truck” event every few months as part of a curriculum being offered through RISE for diesel mechanics in partnership with St. Paul College.



## This Month's Q&A Contract Tips

### Q : Vacation Accruals and How the Progression Works

**A :** Article 8, Section 2 covers vacation time accruals.

Full time (80-hours per pay period) employees are eligible to accrue vacation time.

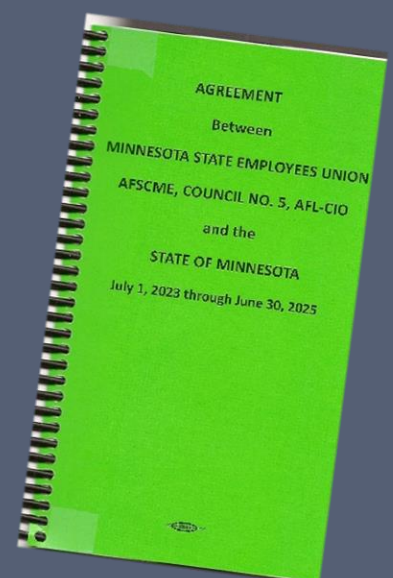
Intermittent, emergency, and temporary employees are eligible but with conditions.

For full time employees, the number of hours that accrue each payroll period ("accrual rate") is based upon your Length of Service.

<u>Years of Service :</u>	<u>Accrual Rate :</u>	<u>Begins On :</u>
0 through 5 years	4 hours	
After 5 through 8 years	5 hours	5 yrs and one day
After 8 through 12 years	7 hours	8 yrs and one day
After 12 through 18 years	7.5 hours	12 yrs and one day
After 18 through 25 years	8 hours	18 yrs and one day
After 25 through 30 years	8.5 hours	25 yrs and one day

Employees may accumulate vacation time to any amount; however, once during each fiscal year the accumulation must be reduced to 275 hours or less. Otherwise, you will automatically lose any hours above 275 hours.

In other words, Use it or Lose it. If you have more than 275 hours in your vacation bank, you must use those hours to get down to the 275 threshold, once per year, or risk losing all your banked hours greater than 275.



# Contract Negotiations Corner

We are entering our second year of the current Contract and will see a 4.5% pay increase on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Hopefully it will show up on the July 12 payday.

The next round of negotiations for the 2025 – 2027 Contract will start with a Union-only delegate assembly in January or February.

A big part of negotiations is called “Inequities”. This comes late in the process but allows members to speak to Their Wage vs that of other/same/similar City, County , and other-State Wages. There is a process and we will have the Inequities form and proposal forms very soon. In the mean time please sign up for Memberlink on the [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org) website and be up to date on all things for our next contract.

AFSCME members represent almost every government agency in the State. Bargaining unit members include folks from Transportation, Commerce, Corrections, Human Services, Natural Resources, Pollution Control, Revenue, and Veterans Affairs; to name just a few.

Local 221 will update our MnDOT Metro Members as the negotiations process moves forward.

## Upcoming Events

### AFSCME International Convention

August 12 – 16, 2024

### AFSCME Council 5 Convention

September 26 - 28, 2024

