

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

For the
COMMON GOOD



AFSCME®

March/April 2009

Volume 5 Issue 7

Often we don't realize the impact that our members have in the lives of others in addition to our families and our co-workers. Many of our members also are active in their communities in community organizations, churches, schools, fraternal organizations and in other important community activities. Recently, Local 2829 vice-president, George Miller, was recognized by the Duluth Area Labor Council with the presentation of one of two Director's Awards for community service in the Duluth area. George was presented the award for his long time leadership involvement with Boy Scouts in his hometown of Cloquet. Among those present to witness the award were his wife Sue & son Garret, co-workers Kevin Norby, Kyle Borg & Mike Anderson and Local officers Mike Nelson & Eric Mattson. Congratulations George and thank you for your service not only to this union, but to your community.

Inside this issue:





It's been some time since I've written a President's column for this newsletter, preferring to focus on our member's participation in our Union and in our communities. Event's in the last several weeks have convinced me that in addition to continuing that focus we do need an editorial point of view supporting our members.

First of all, congratulations to Vice-president George Miller who was recently awarded the "Directors Award" by the Duluth Area United Way for his contributions to his community as an active leader/advisor in Boy Scouts. George, it's recognition well deserved.

Last month we received the opening proposals from the state's negotiator. The proposals did not include proposals for wages or health insurance but included proposals to gut our existing overtime language, allow changes to permanent schedules with only a 7 day notice and a proposal to take away our floating holiday. In addition to these proposals they showed their true colors by proposing that they take away up to 24 days each year of the contract through an unpaid furlough proposal. The furlough proposal amounts to approximately a 10% pay cut (even before proposals for a wage freeze or worse in a wage opener). On April 18 we will again be meeting with the state's negotiator. Before then, we need ALL of our members engaged in this battle, and it is a battle for our survival. We are facing a Governor who seems to think it's OK to balance the state's deficit by asking public employees to do more than their share, while not asking his supporters and contributors to do their fair share to balance the budget. The Governor is clearly engaged in CLASS WARFARE by declaring war on public employees and the middle class. Make your phone calls to Governor Pawlenty and tell him the 24 day furlough proposal is DOA. We're willing to do our fair share, but he needs to negotiate a contract that respects Public Employees and the services that we provide to the state of Minnesota and that ALL Minnesotan's, including the most fortunate, must be asked to do their share to resolve this difficult budget situation.

Mike Nelson



My Interest is in the future because I'm going to spend the rest of my life there.

Good News

MAPE and AFSCME Union members working at the Arts Board shared similar problems and sought a means to address those problems. After approaching their union leadership, a Meet and Confer meeting was arranged and held with the Director of the Arts Board on March 9, along with a representative of Minnesota Budget and Management, in an effort to seek resolution of these ongoing problems.

As a result of that meeting, processes are now in place to review and resolve most all of the items brought to management's attention. Now, quarterly Meet and Confer meetings will be scheduled for the purpose of identifying and resolving employees concerns.

Some of the issues discussed in this meeting include:

- 1) The processing of annual leave and overtime requests. Because of the nature of this Board, functions are at times scheduled on weekends making working overtime necessary. Management's delays in responding to overtime requests were creating hardships to employees needing to make arrangements. Also, responses to annual leave requests were delayed or not given at all, creating hardships for employees. A process is now in place where requests for both overtime and annual leave will be answered timely.
- 2) The establishment of quarterly meetings to strengthen communication between management and union members. Conflicting information and unclear procedures had become a daily frustration for employees in this agency.
- 3) Performance Reviews. A procedure will be put in place where annual performance reviews will be conducted. Performance reviews had not been conducted previously.
- 4) Vacant positions will now be posted per contract language, allowing eligible bidders an opportunity to bid on these positions.
- 5) Agency Purchase cards will be made available for employee's use, thus eliminating the need for union members to use their personal credit cards when making travel arrangements for the Board of Directors and the Executive Director and then experiencing delays with reimbursement.

The positive response MAPE and AFSCME received from this meeting is the first step in providing a better working environment for all employees. MAPE and AFSCME will monitor future developments and activity.

In solidarity,

Kathy Schlangen
Chief Steward, Local 2829

"If you're not at the table you're probably going to end up on the menu." An AFSCME Leader

Member Benefits:
AFSCME Advantage

A Strong Economy for the Common Good



That was the message that AFSCME brought to Day on the Hill, March 11, 2009.

Our priorities to create a strong economy for the common good:

- Sustain funding for quality education, transportation, health and human services.
- Restore aid to local governments to stabilize property taxes.
- Raise revenue fairly, including fair taxes on persons earning more than \$250,000.
- Protect and create good jobs to jumpstart the economy.
- Stop privatization that threatens the quality of public services.
- Move toward affordable health care for all Minnesotans. Daryl Arola convinced several legislators, including Rep. Jeanne Poppe, to remove themselves from a bill to privatize fish hatcheries and tree nurseries.



Most of us that attended from Local 2829 were able to meet with our district representatives. Our newest member, Rachel Parlin, took action and met and spoke with her district representatives.



It was very moving to see so much support from our brothers and sisters there. There were over 1,100 AFSCME members at the capitol that day. Remember that you **CAN** make a difference. Contact your representatives, call, send an e-mail or write a letter. To find out who your representatives are, follow this link <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/Districtfinder.asp> . Let them know that the **HIGHEST-EARNING MINNESOTANS PAY LESS THAN AVERAGE FAMILIES!!!**

A working mom earning \$38,000 will pay 12.8% of her income in state and local taxes in 2011. Billionaires will pay only 8.8%. That's unfair! You can help AFSCME push for fair taxes.

If people who earn more than \$250,000 start paying their fair share, the state could raise \$1 billion to save the services that Minnesotans want and need. **Call your senator and representative today. To find their numbers, call 651-296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550. Tell them to save AFSCME jobs and services by raising revenue, including fair taxes on the wealthy.** Please share this table as proof of Minnesota's unfair tax rates. 2011 RATES ESTIMATED FOR ALL STATE AND LOCAL TAXES IN MN

Source: MN Department of Revenue 2009 Tax Incidence Study

<u>Household Income</u>	<u>2011 Tax Rate</u>
Under \$11,202	22.1%
\$11,202—\$18,454	11.2%
\$18,455—\$26,461	11.1%
\$26,462—\$35,169	11.7%
\$35,170—\$45,349	12.8%
\$45,350—\$58,040	12.5%
\$58,041—\$74,595	12.5%
\$74,596—\$96,681	12.1%
\$96,682—\$136,954	11.9%
\$136,955 & over (Top 10%)	10.1%
\$193,687—\$481,439 (Top 5%)	9.7%
Over \$481,439 (Top 1%)	8.8%
Average of All Households	11.4%

We do the work that keeps Minnesota first!

AMALGAMATED LOCAL 2829

300 Hardman Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Phone: (651) 450-4990
Fax: (651) 455-1311
Email: afscme2829@aol.com

Editor: Mike Nelson
Email: minelcr@msn.com

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Amalgamated Local 2829, serves a membership of over 800 State of Minnesota employees in over 30 agencies as diverse as the Arts Board to the Pollution Control Agency to Military Affairs, representing employees in Units 2, 3, 6 and 7.

Local meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at the AFSCME Offices in South St. Paul. Greater Minnesota members can also participate via telephone hook-up. Contact President Mike Nelson

AFL-CIO COUNCIL 5 LOCAL 2829 OFFICERS

President:	Mike Nelson	(651) 201-1342
Vice President:	George Miller	(218) 788-7459
Treasurer:	Eric Mattson	(651) 296-8208
Secretary:	Candi Parker	(651) 296-6449

MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order
Roll Call of Officers
Previous Meeting Minutes
Local Executive Board Report
Financial Report
President's Report
Chief Steward's Report
 Grievance recommendations
Business Agent's Report
Committee Reports
(Council 5 Executive Board, Central Bodies
CLUW, UCAN, Other)
Old Business
New Business
Good and Welfare
Adjournment

BUSINESS AGENT

Christi Nelson (651) 287-0528

LOCAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Gloria Alt (Finance)	Duane Gatzke (PCA)
Eric Mattson (HF)	Brian Dahlgren(MA)
George Miller (MA)	Mike Nelson (SOS)
Kathy Schlangen (AG)	Candi Parker (TRA)
Theresa St. Aoro (PERA)	

STEWARDS

Brian Dahlgren	(612) 713-2245
Linda Brooks	(651) 757-2246
Duane Gatzke	(651) 757-2061
Tom Gavitt	(218) 788-7434
Sandy Horner	(651) 556-0606
Candy Parker	(651) 296-6449
Dan Lysher	(218) 788-7434
Eric Mattson	(651) 296-8208
Bill Maynard	(612) 713-2001
George Miller	(218) 788-7459
Mike Nelson	(651) 201-1342
Kathy Schlangen	(651) 297-2575
Theresa St. Aoro	(651)355-0062
Gerry Roalstad	
Bill Smith	
Mel Preczewski	(651) 757-2085
Roberta Huspek	(651) 757-2082
Nicole Daley	(651) 757-2087
Kristin Kirchoff	(651) 757-2089
Kyle Borg	
Mike Engeldinger	

The end result of privatization is not cost-saving but cost shifting: from workers wages into contractors profits. (Debbie Goldman, Public Employees Department)