

AT&T workers call out company for pocketing tax cuts, then cutting U.S. jobs

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

"They promised us 7,000 new jobs with the tax break in 2017," Local 7250 President Shari Wojtowicz said. "Instead, we have lost over 12,000 union jobs across the country.

"If we lose jobs in our community, it impacts everybody. It doesn't just impact our families, it will impact all of our families and all of our neighborhoods."

AT&T is a notably egregious example of a growing problem in the U.S., where more and more companies are finding ways to shirk their responsibility to pay taxes.

A report issued by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy found that in 2018, the first year after the tax cuts, 60 of America's biggest corporations zeroed out their federal income taxes on \$79 billion in U.S. pretax income. Instead of paying \$16.4 billion in taxes at the 21 percent statutory corporate tax rate, these companies enjoyed a net corporate tax rebate of \$4.3 billion.

"AT&T is one of the most profitable companies in the United States. And they still insist on cutting jobs and increasing our health care costs. We're in a fight for job security. So our contract battle is about keeping work here in the United States, getting AT&T to keep their promise to America, to create jobs and not eliminate them."



AT&T workers demonstrated outside the company's Minneapolis offices on Tax Day.

Union Advocate photo

Chad Perkins, secretary-treasurer Local 7250, works in call center in Minneapolis doing collections work.

"They want to cut the workforce in

our bargaining unit in half, when they said they would add thousands of jobs," Perkins said. "There's just so much disinformation out there right

now, they think they can get away with it. It enrages me."

3700 workers across U.S. – Legacy T contract.



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The St. Paul Union Advocate

122nd Year, No. 10, Issue 5427

For union homes in Ramsey, Dakota, Washington and Chisago counties

May 2019

Do Something!



Join carriers' effort to 'stamp out' hunger

Letter Carriers nationwide will help replenish food shelves in their local communities May 11 during the annual "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive.

In its 27th year, the union-led effort is the largest one-day food drive in the country. Last year, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers collected more than 71 million pounds of food across the country. They have collected over 1.6 billion pounds since the drive launched in 1993.

Supporting "Stamp Out Hunger" is as easy as leaving a bag or two of nonperishable goods near your mailbox May 11.

And consider doubling your impact by shopping a union retailer – like Cub Foods, Jerry's, Lunds and Byerlys, Cooper's and Kowalski's – for your donation. Find a full list online at ufcw1189.org.



AT&T workers, members of the Communications Workers of America, held a demonstration outside the company's Minneapolis offices on Tax Day. They say despite promises to use new tax breaks to create jobs, AT&T is looking to chip away at union members job security in contract negotiations, which have dragged on more than a year.

Union Advocate photo

TAX CUTS FOR THEM, JOB CUTS FOR US

Union Advocate staff

The Tax Cut and Jobs Act, championed by President Trump and Republicans in Congress, handed AT&T a \$20 billion windfall last year, contributing to record profits at the telecommunications giant.

Not surprisingly, AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson was among the tax cut's

biggest boosters. He promised the legislation would lead to higher wages for middle class workers and new American jobs.

It hasn't exactly worked out that way. AT&T has shed over 10,000 U.S. jobs since the tax cut passed, and the company is stonewalling union workers who want a fair contract that keeps jobs in their com-

munities. Members of the Communications Workers of America in AT&T's "Legacy" bargaining unit, including 400 Minneapolis-based workers, protested the one-year anniversary of their union contract expiring – on Tax Day, fittingly enough.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

Dan Gustafson: 1927 - 2019

Minnesota AFL-CIO past president Gustafson dies at age 91

By Steve Share,

Minneapolis Labor Review editor

MINNEAPOLIS — A plasterer by trade, Dan W. Gustafson, Jr. became an apprentice in 1947 and rose through the ranks of organized labor. He eventually led the Minnesota AFL-CIO as its president from 1985 to 1991.

Gustafson, who died March 21 at age 91, leaves a lasting legacy in the form of the Union Bank & Trust, which he helped

to found, and the United Labor Centre office building, built in Minneapolis as a result of his leadership.

"He was a born labor leader," said Ray Waldron, who followed in Gustafson's footsteps to serve as Minnesota AFL-CIO president from 2001 to 2009. "He was a lifetime coach for me and other labor leaders."

"Minnesota's labor movement has (CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)



Dan Gustafson played a leading role in efforts to found Union Bank and Trust in the 1970s.

Labor Review photo

Go Figure

2.2% Infrastructure spending in the U.S. as a share of GDP in 1968

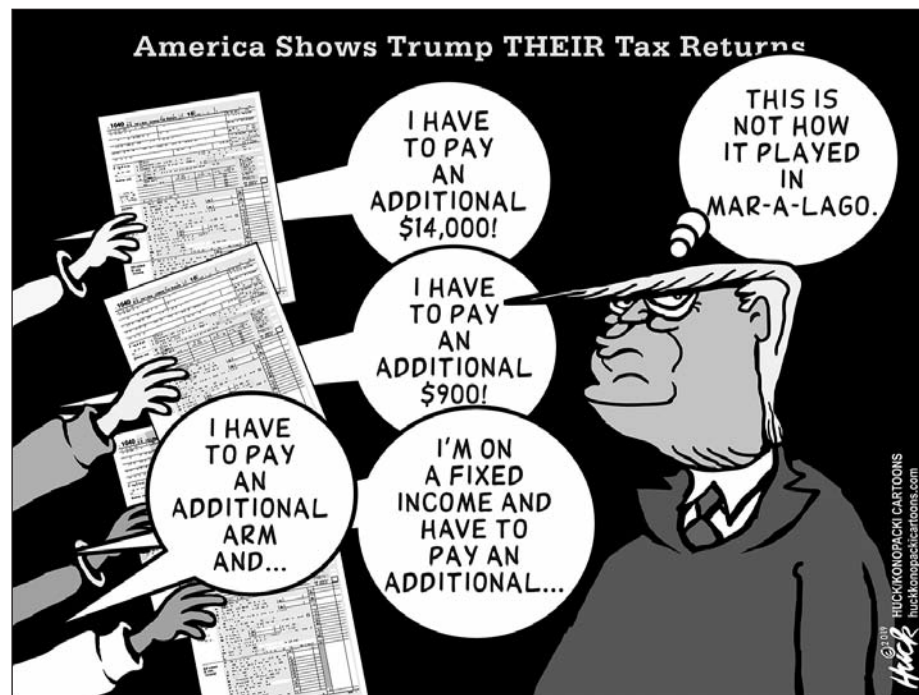
1.0% Infrastructure spending in the U.S. as a

\$7.4 billion

Estimated cost of repairing or replacing deteriorating U.S. bridges, according to the American Society of Civil

\$4 billion

Federal appropriation for bridge



Labor Voices: Kelly Gibbons

Reflecting, with gratitude, on a year of local leadership

In February of last year I became executive director of Local 284 of the Service Employees International Union. It's hard to believe how fast the time has gone by – and how much we've grown and learned as a union.

Our local began preparing for the Supreme Court's Janus decision well before it came down – and not on the side of labor. This ruling was an attack on unions to try and crush us and turn working people against each other, but that did not happen! We chose to fight back, not against each other, and to stand in solidarity with each other and our union. At Local 284, we decided we were not going to let them take our rights away. Only we, the members, can protect the contract we have been bargaining for and fighting for the past 40-plus years. Instead, we chose to have a voice and a vote in our workplace, and to invite our non-members to join us. And they did!

But we still have a lot of work to do. At the moment, roughly 80 percent of workers represented by Local 284 are members. We're asking every one of those members to talk to every person who is not a member – or who is a new hire – and ask them to join us, because the contract we all enjoy could be dismantled if we don't have members to protect it.

Janus hasn't been our only challenge. When it was time to pick Minnesota's next governor, I had the opportunity to sit at a table with community partners and other unions who were tired of how our government doesn't seem to work for all of us. We held several meetings with candidates and asked them to partner with us and co-govern. And we reached out to our members, asking what it means to be a Minnesotan and what do we really want for our communities. What we heard was we need health care, lower housing costs, safer schools, smaller class sizes and more support, good jobs and clean water, among other concerns.

Our members decided to wait until after the primary election to endorse a candidate. At our Leadership Assembly last October, both parties' nominees were invited to talk about why we should support them, and to share their vision for Minnesota. It was exciting and very uplifting for our members, and it charged us up to get to work!

Then we got busy. We had some members who took time off from their jobs to help get our candidates elected. We did phone banks and door knocks. And we won big time! Boots on the ground is how you make this happen, so I would like to say thank you to everyone who volun-

“We have a vision that is going to take work, organizing and holding elected officials accountable.”

– Kelly Gibbons



teered and worked like crazy!

As a union of people who work to make Minnesota's education system great, we are so excited to be working with a governor in Tim Walz who supports education, our veterans and the employees who make education our first priority.

What's next, you might ask?

At our Leadership Assembly, members identified the issues they wanted to bring to our state lawmakers: education funding, unemployment, school safety, full-service schools, universal pre-K, student lunch debt, student loan debt and more. Our members had a chance to talk about those issues at our union's lobbying day. They also shared concerns about the impact of so many school days lost to winter conditions this year. Our legislators listened and responded in a big way, with a bipartisan bill to ensure the safety of kids is met during the dangerous temperatures and slippery roads, and to ensure staff maintain their wages with educational dollars for trainings.

But we can't stop here. We have a vision that is going to take work, organizing and holding elected officials accountable to our communities. We need to ask why lawmakers are protecting the corporations who are not contributing to local taxes. Why do they have more rights than the people who have elected them? Why should we pay and get left behind?

Through our unions, we have a seat at the table where the decisions are being made, a bigger voice for One Minnesota where no one gets left behind, where we have strong schools and where employees get the respect and dignity at their jobs. Where we don't have to fight over crumbs! I'm willing to keep fighting. Are you?

– Kelly Gibbons is executive director of SEIU Local 284, which represents over 7,000 school support staff in K-12 schools and adjunct faculty members at colleges and universities.

Letters

- Send letters to: 353 W. 7th St., Suite 201, St. Paul, MN 55102
- Fax them to 651-293-1989
- Email them to: mmoore@stpaulunions.org

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Minutes of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation

APRIL 10, 2019

The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation met in regular session on the above date and was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance by President Kasper at 6 p.m. Board members in attendance were Beedle B, Beedle G, Beissel, Dreyer, Engeldorf, Faber, Kasper, Luneberg, Madden, Markham-Kocurek, Schmidt, and St. Aoro. Excused were: Guertin, Haugen, Maki-Green, McCarthy, McNamara, Mullin, Ryan, Sansom, Slattery and Varco. Absent were: DeRoy, Gibbons, Gorman, Hoppe, Meyer, Monsour and Weed.

GUESTS

• Kip Hedges spoke at the Executive Board and the delegation meeting requesting support and volunteers to help with the door knock for the Delta Ramp Organizing Drive.
M/S/C FOR THE SAINT PAUL RLF TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST IN THE IAMAW DELTA DOORKNOCKS.

CREDENTIALS

• Credentials were received from AFL-CIO St. Paul Retirees. President Kasper administered the Oath of Obligation to those new delegates and alternates present.

MINUTES

• **M/S/C TO APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2019, AS PUBLISHED IN THE UNION ADVOCATE NEWSPAPER AFTER THE SECRETARY NOTES THERE ARE NO ADDITIONS OR CHANGES CALLED FOR.**

COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION (COPE) MINUTES APRIL 10, 2019

COPE met in regular session on the above date and was called to order by President Kasper at 5 p.m. Board members in attendance were Beedle B, Beedle G, Beissel, Dreyer, Engeldorf, Faber, Hoerth, Kasper, Krey, Luneberg, Madden, Markham-Kocurek, Schmidt, St. Aoro and Wise. Excused were: Angrimson, Edwards, Guertin, Haugen, Maki-Green, McCarthy, McNamara, Mullin, Ryan, Sansom, Slattery and Varco. Absent were: DeRoy, Gibbons, Gorman, Hoppe, Lohmann, Meyer, Monsour, Qualy and Weed.

Items to come before this board included:
• The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation screened for the North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale Schools Bond Referendum.
• Kera Peterson, Political Director, shared what has been happening with the Paid Family and Medical Leave, Ending Wage Theft, Fair Tax Conformity for Working People, etc. The next Labor Lobbyist Meeting is Friday, April 19, 2019, at the MN AFL-CIO.

• The Ramsey County and Washington County Labor Assemblies will be hosting a Meet & Greet on Wednesday, April 24, 2019, at the St. Paul Labor Center.
• **M/S/C TO RECOMMEND LABOR ENDORSEMENT OF THE NORTH ST. PAUL-MAPLEWOOD-OAKDALE SCHOOLS BOND REFERENDUM.**

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$250 DONATION TOWARD THE ANNUAL ORTEGA FUNDRAISER BEING HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 9,**

2019 FROM 5:00 – 8:00 PM AT MANCINIS CHAR HOUSE.

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO PURCHASE A TABLE OF TEN AT A COST OF \$1,250 TO THE EIGHTH ANNUAL MINNESOTA DFL HUMPHREY-MONDALE DINNER ON FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019, AT THE MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER.**

There being no further business to come before this committee, the meeting adjourned.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES APRIL 10, 2019

The Executive Board met upon conclusion of COPE with those same members present who are duly elected to this board.

Items to come before this board included:

• **PRESIDENT'S REPORT.**

President Kasper shared information on the upcoming AFL-CIO Midwest District Meeting conference being held May 1 and 2, 2019, in St. Louis, Missouri, and encouraged attendance; the Ninth Annual Labor Bowl being held on Thursday, May 2, 2019; and the NALC Annual Food Drive on Saturday, May 11, 2019.

• **ORGANIZING/UPDATES/CAMPAIGNS:**

– Volunteers are needed for IAMAW District Lodge 77's organizing campaign for Delta Airline Workers specifically the ground (ramp) and flight attendants. We will be door knocking from April 15 through May 3.

– APWU's April 15 Tax Day Action. Postal workers are again uniting, this time to let the public know that the Postal Services operates with NO tax dollars. Organize a group to leaflet in front of a post office or in a public space or hold a press conference to spread the message. RSVP by filling out the form on apwu.org/taxdayevents or email legislative@apwu.org. Contact communications@apwu.org for media coverage assistance.

– CWA Rally on Monday, April 15, at 1:30 p.m. in front of the AT&T building located at 901 Marquette Avenue South in Minneapolis.

– Dakota County Labor Assembly will be hosting a Workers Memorial Day service on Sunday, April 28, 2019, from 2:00 – 2:30 p.m. at Lebanon Cemetery in Apple Valley.

– Join UNITE HERE on International Workers Day May 1, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. at Peavey Plaza in downtown Minneapolis. There are 15 hotels up for contract renewal.
– The State of Nevada passed a bill allowing AFSCME state workers to organize.

• **REQUESTS:**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$500 DONATION TO THE TWIN CITIES LABOR CHORUS.**
– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$300 DONATION TO NALC BRANCH 9 BOWL-A-THON FUNDRAISER FOR MDA ON SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019, AT 7:00 P.M. AT NEW HOPE BOWL.**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$300 DONATION TO NALC BRANCH 28 FIFTH ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON FOR MD BEING HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2019 AT SUN RAY LANES.**
– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO BE A SILVER SPONSOR FOR \$1,000**

Craig keeps in touch with labor friends



The St. Paul RLF hosted a roundtable meeting with first-term U.S. Rep. Angie Craig at the Labor Center March 21. More than 40 union leaders, members, staff and retirees attended. Craig represents Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District, including Dakota County and parts of Washington County. She answered questions related to health care, good jobs, infrastructure, public schools and other issues. President Kasper urged anyone who lives in the 2nd District to reach out to Craig with questions or feedback. "We may not see eye to eye on everything, but we know Angie will always listen," Kasper said. Learn more online at craig.house.gov.

FOR THE UFCW LOCAL 1189'S KAPOsia DAYS 5K & 10K LABOR AGAINST CANCER RUN-WALK BEING HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2019.

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO SUPPORT UNITE HERE'S INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY MARCH AND RALLY.**

• Thank-you notes received from East Side Freedom Library for the RLF's first installment contribution of \$3,000 and from the Minnesota State Retirees for the RLF's \$500 contribution to their Annual Fundraiser being held on Saturday, May 4, 2019, from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Sheet Metal Workers Local 10 hall.

There being no further business to come before this board, the meeting adjourned.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Secretary-Treasurer Engeldorf reported on the financial status of the Federation as of March 2019. The report was accepted as read.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Kasper reminded everyone of the Ramsey County Labor Assembly. They will be screening for St. Paul City Council at their April 22, 2019, meeting.
• The Chisago County Labor Assembly invites you to the Second Annual Janet Johnson Memorial Dinner and Fundraiser being held Thursday, April 25, 2019 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the North Folk Winery, 43150 Blackhawk Road in Harris, MN. This event is a major fundraiser for DFL Senate District 32 honoring the memory and work of our former Senator Janet Johnson.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

• Connie Beissel reported on behalf of the Dakota County Labor Assembly. We had a good turnout for our Meet & Greet in March. Seven



City Council endorsement notice

The St. Paul Regional Labor Federation may consider endorsing candidates for St. Paul City Council during the May 8 delegate meeting.

For more information on the federation's endorsement process, call 651-222-3787.

legislators and over 30 union members in attendance. At next month's meeting we will be preparing for the Workers Memorial Day Service.

• Theresa St. Aoro reported on behalf of the Ramsey County Labor Assembly. They will be screening for St. Paul City Council at their April 22, 2019, meeting.
• The Chisago County Labor Assembly invites you to the Second Annual Janet Johnson Memorial Dinner and Fundraiser being held Thursday, April 25, 2019 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the North Folk Winery, 43150 Blackhawk Road in Harris, MN. This event is a major fundraiser for DFL Senate District 32 honoring the memory and work of our former Senator Janet Johnson.

NEW BUSINESS
• President Kasper called for a floor vote on the COPE Committee recommendation to grant labor endorsement to North Saint Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale Schools Bond Referendum.

M/S/C TO GRANT LABOR ENDORSEMENT TO THE NORTH SAINT PAUL/MAPLEWOOD/OAKDALE SCHOOLS BOND REFERENDUM.

There being no further business to come before this delegation, the meeting adjourned.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

• You are invited to the Retiree fundraiser being held on Saturday,

Submitted by,
BERNADINE ENGELDORF
Secretary-Treasurer

Editor's Note: "Voices" is a forum for opinions from across the labor movement. It appears regularly in The Advocate. We encourage readers to respond to our columnists' opinions. To write a letter to the editor, see the upper-right-hand corner of this page. To inquire about contributing to "Voices," call 651-222-3787, extension 112. This column does not reflect the position of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation or its assemblies.



Volunteers from local plumbers unions paused for a group photo before fanning out across the Twin Cities to make no-cost repairs for elderly, disabled and low-income homeowners. submitted photo

Union plumbers give back on annual 'Water's Off' service day

On their day off March 30 union plumbers fanned out across the state to provide free plumbing repairs and inspections to senior, low-income and disabled homeowners as part of Water's Off.

This community service program helps homeowners in need while raising awareness of the importance of water conservation attained through proper plumbing maintenance and repair.

"Giving back to our communities is one of our core union principles, so once we identified the problem, we knew we needed to help," said David Ybarra, President of the Minnesota

Pipe Trades Association, which represents more than 9,000 plumbers, pipefitters, and other skilled union tradesmen and women.

This year, in partnership with local Community Action Partnership agencies, 70 homeowners from the Twin Cities to Rochester were treated to no-cost assistance from a local union member.

Since the Water's Off community service program started in 1994, union plumber volunteers have donated more than 12,500 hours of skilled labor, with a value of \$2,000,000.

"These volunteers aren't just fixing a leaky toilet," said Marcia Paulson, the

program coordinator for Ramsey and Washington County's Community Action Partnership. "They're saving money for homeowners and showing that someone's looking out for them."

Water's Off is made possible by three local unions (Minneapolis Plumbers Local 15, Rochester Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 6, and Saint Paul Plumbers Local 34), the Minnesota Mechanical Contractors Association, the Metro Plumbing Heating and Cooling Contractors and three Community Action Partnership agencies (Hennepin County, Ramsey and Washington Counties and Three Rivers).

Workers Center offers workshop focused on immigration law

The Hardman Avenue Workers' Center and the Immigrant Legal Services program of the Volunteer Lawyers Network are teaming up to offer a workshop May 14 on immigration services and referrals in Minnesota.

The workshop is geared toward service providers who are on the front lines, working alongside immigrants and refugees in Minnesota. The goal is to provide up-to-date information on the immigration system and helpful tips to better serve and inform people in need of immigration help.

Topics include accessing free legal services, finding a good immigration lawyer, how immigration lawyers serve their clients, how to support people navigating the immigration system without giving legal advice and how to make good immigration referrals.

The workshop will run from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189, 266 Hardman Ave. N., South St. Paul. RSVP by May 10 to Diana at dtastad@ufcw1189.org.

The Hardman Avenue Workers' Center is an initiative of UFCW Local 1189, focused on educating workers about their rights.

Twin Cities

St. Paul educators want your input

The St. Paul Federation of Educators will begin negotiating a new contract with the district later this year, and the union is committed to bargaining for the racially equitable schools that St. Paul children deserve.

But before talks begin, union leaders want to hear from families and community members about the needs they want addressed in St. Paul's public schools. SPFE invites the public to participate in small group discussions and brainstorming on the subject Monday, May 6, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 Kent St. The union will provide child care and interpreter services.

Learn more about the St. Paul educators' approach to bargaining for the common good on the union's website: spfe28.org.

Boot camp for organizers

The Minnesota AFL-CIO will host a three-day Organizing Institute in Rochester May 31 to June 2. It's designed to give working people and unions the tools they need to go on the offensive and win.

All Minnesota AFL-CIO affiliated unions are welcome to sponsor member and staff organizers to attend the training. Participants will learn one-on-one communication skills, how to move workers to take action, leadership development tactics and more.

Deadline to register is May 10, and space is limited. Find registration forms at mnaflcio.org, or contact Minnesota AFL-CIO Worksite Coordinator Coly Intemann at cintemann@mnaflcio.org.

Minnesota retirees know how to party

The Minnesota State Retiree Council's annual "Fun(d)raiser" bash is scheduled for Saturday, May 4, from 3 to 7 p.m. at Sheet Metal Workers Local 10's union hall, 1681 Cope Ave., Maplewood.

Admission is free, and the event will feature food, music, hourly raffles, a silent auction and a statewide raffle for seven major cash prizes between \$100 and \$500. The winning tickets will be drawn at the event, and winners need not be present at the drawing.

Proceeds support the council's work to speak with a unified voice on policy issues of importance to retired people.

For more information or to purchase raffle tickets, call 651-227-7647, x121. Learn more about the council and its work online at www.mnaflcio.org/state-retiree-council.

Thad Ludwiczak
Do-Good.biz



Jobseekers, employers, representatives of union apprenticeship programs and others filled the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 110 union hall April 4 during the fourth annual Union Job and Resource Fair in St. Paul. For the first time, the event featured a panel, which included (pictured top-center, L-R) Local 110 apprentice Steve Patrin, St. Paul Regional Labor Federation President Bobby Kasper, St. Paul letter carrier and AFL-CIO member Perry Schmidt, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189's Diana Tastad-Damer. Pictured above, jobseekers at the event were able to try out at virtual welding station, hosted by the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters' apprenticeship program.

Union Advocate photos

St. Paul's Union Job Fair continues to grow in year four

Union employers and apprenticeship programs pitched career opportunities to nearly 150 jobseekers April 4 at the Union Job and Resource Fair, hosted on St. Paul's East Side by Local 110 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The event, co-sponsored annually by the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, the Saint Paul Building and Construction Trades Council, the City of Saint Paul, United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1189, and the East Side Freedom Library, continued to grow in its fourth year. The event attracted 32 vendors, including construction firms, manufacturers, government agencies, health care employers, retailers and union apprenticeship programs.

"Unions built the American middle class, and a union job remains the best way for working people to secure liv-

able wages and decent health and retirement benefits," said Bobby Kasper, President of the 50,000-member Saint Paul RLE. "As a labor movement, we need to raise awareness about the value of a union contract, especially among immigrant communities and young workers."

New this year, the job fair opened with a panel discussion, led by Freedom Library co-director Peter Rachleff. Employers, union leaders, apprentices and an analyst from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development offered insight into the local job market. They discussed the skills and qualifications different union careers demand, and the advantages of working union.

On average, union members in the U.S. earn 22 percent more than non-union workers, and union members are

more likely to have health insurance and retirement benefits.

Many job seekers at the event expressed interest in apprenticeship programs sponsored by Building Trades unions and their signatory contractors. Most require only a high school diploma or GED for admittance, and apprentices are able to work regular hours in their field – and earn good wages and benefits – while they learn their particular crafts.

The East Side Freedom Library hosted the Union Job and Resource Fair at its location the previous three years. Moving to Local 110's hall accommodated growing interest in the event, while staying true to its East Side roots.

"This job fair is an exciting opportunity to extend our outreach and build new relationships on the East Side, and we're proud to be a part of it," Kasper said.

Building the college fund

The St. Paul RLF held a fundraiser at the Labor Center in March for New Brookwood Labor College, which launched its first cohort last month. The school is committed to "educating workers into the working class," with courses co-taught by academics and organizers. Activists who helped plan and open New Brookwood paused for a photo at the fundraiser: (L to R) Jean Baudhuin (Laborers), Wu Chen Khoo (IATSE), Kariton Scott (MNA), St. Paul RLF President Bobby Kasper, Peter Rachleff (East Side Freedom Library), Vicki Beebe (RLF), Dave Kamper (MAPE), New Brookwood Executive Director Robyn Gulley, John Crea, Jamie Gulley (SEIU Health Care Minnesota) and Matt Musel (Metro State). Learn more about the school's offerings at newbrookwood.org.

Let's get together, union members!

The St. Paul Regional Labor Federation's local labor assemblies bring working people and retirees together to exchange ideas and take action on issues that matter most in their communities. Assembly meetings are open to all union members who live or work in our four-county area.

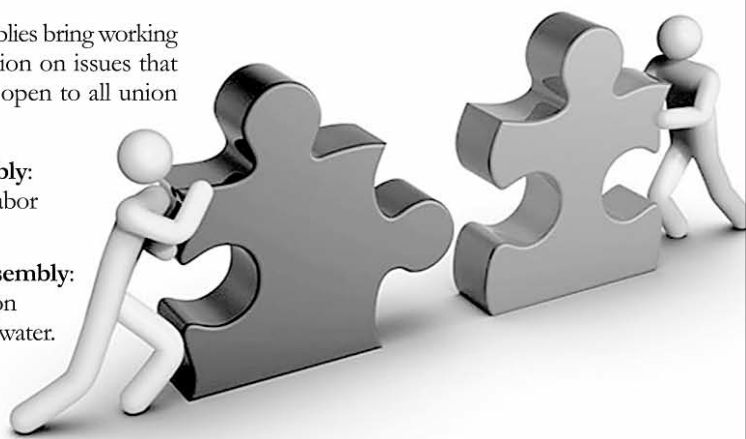
Chisago County Assembly:
May 23, 4:30 p.m., Wyoming Public Library, 26855 Forest Blvd.

Dakota County Assembly:
May 9, 7 p.m., Dakota County United Educators, 6950 W 146th St., Apple Valley.

www.stpaulunions.org

Ramsey County Assembly:
May 20, 6 p.m., St. Paul Labor Center, 353 W. 7th St.

Washington County Assembly:
May 22, 6 p.m., Washington County Gov't Center, Stillwater.



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full page color ad

Unions endorse bond referendum campaign in North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale district

North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school administrators, teachers and staff are united in support of a proposal to invest up to \$275 million in the district's facilities. If approved by voters May 14, the funds would improve school security, modernize learning spaces and ease overcrowding in school buildings.

"Our buildings, most are over 50 years old," Rory Sanders, president of the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Education Association, said. "They're just not designed for today's learning environment. Many have traffic congestion, safety and security concerns. There are just too many kids in too small of buildings."

The bond referendum has been endorsed by the education associa-

tion, the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation and other unions.

The district estimates the referendum, if approved, would increase property taxes for the "average homeowner" – with a home valued at \$200,000 – about \$5 per month. Sanders said that's a small price to pay for the peace of mind that comes with a secure facility.

"For our superintendent, our district leaders, the No. 1 thing we talk about and train on is our safety," Sanders said. "There's only so many lockdowns and tornado drills and things we can do as practice; if we can't secure our buildings the way we need to – with double-door entrances that lead right into office, with modern technologies – it won't matter."



Sanders also pointed out the proposed improvements would have a positive ripple effect throughout the community, including the jobs created for skilled tradespeople.

"When your schools are updated and nice, your property value goes up," he added. "That's a proven fact."

Get the facts about the May 14 vote on District 622's website: www.isd622.org/bond2019.

Trades night' promotion a hit for Wild – even in defeat



The Minnesota Wild rolled out the red carpet for over 200 union members during the team's March 19 game against the Colorado Avalanche. The Building Trades Ticket Pack included a pregame party at the St. Paul Labor Center, a personalized scoreboard message and an opportunity to take the Xcel Energy Center ice as a group after the game. The Wild lost, 3-1, but deserves a tip of the helmet nonetheless for supporting the union tradespeople who build our communities - not to mention the team's beautiful arena! Pictured enjoying their ice time (top two photos, L to R) are members of IUPAT District Council 82's group: Jess Redfield, Jack Carlson, Ken Gorman, David Sears, Leslie Philmon, Tom Aasheim and Dave Morrison.

Union Advocate photos



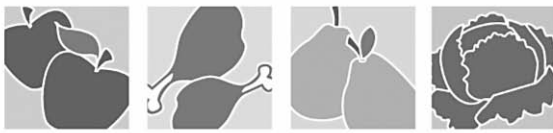
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East Metro Locations – May 2019

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Burnsville: Diamondhead Ctr.
May 22, 3 to 5 p.m. | • Roseville: Real Life Church
May 14, 3 to 5 p.m. |
| • Cottage Grove: All Saints
May 2, 4 to 6 p.m. | • St. Paul: Hallie Q. Brown Ctr.
May 16, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Eagan: Easter Lutheran Church by the Lake
May 7, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • St. Paul: Hazel Park UCC
May 1, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Forest Lake: VFW
May 22, 4 to 6 p.m. | • St. Paul: West 7th Community Ctr.
May 3, 10 a.m. to noon |
| • Maplewood: Redeeming Love
May 6, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • South St. Paul: Central Square
May 21, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • North Branch: Trinity Luth.
May 8, 2 to 4 p.m. | • Stillwater: Community Thread
May 14, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Northfield: St. Dominic
May 9, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • White Bear Lake: Community of Grace Lutheran
May 10, 2 to 4 p.m. |
| • Oakdale: Grace of God Luth.
May 20, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | |

Questions? Please go to www.fareforall.org or call 763-450-3880.

Gustafson remembered as tough, humble champion for working people

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

lost a true champion for working people," said current Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bill McCarthy. "When big business tried to weaken Minnesota's workers compensation system and labor protections in the 1980s, Dan Gustafson led the effort that stopped those attacks."

Although Gustafson retired as Minnesota AFL-CIO president in 1991, he continued to serve as chairman of Union Bank for many years and also as president of the Labor Temple Association, which owns the United Labor Centre.

"Danny served on the board of Union Bank & Trust Company for 42 consecutive years, 35 of those years as chairman," said Jeff Schrempp, the bank's current president. "I think the bank was a crown jewel for him, although he never boasted, always giving credit to the employees."

"One of Danny's endearing attributes was that he was respected by all, even by those that were on the other side of the issues, primarily because he fully understood and carefully listened to the passion of others."

Colleagues, politicians and journalists described Gustafson as a dedicated trade unionist who was straight-

shooter, who always spoke the truth and who always kept his word.

Nellie Stone Johnson, Minnesota's ground-breaking civil rights leader and labor leader, wrote a June 14, 1985 open letter to Gustafson published in the Labor Review: "You are the most compassionate and articulate spokesman for working men and women in all of Minnesota...Load up your guns, Danny; and go get 'em!! Minnesota's working men and women need your good heart and strong voice."

Former Minnesota Gov. Arne Carlson commented on Facebook after Gustafson's death: "Dan Gustafson was far more than a labor leader. Like his colleague and mentor, Dave Roe, he was an influential and dedicated Minnesota giant who truly understood the vital importance of the middle class and always supported efforts to expand it. Gustafson will always be remembered as one of the Greats."

"Whether you agreed with him or not, Dan always forcefully fought for workers' interests and remembered who was on his side and who wasn't," Ken Peterson, former commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, commented on

Facebook.

"I liked the contrast between the gruff exterior and his big heart," commented longtime Twin Cities journalist Karen Boros. "He also did his homework."

Born in 1927 in Minneapolis, Gustafson attended Patrick Henry High School and Dunwoody Technical Institute. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II. Gustafson followed his father into the plasterers trade, becoming an apprentice in 1947.

From 1955 to 1966, he served as business representative for Plasterers Local 65. He was elected business manager of the Minneapolis Building Trades Council in the 1960s, and in 1974 he was elected president of the Minnesota State Building Trades Council.

Gustafson served as secretary-treasurer of the Minnesota AFL-CIO from 1978-1984 and, following the retirement of his mentor Dave Roe, served as president of the state federation from 1985-1991.

When the idea to create a union-owned bank became Gustafson's mission in the mid-1970s, he went to union meeting upon union meeting to raise millions in capital to launch

the bank.

"We saw that all kinds of firms were getting rich off money that belonged to the workers," Gustafson told the Labor Review on the bank's fifth anniversary. "We figured we ought to have something to say about what happens in the financial community."

About three years ago, Gustafson persuaded Russ Scherber, business manager of Pipefitters Local 539, to take on the leadership of the Labor Temple Association, which owns the United Labor Centre — where Union Bank is located.

Scherber got schooled in Gustafson's ways of leadership. Scherber related a lesson from Gustafson: "Not everything you're going to do as a leader is popular," he said, "but stick with what's right."

"He was a big picture guy. That's how he led," Scherber said. "I just wish there were more people like him today."

Labor's agenda advances in Minnesota House, finds roadblocks in Senate

By Steve Share,

Minneapolis Labor Review editor

With the clock ticking towards the Minnesota Legislature's May 20 adjournment date, almost all of the Minnesota AFL-CIO's legislative priorities have advanced in the DFL-controlled House. But they have made little progress of any kind at all in the Republican-controlled Senate.

In the House, "all of our top priorities are very much alive," reported Melissa Hysing, the Minnesota AFL-CIO's legislative director.

With little action in the Senate, however, "a lot of this is going to come down to conference committee negotiations," Hysing said. Here's a rundown on the status of the Minnesota AFL-CIO's agenda:

• Paid Family and Medical Leave

A proposal backed by the Minnesotans for Paid Family and Medical Leave Coalition, of which the Minnesota AFL-CIO is a co-chair, has passed through nine committee hearings in the House. The proposal is included in the omnibus jobs bill and in a largely identical stand-alone bill, HF 5.

"The Senate has done nothing," Hysing said. "They haven't addressed the issue in any way. No hearings. No proposals in their bills at this point."

• Ending Wage Theft

Legislation to address wage theft also is included in the omnibus jobs bill and in a stand-alone bill, HF 6.

"The House bill reflects the priorities of the Coalition to End Wage Theft and the experiences of directly-affected workers, employers, advocates, and the Department of Labor who have been working together to address this problem for years," Hysing said.

"The wage theft bill in the House is bi-partisan," she noted. "It has bi-partisan authors and has received multiple bi-partisan votes."

A companion bill in the Senat, however, was not even accorded a hearing by Senate leadership.

A Republican wage theft bill in the Senate, SF 1816, is weak on enforcement, Hysing said, and contains provisions harmful to workers. For example, the bill would require a worker who experienced wage theft to submit a written demand to his or her employer for payment five days before the Department of Labor would be allowed to investigate.

The same weak wage theft bill is in the Senate's omnibus jobs bill, which also includes language to preempt local \$15 minimum wage and earned sick time ordinances in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

• Accessible and Affordable Health Care

The House omnibus Health and Human Services bill includes the governor's OneCare proposal, a prescription drug price transparency bill and the important repeal of the sunset of the healthcare provider tax. The bill was scheduled for a vote on the House floor April 24. The Senate omnibus Health and Human Services bill contains none of the key House provisions.

• Fair Taxes for Working People

The House tax bill includes conformity with new federal tax laws and raises \$1.2 billion in new revenue. "We support it," Hysing said. "Overall the bill raises revenue to fund working Minnesotans, their schools, health care and communities. It provides investments in things working people in Minnesota need."

The Republican-controlled Senate had not yet released its tax proposal at press time.

• 40-Hour Workweek

Minnesota is the only state that has a 48-hour

workweek in state law, but legislation to mandate a 40-hour workweek, supported by the AFL-CIO has stalled.

"We are prioritizing that one more for next year," Hysing said, and the bill is "no longer in play for this session."

• Comprehensive Transportation Funding and Gas Tax Increase

The House omnibus transportation bill includes a 20-cent increase in the gas tax, phased in over four years, to invest in roads and bridges. For transit, the bill includes a one-half cent metro area sales tax.

Senate Republicans' omnibus transportation bill contains neither provision.

Save the date: Working People's Day at the Capitol!

Plans are in the works for a rally at the Capitol May 3 in support of the Minnesota AFL-CIO's legislative agenda.

Organizers had yet to finalize details at press time, but they promised an event designed to show strength and solidarity as the Legislature votes on paid family leave, wage theft legislation and other labor priorities.

Monitor mnaflcio.org for details.

Celebrating public service – and public workers



Two of the state's largest public-employee unions, AFSCME Council 5 and the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, combined forces for a rally at the Capitol March 26, packing all three floors of the rotunda. The rally was a celebration of public service workers and their right to collective bargaining — a right they began exercising in contract negotiations with the State of Minnesota last month. "Together, we are 60,000 workers strong," MAPE Executive Director Lina Jamoul said. "That's 60,000 workers committed

to workplace democracy and a just economy that works for everyone, not just those few at the top." Four state constitutional officers, including Gov. Tim Walz, pictured with AFSCME Executive Director John Westmoreland, addressed the rally. The governor, who has referred to himself as the "organizer in chief," reaffirmed his commitment to collective bargaining. "When you stand for the right to collectively bargain with unions, you are standing with the people of Minnesota," he said. Union Advocate photos

Carpenters take a stand against tax fraud



On April 15 – Tax Day – the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters spoke out against the tax fraud that occurs when unscrupulous employers treat their workers as independent contractors. That's a tax fraud because it means the employers are not withholding state and federal income taxes or paying into Social Security or workers compensation. "What I don't think people realize is how prevalent it is in a state like Minnesota or a city like Minneapolis," said Adam Duinick, NCSRCC director of government affairs. The Carpenters were outside the Arrow Apartments near the University of Minnesota, displaying a banner and passing out leaflets to passersby. The leaflet cited the Arrow Apartments as an example where "workers were paid off the books, not paid time-and-one-half for overtime, workers compensation premiums were not paid on all workers, and workers were misclassified as 'independent contractors...'" The Minneapolis action was one of more than 100 events like it around the country organized today by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters. Minneapolis Labor Review photo

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Labor News in Review



Members of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota held informational picketing outside Stillwater Medical Group April 15, calling out the HealthPartners affiliate for dragging its feet in negotiations on a first contract. Workers at the clinic voted to form a union in August of last year.

Union Advocate photos

LOSING PATIENCE

Employees of Stillwater Medical Group staged informational picketing outside their workplace April 15, protesting the slow pace of negotiations with their employer on a new union contract.

The group of certified medical assistants, licensed practical nurses and audiology assistants voted last August to join SEIU Healthcare Minnesota, seeking improved conditions both for themselves and the people they care for at the HealthPartners-affiliated facility. But in the eight months since, management has show little interest in bargaining a first contract, union members on the picket line said.

"We've been bargaining for the last six months, and we've had very little movement," Becky Ogren, a nurse with nearly 16 years of experience at the clinic, said. "We just want to get a contract everybody can live with."

Nursing assistant Amanda Looney called it "sad and ridiculous" that while workers are pushing to raise standards and improve care, the employer has failed to address their concerns about safe staffing. Employee turnover at the facility is high, Looney added, as workers leave the Stillwater clinic for positions with higher wages and better benefits.

"Everybody's tired of a lot of the working conditions, being shortstaffed," Looney said. "I think a lot of our employees are frustrated right now."

Workers believe they've identified an easy fix for Stillwater Medical Group's turnover issues: raising their wages and benefits to the level enjoyed by workers at HealthPartners facilities in the metro area. Lori Leiner, an LPN with 30 years of experience at the clinic, said she earns \$4 less per hour and pays nearly four times as much for health care as HealthPartners employee doing the same job.

"It's the same work, same procedures, same policies," Leiner said. "We're doing HealthPartners work, but not getting their benefits or pay."

The two sides were scheduled to hold their last scheduled negotiations April 22.



Stillwater Medical Group workers (L to R) Lori Leiner, Becky Ogren and Amanda Looney joined the picket for a fair contract.

SNOW DAY RELIEF

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz signed a bipartisan Snow Day Relief bill April 1, allowing public school districts and charter schools to count school days that were canceled due to extreme weather this year as instructional days. The bill also requires schools to do right by employees who were scheduled to work on days school was canceled. The employees must either be given an alternative work day or compensated for their scheduled hours.

As a former teacher, Walz said he trusts local school districts to know best how to keep their students safe. Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan added that cancellations were lost income for workers in hourly jobs. SEIU Local 284, which represents school district employees statewide, lobbied in support of the bill.

"Many hourly employees, like bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and custodians, are feeling financially pinched this winter because they aren't paid when schools are closed," Flanagan said. "These dedicated workers support our children every day, and I'm proud this bill ensures we support them."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

TAX DAY TRUTHS

Rallying outside the downtown Minneapolis post office April 15, union members took aim at a commonly held misconception about the Postal Service – that it's a drain on federal tax dollars.

The truth is the USPS receives no tax dollars for operating expenses. Sale of postage, products and services entirely funds its operations.

But that hasn't kept President Trump and other politicians from trying to privatize the Postal Service. Union members at the rally distributed fliers that read, "The public postal service – keep it. It's yours!"

The White House Office of Management and Budget has proposed selling the USPS to corporations for private profit, which, unions like the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers warn, would result in higher shipping and mailing costs, reduced service and the end of guaranteed delivery.

To U.S. Postal Service delivers 470 million pieces of mail each day to all 159 million addresses in the country. In contrast, private delivery companies go where they can turn a profit.

The Minneapolis rally was among more than 100 nationwide. Learn more about the campaign to protect the Postal Service from privatization at usmail-notforsale.org.

NURSES ENTER TALKS

Members of the Minnesota Nurses Association in the metro area have begun negotiations with Twin Cities hospitals on new contracts that, they hope, will ensure quality patient care. Nurses planned to approach negotiations optimistic that cooperation with hospitals will lead to a settlement,



Postal workers and letter carriers rallied outside the downtown Minneapolis post office on Tax Day, one of 100 actions across the country in opposition to privatizing the Postal Service.

Union Advocate photo

while still firmly believing in contract proposals that value nurses and patients.

"Nurses are united in putting forth proposals that recognize the value of their care and their professional judgment to protect patients," said Jordan Foerster, a negotiations team member and a registered nurse at Fairview.

Nurses at Fairview, Allina, Children's, Methodist, HealthEast and North Memorial hospitals began meeting with their employers last month, and negotiations are scheduled to continue about once a week through May. Their current contracts expire May 31.

"Staffing and workplace violence are still daily issues in our hospitals," said Emily Sippola, registered nurse at United Hospital and negotiating on

behalf of Allina nurses. "We're asking hospitals to track and report violent incidents with frontline staff to help create prevention plans to protect nurses and patients."

A HealthEast facility was the site of a fatal violent incident in 2015. Violence is commonplace across Twin Cities hospitals. In 2018, Allina Health hospitals reported more than 3,000 violent incidents against nurses alone.

"Nurses need to have a say in shaping staffing levels according to patient needs, not just what's the easiest, cheapest option," Foerster said. "The present system of forcing nurses to keep up with patient needs and constantly calling and texting for more help isn't safe or sustainable. It only leads to burnout for nurses."

MNA nurses in the metro are united in proposing that they have a stronger voice in the creation of "staffing grids," which determine how many nurses are needed to provide patient care. They also hope that increases to nurses' compensation will ensure that hospitals can attract and retain the best nurses who can provide the highest quality care.

"We're looking forward to productive conversations with the hospitals," said Elaina Hane, RN at Children's St. Paul. "We've put a lot of work into proposals with contract language that can work for nurses, the hospitals and, of course, the patients. We expect Children's and the other Metro hospitals to meet us with the same commitment to working on an agreement."

— Labor News in Review includes reporting by local unions and other labor news sources. For more labor news, follow @unionadvocate on Twitter. Have a news tip or story idea? Call us at 651-222-3787, ext.112, or email mmoore@stpaulunions.org.



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