

LABOR WORLD

An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

WEDNESDAY VOL. 115
AUGUST 19, 2009 NO. 5



Todd Erickson, along with CJ Cannon and Sandy Reinholt, two Workers United Local 99 members fired at the Pickwick for picketing, gave an update to delegates at last week's Central Body meeting. Continue to boycott the Pickwick until owner Chris Wisocki negotiates with the union.

Pickwick boycott holding strong in week 6

When owner Chris Wisocki violated federal labor law by illegally firing CJ Cannon and Sandy Reinholt for picketing their own jobs, he smugly told workers inside the Pickwick, "I don't give them two weeks." That was six weeks ago and the boycott at the Pickwick is gaining strength and Cannon and Reinholt are still picketing. "The support of labor has been beyond our expectations," Cannon, a 21-year Pickwick employee told Duluth Central Labor Body delegates August 13th. "That support has really opened our eyes."

Union members from many different local unions have spent time on the picket line and helped in other ways. It has had Wisocki ramping up his campaign to harass picketers. In the past his minions working inside the Pickwick would come out and harass picketers. "Now, some customers make it a point to tell us 'we're only here because you're picketing,'" said Workers United Local 99 President Todd Erickson. "The Building Trades and Nurses (Minnesota Nurses Association) have been outstanding, and the more people know what's going on, the more regular community members come out to stand with us." Erickson said he gets goosebumps on the line from all the support workers receive. Erickson said Wisocki continues to lie and mislead the public by presenting the dispute as being over the two fired workers. The union held off any public displays against the Pickwick while they tried to renegotiate their contract with the help of an arbitrator. Wisocki broke off negotiations and implemented conditions of employment with an 11-page Employee Policy Handbook that destroyed the contract the union had at the Pickwick with four generations of Wisocki's family over 85 years.

Chris Wisocki's actions prompted Wisocki's uncle, Tony, whom he purchased the business from in 2001 to say, "The Pickwick has dealt with the union for 85 years from my grandfather, my father, myself and my partner (Steve Wisocki,

Central Body endorses in all local races

At their August 13 meeting Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body delegates voted by the required two-thirds majority to endorse four candidates who filed for Duluth city council seats, and four Duluth school board candidates. The eight endorsements cover all races that will be on the ballot for Tuesday, Sept. 15's Primary Election, and Tuesday, Nov. 3's General Election.

The endorsements came after Committee on Political Education screenings held just prior to the monthly meeting.

City council candidates, all of them first time candidates, endorsed were: At-Large Dan Hartman and Beth Olson; District 2 Patrick Boyle; District 4 Kerry Gauthier.

School board candidates, all incumbents, endorsed were:

At-Large Mary Cameron and Nancy Nilsen; District 1 Ann Wasson; District 4 Laura Condon.

All candidates who had filed for the elections had been invited to the Central Body screenings. All five city council at-large candidates showed up. Two of five council District 4 candidates appeared. Boyle's

father to Chris). We never had a problem of consequence with the union, disagreements sure. The union is not the problem. The problem lies elsewhere. To find out where you'll have to read between the lines."

Erickson said the union expects legal decisions in the union's favor to come soon--maybe even this week. Wisocki has been cited for a number of labor law violations including orchestrating a union decertification drive by intimidating employees.

"It may still get ugly on the streets because justice has to prevail in this fight," Erickson said. "This fight is about the whole hospitality industry in Duluth--do these workers live in poverty or can they have family-supporting jobs is the question."

Wisocki has been put on a COD basis by some of his suppliers according to drivers.

If you are interested in standing with WU99 or would like to support them in others ways contact Todd Erickson at 1-218-728-6861 or email terickson@cmrjb.org.

One good way of supporting the workers is to contact Chris Wisocki and ask him to negotiate with his workers' union. He can be reached at 218-727-8901, cwisocki@charter.net.

opponent in District 2 did not appear.

Nilsen was the only school board at-large candidate to appear of five running. Cameron sent a letter saying she regretted she would be out of the area on a long-planned vacation but would appreciate a labor endorsement. She got it after some debate.

Wasson's two opponents in District 1 did not appear, nor did Condon's challenger in District 4.

CITY COUNCIL

Even though they are running for office for the first time, the group of endorsed city council candidates all had done their homework on labor's issues. The four also showed a commitment to running hard and winning their races, which is a requirement trade unionists always look for in candidates.

Hartman and Olson have been campaigning since May. Both said the labor endorsement was important to them even though they were not union members because they have the same value systems as the labor movement.

Like all endorsed candidates Olson and Hartman showed support for living wages, project labor agreements, were against contracting out of public services and would vote to fund them in budgets, and they support card check organizing. All candidates were asked questions on those issues as well as questions that came from the audience.



Dan Hartman

Hartman is Program Director for the Veteran's Memorial Hall, which is part of the St. Louis County Historical Society. He served as Councilor Jeff Anderson's campaign manager two years ago. He said he would love the opportunity to work with Anderson, other councilors and the administration to improve city streets, job growth, neighborhood revitalization, and environmental preservation.

You can find out more at www.hartmanforcouncil.org.

Olson, who has worked in the non-profit sector for many

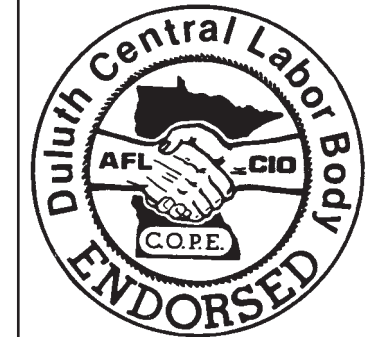


Beth Olson

years, said she has dealt on many levels with the problems people face in their lives and has learned how to stretch budgets. That experience helped her decide it was time to get involved on the public policy level that being a councilor would provide.

Olson is the Team Leader of the Family Visitation Center, a project of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Program.

See Endorsements...page 4



DULUTH CITY COUNCIL

AT-LARGE

Dan Hartman
Beth Olson

DISTRICT 2

Patrick Boyle

DISTRICT 4

Kerry Gauthier

SCHOOL BOARD

AT-LARGE

Mary Cameron
Nancy Nilsen

DISTRICT 1

Ann Wasson

DISTRICT 4

Laura Condon

Please Vote
in Tues., Sept. 15's
Primary Election &
Tues., Nov. 3's
General Election

Labor Movie Night off to a good start

By Chad McKenna
NEALC Field Organizer

On July 23rd, 30 union and community members of all ages gathered in the Duluth Labor Temple's Wellstone Hall for an event that has become "Labor Movie Night." The film being shown that first night was "Labor's Turning Point: The Minneapolis Truck Strikes of 1934." It sparked a

conversation among viewers about the significance that struggles such as that Teamsters strike have had on the strength of our unions today.

The gathering was a chance for union members and non-union members alike to discuss issues of social and economic justice in an open setting and learn about another piece of Minnesota's rich labor history

that isn't given much play outside labor circles.

Everyone in attendance, they were from many different unions and segments of our society, agreed that the event should continue so this month "Harlan County USA" will be shown in Wellstone Hall on Thursday, August 27th at 6:00 p.m.

"Harlan County USA" documents the struggle of 180 coal miners who voted to join the United Mine Workers in 1973. Their employer, Duke Power Company, refused to sign a contract with the workers and a bloody battle ensued. *The New York Times* calls Harlan County USA "fascinating and moving... powerful, provocative, exciting, and frightening - because it's real."

Join us for the film and hang out afterwards to socialize with other union members and folks interested in learning about the past through films.

Light snacks and beverages will be provided and children are welcome.

To download a flier for the event to hand out at work or to friends go to www.nealc.org and click on "Calendar" in the upper left hand corner.

See you at the movies!

Wisconsin health/safety conf.

The Wisconsin State AFL-CIO, in conjunction with the National Labor College, Department of Labor (OSHA), UW-Extension School for Workers, UW State Lab of Hygiene-WisCon and WisCOSH, will be holding a Health & Safety Conference in Milwaukee September 24-25.

The focus will include industrial unions, public employees, building trades and the service sector. You'll learn how unions can be more effective in their efforts to improve workplace safety and health. The conference timing is perfect in that their is leadership at OSHA that really intends to protect workers on the job. Conference topics include:

- Involving Members in Health and Safety: Mobilize!
- What's Making Workers Ill or Stressed?
- H1N1 (Swine Flu): Is Your Employer Prepared?
- Union Members' OSHA Rights
- Identifying Health and Safety Hazards
- Protecting Workers from Health and Safety Hazards
- Building Effective Health and Safety Committees

The Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Health and Safety Conference is Sep. 24-25 at the Wyndham Milwaukee Airport Hotel & Convention Center, 4747 S. Howell Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53207.

Rooms are \$85 per night plus tax. Reservations can be made by calling (414) 615-8000 (cut-off date is August 24).

Health insurance teach-in

Members of Congress may be scared off from holding town hall meetings on health care reform because of obstructionist hecklers, but that doesn't mean everyone is. The Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body has signed on as one of the first organizations that will help sponsor a "Teach-in on Health Insurance Reform" at UMD's Labovitz School of Business and Economics Room 118. The event is Wednesday Sept. 16, 4:30--7:00 p.m. There will be more about it in the next Labor World.

Need help thinking?

We'd be the last ones to ever imply anything about anyone's intelligence, but, hey, we can all use a little help in the thinking department. Your meetings will have a lot better input with T-Bonz food deliveries.

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LABORERS' LOCAL 1091

~PICNIC REMINDER~

Our 2009 picnic will be
Sunday, August 23

11:00 a.m.--5:00 p.m.

AAA Auto Club--Pike Lake

All active members and their immediate families are welcome.

IBEW 31 & 242 Retirees' Luncheon

Tues., Aug. 25
1:00 p.m.

The Landing
(Hwy 53/LaVaque)
Members & Their Guests Welcome!

Sheet Metal Workers' Local 10 Retirees' Luncheon

Tuesday, Sept. 1, 1:00 p.m.
Trapper Pete's (old Golden Gate)

I.U.O.E. Local 70

Monthly Arrowhead Regional Meeting
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009, 5:00 P.M.
Duluth Labor Center, Hall B
Dick Lally, Business Manager (651) 646-4566

IN MEMORIAM

Brother Robert O. "Bob" Oswald



President of the
Carlton County
Central Labor
Body
1994 - 2009

On behalf of all past and present delegates of the CCCLB our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Jane, sons Jamie and Justin, and his extended family.

Come one, come all!

Meet Sec. of State
Ritchie, Auditor Otto,
area legislators,
gubernatorial candidates!

5th Annual Carlton County DFL FunRaiser

Live Milkbone music,
picnic food, beverages
Saturday, Sept. 5
1:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine @
Larry the Laborer's
97 E. Palkie Rd, Esko
Info? 428-2722, 878-0953
\$20 suggested donations accepted



PRE-LABOR DAY WEEKEND CELEBRATION!

Sunday,
September 6
Noon to 5:00 p.m.
Olcott Park, Virginia

Yes, it's the day before Labor Day!

FREE FOOD & MUSIC, EVERYONE'S WELCOME!

Speakers at 1:00 p.m.

Cash Bar

1st Prize: Weber Genesis Platinum Stainless Steel Gas Grill (Union-made in USA-\$700 Value)

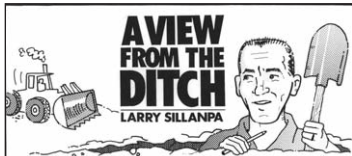
2nd Prize: \$500 Cash

3rd Prize: Wool & Leather Jacket (Union-made in USA- Donated by All American Imprints-Wyoming, MN)

Kids Entertainment

Raffle Drawing at 4:00 p.m. for:

For information call Ida Rukavina, (218) 235-0029

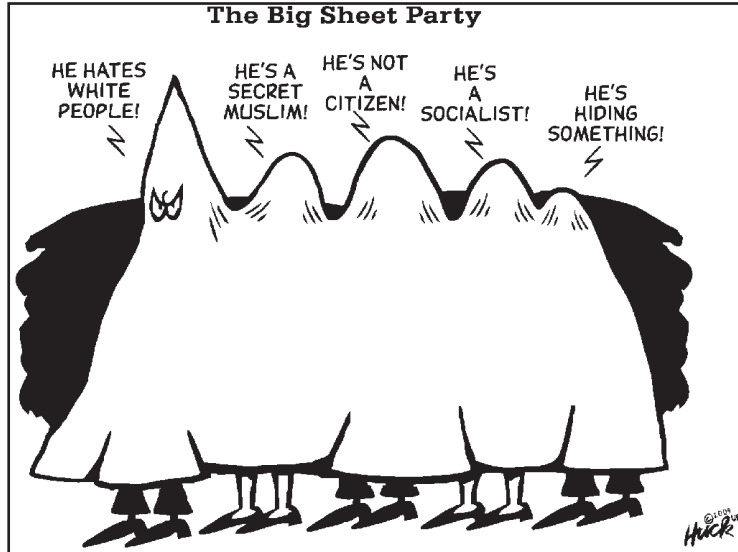


If you didn't get enough of the Extreme Makeover you'll have to go on the internet or wait for the premiere on television. I got ill from all the hoopla and never made it to cover it. It was the same for the Hell's Angels for me and probably the next "big" media event that hits town.

Building Trades unions and their signatory contractors have a high percentage of the market share in the Twin Ports but you never would have known they existed if you watched or read about the Extreme Makeover that was covered wall to wall by TV and print media. As the media fell all over the project, they ignored the union impact in getting that project done right.

(Yes, you're right, I have to complain because I didn't do my job in covering the feel good story of the month.)

The list of union contractors on site was impressive: Lakehead Constructors, JR Jensen, Electric Systems, Arrowhead Concrete, Jamar, Agate Electric, LaVeau Electric, Quality Drywall, and



I'm sure I'll hear about others I missed.

In addition the number of individual union members that volunteered over there was terrific. Who do you think showed up when the call went out for drywall hangers, tapers, and painters?

One retired member of Laborer's Local 1091 called his union hall to make sure his pension, oh, and they have good pensions, wouldn't be affected for volunteering on a project run by a non-union contractor. He went to work.

In talking to some union workers at the home makeover, they said it wouldn't have gotten done in time or as well without the expertise of local, union, Building Trades workers. Many union foremen from the listed contractors were there correcting the mistakes that unskilled or incompetent workers were making.

The demolition of the home and extreme makeover could have been a huge feather in the hardhats of the unionized building trades here but that opportunity was lost when Johnson-Wilson, a union contractor in Duluth, reportedly declined the invitation to be the general contractor. Shane and Dean Johnson evidently weren't interested in taking the project on because they were in negotiations with the Laborers

and Carpenters unions. Must of had a need to stay pissy during negotiations and the project wouldn't have allowed that I guess. So the job was handed to a non-union outfit which made it that much easier for the media to ignore the union presence. Makes you wonder what's on the agenda at the next labor/management meeting.

The backlash over the Hell's Angels visit continues from both sides of the argument too. A county sheriff told my township night out gathering that the motorcycle club won't be back. That's probably the reason for the strong police presence while they were here.

"There were too many cops, it was too cold, too windy, rained too much, and the roads were terrible," is pretty much how the sheriff's deputy put it with a smile.

Let's fix the roads so the Good Neighbor Sam RV club will put us back on their calendar. Wonder how many cops went to Sturgis on their Harleys and rubbed shoulders with the Hell's Angels? We're all still safe but there really should have been a Code Red alert issued for the entire week.

Boy, for a guy who pretends to not pay attention to the next big thing I sure get sucked in don't I? Meanwhile back in the blueberry patch...

A letter to Chris Wisocki

(Editor's Note: Carpenters Local 361's Matt Conlan sent the following note to the Labor World:

"My 10 year old son, without prompting, picked up a copy of last week's Labor World and took it upon himself to write a letter and mail it. I found out about it the next day.")

dear Mr. Wisocki

my name is John Conlan I am 10 years old. My favorite thing on your menu used to be a "grandpa Joe's" with mustard and coleslaw. USED TO BE. Me and my family have stoped going there on account of you not hiring unions. I really hope you will reconsider hiring non-union workers because I am looking forward to the day i can eat my grandpa Joe's, knowing that i am eating in a union restaurant.

thank you and please reconsider sincerely,
John Conlan

Shar Knutson elected as first woman to lead MN AFL-CIO

Shar Knutson, president of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, was elected Monday by the Executive Council to lead the 300,000 member Minnesota AFL-CIO. Knutson will become the first woman president in the history of the statewide organization. She will fill out the term of current president, Ray Waldron, who retires Oct. 1, after nine years. The position will be up for election again at the fed's convention next year.



Shar Knutson

"I am honored that our state's labor leaders have elected me to continue the mission of securing social and economic justice for Minnesota's working people," Knutson said. She added that "... focusing the growing political strength of Minnesota's union members on electing state and federal officials who will put working people first..." is one of her primary political goals.

Knutson was elected to lead the St. Paul labor federation in 1998. She is a regional representative advising the Executive Board of the national AFL-CIO and has played an active role in the successful campaign to increase labor's voice in national, state and local elections. She also serves as President of the St. Paul Labor Studies and Resource Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and promoting community debate about social and economic justice.

Knutson served as a policy analyst and assistant to St. Paul Mayor Jim Scheibel, where she was an AFSCME member. She is currently a member of Painters & Allied Trades Local 61. She has served on the Greater Twin Cities United Way Board and the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs Advisory Council.



It was hugs and happiness as Senator Al Franken visited the Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body meeting Aug. 13.

Franken thanks Labor

During his extended campaign Senator Al Franken had health care through two of the four unions he's a member of, but he told Central Body delegates Aug. 13 that he's now getting it through kind of a public option as a member of Congress. He debunked many of the myths that are being presented against health care reform by conservative interests, and staked out a middle ground on how to improve the delivery of health care in the U.S.

"There are good debates and I don't know what the final outcome will be...I want a public option...but what we pass will be infinitely better than what we have," he told delegates. The money is there to do this, he said, but single payer is not viable.

He said the Employee Free Choice Act, the first bill he signed on to, will give employees a right that management has always had to call for either a card check or secret ballot election in union organizing campaigns.

In thanking labor for making his campaign and the vote recount successful, Franken said he is very optimistic in spite of the tough times for this country, Minnesota, and Duluth. "We have a president who is smart and calm," Franken said.

This Day In History from www.workdayminnesota.org

August 19, 1909 - The Industrial Workers of the World - "Wobblies" - issued the first edition of their "Little Red Song Book." Learn more at www.iww.org

August 19, 1916 - Strikebreakers hired by Everett Mills owner Neil Jamison attacked and beat picketing strikers in Everett, Washington. Local police watched and refused to intervene, claiming the waterfront where the attack took place was federal land and outside their jurisdiction.

~NOTICE~

Next issues of Labor World:
Sept. 2, 23; Oct. 7, 28;
Nov. 11, 24; Dec. 16.

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Endorsements earned in all races...from page 1

You can find out more at www.olsonforoffice.com.

Patrick Boyle opened his run for the seat that has been held by Greg Gilbert for years by making his first campaign speech before the Central Body in January. The son of former Wisconsin State Rep. Frank Boyle, Patrick said he has learned well the importance of labor from both his parents. A nurse practitioner for the Fond du Lac Clinic, Boyle was an easy endorsement for delegates.

You can find out more at www.boyleforcouncil.com.

Kerry Gauthier was another easy call as a long time DFL activist in Duluth and the region. As a political activist he

told delegates he has always been involved with labor and couldn't see it any other way.

With four opponents in the Primary Election, Gauthier may have the toughest road to travel among endorsed candidates in getting to the General Election, but he has a long history of working on political campaigns, which should serve him well. The District 4 seat has been held by Garry Krause, a member of IBEW Local 242, who retired.

Gauthier is Director of Rehabilitation Services for the Mash-Ka-Wisen Treatment Center.

Find out more about Kerry at www.kerryforcouncil.com.



Patrick Boyle



Kerry Gauthier

SCHOOL BOARD

While some tried to downplay the role of the Duluth Public School's Long Range Facilities Plan in this election, the issue is the line in the sand. The Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body, the Duluth Federation of Teachers, and the Duluth Building & Construction Trades Council are all on board with the LRFP. All four incumbents that got Central Body endorsements in their reelection bids support the LRFP. You'd be hard pressed to find an opponent of any of them that isn't opposed to the LRFP. In the years of discussion and hundreds of public meetings on the LRFP, labor had been well represented.

School board elections can be litmus tests for superintendents of school districts as well. ISD 709's Supt. Keith Dixon has as good a relationship with his bargaining units, and the Building Trades, as any Duluth superintendent in memory. Nilsen, Wasson, and Condon said they still have their battles on the issues with Dixon, but appreciate the fact that he listens well and is reasonable in dealing with differences.

Nilsen was first elected four years ago. She ran for a love of education and to support her community she said. She was a founder of Save Our Schools and the Duluth Heritage Hockey facility, while serving on the school board and pursuing her Masters in Business.

Wasson has served six years on the school board because of her passion for children and education. She said it's a shame Dixon has had to spend so much time battling opposition to the LRFP, because it has taken away from his being able



Duluth School Board incumbents Nancy Nilsen, Ann Wasson, and Laura Condon, along with Mary Cameron, received Central Body endorsements August 13.

to focus on the everyday issues of the district.

Condon taught 34 years in the Proctor School District, where she served as a president of her union. She said she learned well that labor's support is needed to help students and get schools built. She originally ran in opposition to Edison Charter Schools coming here and is now in her fourth campaign.

All three spoke of the need to establish the best possible programs for students, which will be easier to do with LRFP consolidation. Buildings are second to programming.

"If we could take the adults out of it, the kids would do pretty good," said Wasson about melding the students and new schools together.

Condon said the downsizing can actually help in that partial programs can become full time, and learning gaps between various groups of students will be able to be more easily addressed. She said technology is a big part of students' world today.

"I wouldn't know Twitter if it bit me, but that's their world and they're great in their world," Condon said.

Nilsen said she'd like to see math and science, and how they are taught, get more attention in the district. She says students are excited about new facilities and state of the art equipment, but those at all lev-

els of learning must have their needs addressed.

Wasson said it is hard to match education for every child and that's why the idea of standard curriculum is problematic. "Some need languages, the arts, and music," she said.

In answering a question about the responsibilities of students in education, Wasson said it is a difficult time for educators because they need to teach beyond academics.

Nilsen said times are different and many students don't have the teaching at home, and the sense of responsibility that it creates, that was prevalent in households in the past.

Condon, who taught "reluctant learners" in her teaching career, said financial limitations, and parents working long hours at multiple jobs, were huge concerns in cases of troubled students that she came across. Those parents cared just as much about their kids but were less able to help them. As a teacher it was her responsibility to find ways to help those students and families she said.

Mary Cameron's endorsement was the only one of eight that caused a stir at the Central Body meeting. Some delegates questioned her commitment to labor values. In the end she received the endorsement with an invitation to be forwarded to her to come before the Central Body for a meeting.

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✓ Ready Refill™ (Automated Refills) authorizations		Two week delivery, often LATE
✓ Free in town prescription delivery		Do you want your meds sitting in a 110 degree mailbox?
✓ We contact doctors for refills		Some require you to get your own refill authorizations
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Yvonne Harvey calls it a career in community service, helping others

Yvonne Harvey has retired effective this month as director of the Community Services Program, a joint venture of the Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body and the United Way of Greater Duluth.

"It's time for me to start taking better care of myself and having time to spend with my family," Harvey said on July 31, her last full day of work.

Harvey looked at peace in her crowded, tiny Labor Temple office on her last day, and why

not, her Social Security would start rolling the next day. But true to her history, the work wasn't going to end.

"Oh, I'll still be around some," she said. "I can still earn a little bit under Social Security and we've got to bring the Labor Day Picnic home. After that I'm gone."

Among her many duties, tasks, and events, Harvey is chair of the picnic committee.

"Having served on the Community Services Committee

prior to be named director, I knew much of what the job entailed," she said. "But when you start doing it on a day to day basis, it can get a little overwhelming. You have your activities that come up every year, but so much hits you that you can't anticipate. This terrible economy has really increased our workload with all the families that are in financial and other trouble."

Harvey became Community Services director in 2002, when Jackie Docauer who had the job for 18 years, retired. Yvonne had a long history of service to the labor community and the United Way in being selected for the position. She had been a member of AFSCME Local 66 since 1981 employed by St. Louis County Social Services. As a United Way employee she became a member of AFSCME Local 3558, retiring as treasurer of her union.

Her community service also included the United Way Board of Directors, the Community Services Program Committee, the International Labor Council, the Duluth Central Body, the Superior Federation of Labor and the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

As Community Service Director any task that couldn't

find a home ended up in her lap. There were a lot of adjustments to be made from her many years working in a cubicle at a computer for county social services.

"I've enjoyed not being at a desk eight hours a day as I had been," she said. "But it's tougher in that you can be working almost anytime of the day, anytime of the week, in community services. And you can't just punch emergency assistance into a computer."

Working with people and helping them in their time of need has been Yvonne Harvey's life's work. Now it's time to take care of herself a little better. In the past couple of years she has suffered from a number of disabling medical problems and she's looking forward to the rest that retirement will hopefully bring. If you remember she also had her home burn down just a few years ago.

"I'm heading for New

Mexico, where I have family," Harvey said. "The weather should be much better for me down there."

Kimberly Butson, a member of AFSCME Local 3801, which represents UMD Clerical & Technical Employees, knows how much Yvonne will be missed. Since 2003 the union has been on the picket line twice over their contract..

"A lot of us were in tough financial straits because of loss of our income," Butson said. "Yvonne and the program really came through for us on both occasions. So much of what she did is unnoticed. She gave me dignity when I wasn't feeling dignified. She gave me a smile when I felt like crying. She gave me a greater hope than the one I was trying to hang on to. I can't imagine how many people Yvonne has given a life line to in their time of need."



That's the smile of another American success story on Yvonne Harvey's face--retirement after a good career.

Yvonne Harvey retirement party

A retirement, open house party for Yvonne Harvey is set to be held the night of the September Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body meeting. On Thursday, Sept. 10 from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. a fiesta style party will be held in the Reef's Party Room, in the Duluth Labor Temple, 2002 London Road.

Food and a cash bar will be made available for everyone that can attend before, during or after the Central Body meeting.

Contributions to a retirement gift for Yvonne may be sent to the Central Body, Room 110, 2002 London Road, Duluth, MN 55812.

Community Services job posted

The call is out for someone to replace Yvonne Harvey as AFL-CIO Community Services Director for the Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body and the United Way of Greater Duluth.

The position entails many different types of responsibilities and activities that require a unique set of qualifications. A detailed job posting appeared in the August 5 Labor World on page 2 (see www.laborworld.org-Issues-August 5, 2009).

Send resumes/cover letter/references, postmarked by Friday Sept. 4, to Alan Netland, President, Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body, Room 110, 2002 London Road, Duluth, MN 55812





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MNA wins grievance over SMDC lay-offs

The Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) has won a grievance against the SMDC/Miller Dwan health care system over the lay off of Registered Nurses. The laid off RNs will get their jobs back and get pay and benefits for having been illegally laid off following an arbitrator's decision. SMDC will not be required to do or say anything about illegal activity.

Beginning in early April, a total of 20.75 full time RNs were given layoff notices or notification of having been bumped from their position. Eleven RNs who had been hired under a program to capture new graduates of nursing programs (Early Hire program) to the medical centers were also laid off.

The repercussions affected over 60 nurses MNA says. Not only their work lives but their family lives were disrupted. Some of the RNs stated publicly that they thought the lay-offs and bumping were an attempt on the part of the employer to drive a wedge into the bargaining unit. That didn't work as nurses have been signing a petition against short staffing at an unprecedented rate at the hospital system.

Lynette Swanberg, an MNA representative, said lay-offs can only come because of a lack of work and there hasn't been a lack of work. The lay-offs only added to short staffing and more bumping of positions. Swanberg said the bumping caused by the lay-offs affected over 63 RNs because

of bumping.

"It's unfortunate that the layoffs caused so much disruption to so many people while approval of the positions was just around the corner," said Swanberg. "We won this case because of the solidarity and concerted voice of the nurses."

The laid off RNs had all been called back to work almost immediately to fill holes in scheduling but they had to work without benefits because of their lay-off status. That was union busting said Swanberg and the MNA went to the grievance procedure for remedy. Nurses that were working said they feared for patient's safety because of the short staffing and that was the reason for the petition that started to circulate for safe staffing levels. Within a couple weeks 450 of the 900 or so RNs had signed the petition.

On August 6 a grievance mediation meeting was held and resolution to the MNA lay-off grievance was achieved. Of the 8 early hired nurses who worked while laid off, 4 have been awarded posted positions and will receive all benefits, with the exception of sick time, for hours worked while laid off. The other nurses will be awarded positions within 60 days with the same retroactive benefits. 10.4 FTEs are back to work, some laid off nurses resigned from SMDC, and 4 are laid off with reduced hours.

Calls needed to protect jobs

Earlier this year the Minnesota Department of Human Services had decided to shut down the chemical dependency treatment programs it ran in five cities around the state. AFSCME represents the workers at those sites and began a telephone calling campaign to save the programs earlier this year.

"In two days over 3,000 calls hit the Human Services switchboard on behalf of the patients, programs, and workers," said Christina St. Germaine, President of AFSCME Local 1092. "We were able to keep the programs open for another six months but they're under attack again."

The programs are in Carlton, Brainerd, Fergus Falls, Anoka, and Willmar. AFSCME 1092 has about 500 members working at a number of sites in the region including Carlton Care.

St. Germaine said lay-offs are occurring and other workers are having their hours reduced.

"Once they get their full time hours reduced they can be worked any number of hours in a two week period as part-time employees," St. Germaine said. "They no longer are family supporting jobs."

She said the situation has started another phone calling campaign. Calls to Michael Lee Tessner at the Dept. of Human Services, 651-431-2369, should ask that the programs use voluntary reduction of hours in lieu of layoffs for care, and that the DHS not balance the budget on the backs of state employees.

Pawlenty's ax falls again

St. Paul, MN – Last Friday Gov. Pawlenty's budget ax fell hard on the people of Minnesota with another \$14 million in cuts to state agencies for FY 2011.

Eliot Seide, director of AFSCME Council 5, Minnesota's largest public employee union, expects 3,400 public sector jobs will be lost as a result of Gov. Pawlenty's unallotment and budget cuts. "While Gov. Pawlenty globe trots for president, state employees are hard at work helping Minnesotans survive the poor economy. Piling on more layoffs and cutting vital public services is certainly not the path to economic recovery."

"Unallotment is a badge of shame that should be worn by every legislator who refused to make taxes fair – they're willing to wreck Minnesota to protect the wealthy," said Seide. "We need the Legislature to override these cuts and help us protect these communities where everyone can thrive."

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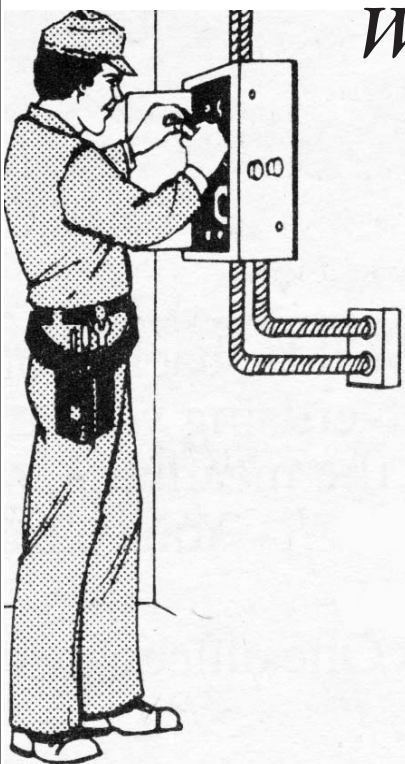
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Will there be a health care fight on the AFL-CIO Convention floor?

By Mark Gruenberg
PAI Staff Writer

PITTSBURGH (PAI)--With one month to go before September's AFL-CIO Convention here, the biggest floor fight may be over health care. That floor fight could affect the whole health care battle on Capitol Hill and nationally.

While the federation has supported and actively campaigned for legislation based on the principles of universality, cost controls, choosing your own doctor and a government-run alternative to the insurance companies, 552 labor bodies -- from international unions down to local councils -- want a government-run single-payer Medicare-like system. If the AFL-CIO yanks its support for legislation being considered in Congress, and backed by President Barack Obama, that legislation could sink.

But in a recent speech to the Netroots Nation Convention, Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer said, "My preference, and the feeling of many in the labor movement, is that we should have a single payer health care system." (www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnNoIT275Yw). Trumka is set to become AFL-CIO president at the convention. President John Sweeney Monday issued a call to not let a public option to compete with insurance companies die. Even that idea is under attack.

As of Aug. 10, four days before the resolutions deadline, single-payer health care coverage advocates had sent 40 draft resolutions backing the bill (HR 676, S 703) to the AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer's

office. One was from the California School Employees Association, a union that sits on the fed's Executive Council. While dozens of union groups back single-payer, the Executive Council has not. That may change, a CSEA council rep told Press Associates. Backers include the Steelworkers, CSEA, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and more than a dozen other AFL-CIO unions. Several, but not those three, call single-payer one of several alternative roads to health care reform.

Other labor bodies sending single-payer resolutions to the AFL-CIO include two central labor councils in the greater Cleveland area (the Dayton-Miami Valley AFL-CIO and the Erie-Crawford Pa., CLC), the Duluth, MN AFL-CIO and the Marquette County, Mich., Labor Council, the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, many California central labor councils and the Wisconsin and South Carolina state feds.

The resolutions are blunt, with a model version, from Troy, N.Y., blasting the health insurance companies. The Troy CLC's resolution not only supports the single-payer bill by Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., but bars the AFL-CIO from taking a fall-back stand in favor of a "public option" in a wider health care reform plan.

If passed, the single-payer resolutions would put the federation on record as trashing and abolishing the private insurers and their high co-pays, premiums and deductibles, denial of care and resulting 101,000 deaths from refusal to

pay for care.

While single-payer backers fight for their cause in Pittsburgh, and cite opinion polls nationwide showing majority support for such a change, they face obstacles:

* Congress. The key Senate Finance Committee, charged with finding \$1 trillion needed over 10 years to expand coverage to all, is lukewarm at best

to even the "fall-back" public option. Chairman Max Baucus, D-Mont., is dead set against single-payer.

* Anti-health care hysteria whipped up by the insurance companies, the Radical Right and Republicans. The frenzy has gotten so insane that an effigy of one moderate Democratic congressman from Maryland was hung outside his

district office, the district office sign of a second moderate from Georgia was spray-painted with a swastika, and a third moderate Democrat, from North Carolina, received telephoned death threats.

* Obama. He told a pro-health care reform crowd in New Hampshire on Aug. 11 that single-payer would not pass.

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