

The St. Paul Union Advocate

123rd Year, No. 3, Issue 5430

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

September 2019

Do Something!

Stand with St. Paul educators

In March, employees at the St. Paul Public Schools represented by St. Paul Federation of Educators and Teamsters Local 320 exercised their legal right to change health insurance plans and move into the Public Employees Insurance Program (PEIP). The move will reduce workers' out-of-pocket costs and make insurance more affordable.

But HealthPartners now plans to levy a \$4 million fee against SPFE for ending its contract one year ahead of schedule. This multi-billion dollar nonprofit organization – which, notably, pays no taxes in support of public schools – intends to take money out of children's classrooms to protect their bottom line.

SPFE is encouraging supporters to call on HealthPartners to waive the \$4 million fee and support our schools. The union has set up a petition on its website: spfe.org.



TRUMP ATTACKS, WORKERS FIGHT BACK



VA Hospital workers rallied in Minneapolis last month, calling out the Trump administration's efforts to cripple their union contract. The workers, members of the American Federation of Government Employees, were joined by supporters from other unions. Union Advocate photo

Minneapolis VA Hospital workers rally support as administration seeks to gut their union contract

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

The Trump administration's quiet war on federal workers provoked a loud response from union members in Minnesota last month.

At a rally Aug. 7, members of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and supporters from other unions lined the main road to the VA Hospital in Minneapolis. They chanted, carried signs and drew honks of support from passing vehicles.

Their message to the Trump administration: Stop trying to cripple VA workers' union contract, and start filling the 49,000 still-vacant positions within the agency.

"These are some of the most dedicated federal

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- After pocketing \$21 billion from Trump's corporate tax cut, AT&T finally settles contract with CWA union. **Page 5.**
- Trump won't defend ACA in court; Ellison among state AG's stepping up to defend care for millions. **Page 11.**
- Trump's pick for labor secretary sparks union outrage. **Page 12.**

U.S. Labor Department gets earful from union tradespeople after floating apprenticeship rule change

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

In Minnesota and across North America, Building Trades unions' registered apprenticeship programs set a high bar for training, safety and labor standards in construction.

But in June the Trump administration floated a proposal that, unions warn, not only would lower the bar, but set off a race to the bottom among employers in the industry.

In response, union tradespeople have flooded the U.S. Department of Labor with thousands of letters opposing the regulation, which would establish a new, competing framework for apprenticeship in several career fields, including construction.

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CELEBRATE LABOR DAY AT THE MINNESOTA STATE FAIR!

Each year on Labor Day, the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation sponsors a marching unit in the State Fair's afternoon parade through the fairgrounds. Join us and get a free ticket to the fair! To RSVP call Lynne at 651-222-3787, ext. 116.

Learn more about the Labor Day parade on our website, www.stpaulunions.org.

Well Said!

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, on the workplace immigration raids in Mississippi last month:



"In an act designed to spread fear and cater to some of the most divisive forces in our nation, the U.S. government came into our workplaces to arrest people whose only crime is working hard for a better life. These members of the United Food and Commercial Workers put food on America's table, laboring in dangerous conditions and sacrificing for their families and our communities. We condemn these raids in the strongest possible terms and pledge our full support to the UFCW and the working people of Mississippi as they work to win justice for all those who were unfairly targeted."

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KONO PACK!
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Labor Voices: Bobby Kasper

Celebrating the working people who make America great

Every Monday on Facebook, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189 posts pictures of its members at work. It's fascinating to see the many different places UFCW members work – behind the deli counter at a union grocery store, on the shop floor of a tannery in Red Wing, in nursing homes, pharmacies, greenhouses and beyond.

Local 1189 calls it #MemberMonday, and it's a great example of how our local unions lift up the work their members do. It's a celebration of the working people who make up our labor community – and also a reminder that we can support their jobs by spending money at union employers. That includes Cub Foods, Jerry's, Kowalski's, Lunds and Byerlys, Hirschfield's Paints and many others listed at ufcw1189.org.

The biggest #MemberMonday of them all, of course, is Labor Day, when we unite as a nation to celebrate American workers, the jobs we do to make our country prosperous and, not least of all, the rights and freedoms we've fought for and won to ensure fair treatment and return on our work.

And first and foremost among those rights and freedoms is the ability to join together, form unions and negotiate our wages, benefits and working conditions.

Want a raise? You could ask your boss for one, but we know how that's likely to turn out. Organize a union with your co-workers, though, and you'll have the power to demand that raise with a strong, collective voice. It's why union members, on average, earn more than non-union workers. In 2018, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a full-time union worker's weekly paycheck averaged \$1,051, while non-union workers averaged \$860 in weekly pay.

Want good health insurance? Over 90% of working Americans covered by a union contract have access to employer-sponsored health insurance, compared with roughly two-thirds of non-union workers. And the cost of accessing care through health insurance – whether it's a copay, deductible or premium – is lower for union members, too.

Want a voice on the job? Unions negotiate fair terms and conditions of employment. In Minnesota and most other states, workers can legally be fired at will. But union members who speak up about mistreatment, mismanagement or safety concerns are shielded by their contract

"Life is better when you work union. And when unions are strong, life is better for all working people."

— Bobby Kasper



from management retaliation. Try raising those concerns in a non-union shop, and you'll find out the meaning of the old saying, "If you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu."

It's true that life is better when you work union. But it's also true that when unions are strong, life is better for all working people. Our contracts raise the bar for wages and benefits. When we negotiate pay increases with our employers, non-union employers usually raise their wages in turn to avoid falling behind in the labor market.

Strong unions also advocate for public policy that benefits all working people. We're proof of that here in St. Paul, where The St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, our affiliate unions and worker centers like CTUL led successful campaigns extending earned sick and safe time to all workers, and putting our city on the path to a \$15 minimum wage. Now, we're watching closely to see that the city puts teeth into those new ordinances by hiring staff dedicated to enforcement, and funding outreach efforts to ensure workers and employers understand the new rules.

Whether it's Labor Day, #MemberMonday or any day of the year, it's always the right time to be proud of our union identity. Unions look out for American workers, and American workers drive our economy. At the Regional Labor Federation, that's the message we bring every year to the Minnesota State Fair on Labor Day, along with 250-plus union members, retirees and their family members. It's always a great event that puts a positive spotlight on our labor movement. Join us if you can, and no matter what, have a happy Labor Day!

— Bobby Kasper is president of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, with more than 100 affiliate unions representing over 50,000 members in Chisago, Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties.

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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Get together, tradeswomen!

Minneapolis will play host to the 2019 Tradeswomen Build Nations conference Oct. 4-6. The event is expected to draw women of all ages, construction crafts and skill levels from across North America.

The conference at the downtown Hilton is for all women who work – or aspire to work – in the construction trades, including apprentices, pre-apprentices and journey-level workers. Register online at nabtu.org/twbn.

Entering its ninth year, Tradeswomen Build Nations is the largest conference of its kind. It drew over 2,300 tradeswomen in 2018.

The conference provides opportunities for networking, learning and leadership development, with workshops and plenary sessions facilitated by tradeswomen, featuring union leaders, apprenticeship coordinators, contractors and politicians. Social events and volunteer opportunities also are in the works.

Retirees to put eye on 2020 elections

The Retirees are freshening things up this fall. Rather than hosting an annual convention as in years past, the Minnesota State Retiree Council plans to hold its first Annual Conference and Election of Board Members and Officers on Sept. 25 at the Sheet Metal Workers hall in Maplewood.

The conference theme is “2020: Eyes on the Election,” and participants will look to gather information and motivation to make the council’s contribution to labor get-out-the-vote efforts better than ever next year.

The Retiree Council still plans to hold conventions, but only in even-numbered years. To register for the conference, consult your local retiree chapter or go to mnafclcio.org/retirees.

Spend a day shooting clays

Roofers Local 96, in partnership with the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance, will host a sporting clays shoot Sept. 14 at Wild Marsh Sporting Clays in Clear Lake Township. USA’s 9th Annual Roofers Twin Cities Sporting Clays Shoot is an opportunity for union members to connect – and compete – with their brothers and sisters while supporting efforts to preserve America’s outdoor heritage.

The shoot begins at 9:30 a.m., and participants receive lunch and drinks, 12- or 20-gauge shotgun shells and clay targets. There also will be awards, door prizes and premium drawings.

Advance registration is encouraged. Call Chris Piltz at 203-767-0745 or email chris@unionsportsmen.org.



Eight days before the Minnesota State Fair opened for business, three members of the Twin Cities art collective Rogue Citizen were busy at work on their new mural, spray-painted on the north-facing exterior wall of the Minnesota AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion. Pictured bottom-right, L to R, are artists Matt McGorry, Goat Henke and Matt Wells. Other members of Rogue Citizen who helped paint the mural are Shawn Hennessey, Eric Mattheis and Ugaso Sheik-Abdi.

Union Advocate photos

Move over seed art, Labor Pavilion unveils vivid new mural

A new mural at the great Minnesota get-together celebrates working people ... getting together!

The Minnesota AFL-CIO recently commissioned a 15-foot-high, 60-foot-long mural on the exterior of the Labor Pavilion, the State Fair’s hub of union activity located at the corner of Dan Patch and Cooper.

The Labor Pavilion has become a lively spot in recent years, hosting live music, demonstrations, contests and hands-on activities for all ages. And several local unions staff kiosks on the pavilion’s apron, engaging with thousands of fairgoers each year about the advantages of working union.

The new, brightly colored mural, created with spray paint by members of the Twin Cities art collective Rogue Citizen, figures to draw even more visitors to the pavilion. Recent renovations on the fairgrounds exposed the pavilion’s north-facing wall, and Minnesota AFL-CIO leaders saw an opportunity to increase the House of Labor’s visibility.

“This is just going to slap them in the face,” Matt Wells, one of the Rogue Citizen artists who worked on the mural, said of fairgoers passing by the pavilion. “They’re going to

go around the corner and ask people, ‘What’s this about?’ It’s going to lead to engagement, and that’s what we want.”

The mural depicts six working people – a tradesperson, an office employee, an industrial worker, a health care worker, a hospitality worker and a postal worker – gathered around the state federation’s circular logo.

Apprentices from District Council 82 of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades donated their labor to coat the wall with primer. Rogue Citizen began work Aug. 11 after dark, using a projector to illuminate the wall with a rough outline of the mural. They expected the project to take about a week.

The Minnesota AFL-CIO, the state’s largest labor federation, began fundraising in support of the mural earlier this year. Several unions and partner organizations have chipped in, including Local 110 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189, LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota, Letter Carriers Branch 9, the Minnesota Nurses Association, SEIU Healthcare Minnesota and American Income Life.

– Michael Moore, Union Advocate editor

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Labor News in Review

CWA, AT&T FINALLY CONNECT

Nearly 16 months after their union contract expired, workers in AT&T's "Legacy-T" bargaining unit voted to ratify a new, four-year pact with the company last month. The contract covers some 3,000 members of the Communications Workers of America, including over 400 who work in the Twin Cities.

Of CWA members who participated, roughly 65 percent voted in favor of ratifying the contract. It includes healthy raises on the front end – including a 3% retroactive increase dating 6 months prior, and an additional 3% upon ratification.

But workers also conceded to some of the company's demands, giving up some sick-time and tuition-reimbursement benefits, and agreeing to shoulder a greater share of their health insurance premiums.

Shari Wojtowicz, president of Minnesota-based CWA Local 7250, said the deal included "lots of take backs and little gains," but pledged that union members wouldn't wait until the new contract expires in April 2022 to continue their fight against AT&T's corporate greed.

"We are still fighting AT&T's greed, and calling for an investigation into their broken promises of 7,000 new jobs per \$1 billion of savings from the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017," Wojtowicz said.

"We are still calling on our allies to sign on to the www.investigateATT.org petition and to hold AT&T and other corporations who promised jobs accountable."

The unpopular tax overhaul, championed by President Trump and Republicans who controlled Congress at the time, handed AT&T an enormous



Members of CWA Local 7250 picketed outside AT&T's offices downtown Minneapolis in April, marking one year since their previous union contract expired. The workers, some 400 in the Twin Cities in all, finally ratified an agreement last month. file photo

windfall that exceeded \$21 billion. But rather than creating more American jobs, the company has cut some 23,000 positions in the U.S. since 2017.

Next up for CWA: negotiations on a nationwide contract covering workers at AT&T wireless stores, including 29 across Minnesota. (Find a list of union-represented stores at cwa7250.org.)

"We would like to thank all of the retirees, other unions, regional labor feds, politicians, allies and our communities for standing with us in our fight against corporate greed," Wojtowicz said. "Thanks for your help and support throughout our campaign, and keeping our fight public."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

**SHEET METAL
WORKERS
LOCAL 10
MEMBERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES
WISH EVERYONE
A SAFE & HAPPY
LABOR DAY
– 2019 –**



**Members: Local #10's Annual
Picnic/Booya will be Sept. 7**

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

*Highland Park Picnic Pavilion
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Wishing everyone a
happy and safe Labor
Day!

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

Prepared and paid for by McCollum for Congress

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

AMAZON CAVES TO MN WORKERS

Over 80 workers at an Amazon warehouse in Eagan went on strike Aug. 8, according to a report from the Awood Center, the Twin Cities-based worker center serving members of the East African immigrant community.

Within three hours, the workers were back on the job, having received assurances from management that their demands – including adequate parking space, compensation for parking fines and recognition of upcoming Islamic holidays – would be met.

Fardowsa Nunow, a worker at the Eagan warehouse, said the victory demonstrates the power workers have when they stand together, and she called the victory “just a start” for workers at her location.

“This morning, by walking off the job and winning on demands important to our families, we showed that together we have the power to stand up for what is right,” Nunow said. “Right now, Amazon doesn’t consider us when making decisions, despite our value. We know they can’t do this without us.”

The strike in Eagan came less than a month after workers at Amazon’s Shakopee fulfillment center, also organizing with the Awood Center, garnered worldwide attention by striking during the company’s Prime Day sale.

PLA COURT CHALLENGE TOSSED

A U.S. District Court judge last month dismissed the lawsuit challenging Minneapolis Public Schools’ project labor agreement (PLA) with local Building Trades unions after the plaintiffs, a non-union contractors’ association and one of its members, voluntarily withdrew their complaint.

The lawsuit made headlines when the plaintiffs, represented by attorneys from the right-wing Pacific Legal Foundation, filed in March. They argued the Minneapolis schools’ PLA violated the constitutional rights of non-union contractors like Waconia-based Laketown Electric.

A PLA establishes terms and conditions for construction employees and contractors on a project, from wages and benefits to grievance procedures. By setting those terms and conditions at the outset, project owners make their labor costs more predictable, weed out irresponsible bidders and ensure labor peace for the entirety of the project.

Any contractor – union or non-union – can bid on work governed by a PLA, provided the contractor agrees to abide by its terms. But the Pacific Legal Foundation, which has a track record of taking on anti-union cases across the country, tried arguing otherwise.

At least, they did for a while.

“While the plaintiffs are not commenting about their reasons for withdrawing this lawsuit, it appears the Pacific Legal Foundation pulled out once they saw the information the Minneapolis School District and Minneapolis Building Trades put together on the process and the benefits of PLAs ... and decided to stop throwing good money after bad,” Minneapolis Building Trades Business Manager Dan McConnell said. “Anyone can bid on these jobs under a PLA, both union and non-union.”

McConnell characterized the lawsuit as an attempt to “intimidate school districts, which are increasingly using project labor agreements to help keep construction projects on time and on budget while maximizing benefits to local families.”

Local projects built using PLAs include U.S. Bank Stadium, the Interstate 35W bridge, TCF Bank Stadium, Target Field and several others.

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CITIES EYE LABOR ENFORCEMENT

St. Paul City Council members moved last month to boost enforcement of newly minted labor standards for employers in the city. The ordinance creates a division within the city's Department of Human Rights to investigate and enforce new earned sick and safe time and minimum wage rules.

The Division of Labor Standards Enforcement and Education will be charged not only with enforcement, but with educating employers about their legal obligations.

But workers and labor advocates who attended a public hearing on the measure Aug. 7 warned the new office won't be effective unless adequately staffed. They called on Mayor Melvin Carter and council members to include funding in the next budget to double the number of investigators they employ from two to four, and earmark \$400,000 to contract with community groups capable of assisting with education and outreach.

Up to now, advocates say, the city has employed only two investigators, and employers have been able to violate the law with few consequences. CTUL, the low-wage workers center based in the Twin Cities, has filed 17 complaints of labor rights violations in the last year. All are still open, in part due to a lack of resources.

Meanwhile, in Minneapolis, council members voted 12-0 to adopt a local "Wage Theft Prevention Ordinance" last month. The measure won support from a broad coalition of labor unions, worker centers and community groups.

Coming just months after the Minnesota Legislature enacted strong new measures to combat wage theft, advocates said the city's action would

empower the Minneapolis Civil Rights Department to become a strong partner in helping to enforce the state legislation.

"Now we have the tools to hold the bad actors accountable and support workers," said Ward 4 City Council Member Philipe Cunningham, one of the co-authors of the local measure, following the historic vote. "We have the power of the Civil Rights Department to do the enforcement."

"This isn't about going after employers," said Dan McConnell, business manager of the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council. "This is about employers playing by the rules."

If not for passing a local wage theft ordinance, "we would have been referring people to the state," commented Ward 3 City Council Member Steve Fletcher, also a co-author of the ordinance.

Members of CTUL – the Center for Workers United in Struggle – also celebrated the vote on the ordinance. "For years, we've been fighting against wage theft," said CTUL member Juana Cinto. "With this victory today, we have the resources necessary ... to stop wage theft."

CTUL activist Henry Scott, who moved to the Twin Cities from Chicago in 1999, commented: "I had to come here to learn that the system actually worked for the people," he said. "It was CTUL telling me to be a voice, don't stand in the background."

The campaign to pass the wage theft ordinance "has been an amazing example of when you build inside/outside power," Cunningham said. "This is truly a model for how the city should be operating."

He credited workers "for continuously showing up, telling your stories so powerfully."

– Minneapolis Labor Review Editor Steve Share contributed to this report.



Union Building Trades workers came from nearby construction sites in downtown Minneapolis for a barbecue lunch and rally to support the proposed wage theft ordinance. For more photos from this event: facebook.com/minneapolisunions. Labor Review photo

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Workers meet with a UFCW Representative who specializes in helping workers form Unions to learn more about joining the UFCW.

2. A Petition is Filed and Voting Date is Set.

When a strong majority of workers sign union cards, the UFCW presents the cards to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an agency of the federal government, and asks them to conduct an election.

3. Vote UNION YES.

When a majority of workers vote YES, you will have earned the right to negotiate a contract with management to make improvements to wages, benefits, and working conditions, and we will be with you.

4. Form a Negotiating Committee.

A committee of co-workers and your UFCW representatives will meet with the company to develop a union contract with guaranteed wages, benefits, and working conditions.

5. Vote on Your Contract.

Together, workers will vote on the new contract.

There is never a charge or fee for UFCW help in forming union at your workplace. Only when you have a voted YES on a contract that provides a better life for you and your family will you be asked to contribute to the membership.

UFCW Local 1189 – Representing Retail Workers

For help forming a union in your workplace, call 651.451.6240 and ask for an Union Organizer. Find us on the web at www.ufcw1189.org

Happy Labor Day from the 90,000 members of Education Minnesota!

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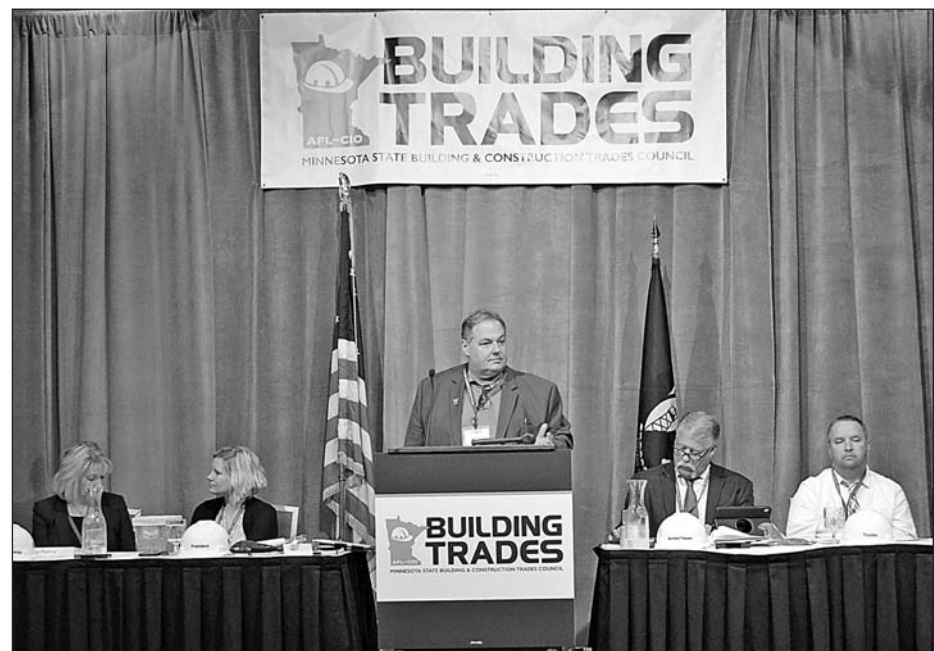
**Happy Labor Day
from Local 563!**

LIUNA!



Feel the Power

**Construction and General
Laborers' Union
Local 563**



St. Paul Regional Labor Federation President Bobby Kasper, a member of LIUNA Laborers Local 563, addressed delegates to the Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council Convention in Brainerd in July. Union Advocate photos

At convention, unions announce plans to combat labor abuses in construction

Leaders of 14 construction unions, gathered in Brainerd for their annual statewide convention July 26, announced the launch of Not On My Watch, a new initiative to combat wage theft, exploitation and labor trafficking in their industry.

The abuses pose a growing threat to the welfare of immigrant workers and the health of the state's construction sector, State Building and Construction Trades Council Executive Director Jessica Looman said.

"This initiative is about ensuring that no construction workers in our state are exploited and that all contractors are held accountable to the law," Looman said. "In Minnesota, workers stand-up for workers."

The Not On My Watch campaign will enlist union staff and rank-and-file members in efforts to identify cases of abuse and assist exploited construction workers.

Union construction workers will be asked to wear hardhat stickers that read "Not On My Watch" or "Ya No Mas" and participate in job-site actions to show solidarity with workers – immigrant workers in particular – who may be targeted by unscrupulous contractors.

In an preview of the approach organizers hope to take with the new campaign, union members and nonunion workers joined forces in June to protest allegations of wage theft by immigrant concrete workers building the Digi-Key Expansion Project in Thief River Falls. The demonstration drew TV and print media coverage.

Union leaders were joined at the unveiling of their new initiative by Attorney General Keith Ellison, who recently launched a new task force in his office to enforce the state's new



The new campaign will target labor trafficking, wage theft and exploitation at construction sites across Minnesota.

wage theft law. Ellison told delegates to the convention he welcomed their help in cracking down on worker exploitation.

"Wage theft is theft, pure and simple," Ellison said. "Not only does it rob workers of their ability to afford their lives, it robs them of their dignity... It's powerful that workers themselves will be on the front lines in helping us fight wage theft and helping all workers afford their lives and live with dignity and respect."

State Labor Commissioner Nancy Leppink likewise welcomed the announcement.

"The State of Minnesota is committed to combating wage theft, but we can't do it alone," she said. "We will need the help of labor, community leaders, responsible employers and, of course, workers themselves to make sure workers know their rights and can bring abuses to light."

Wage theft and worker exploitation are problems in every corner of the state, union leaders said.

"A lot of people think wage theft is a big city problem, but it's everywhere," Northwest Minnesota Building Trades President Darrell Lende said.

Learn more about the campaign online at BuildBetterMN.org.

Trades mobilize opposition to Labor Department's low-road apprenticeship scheme

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If the administration adopts the proposal, private organizations, made up of construction employers and industry groups, could write their own standards for apprenticeship training – and have the authority to certify programs as they see fit.

That's putting the fox in charge of the henhouse, unions say. And they aren't the only ones sounding the alarm.

"It would fundamentally change what the word 'apprenticeship' means," John Aiken, director of apprenticeship and labor standards at the Minnesota Department of Labor, warned during a panel discussion at the state Building Trades Council's annual convention in July.

No shortcuts

Currently, construction apprenticeship programs must register with the U.S. Department of Labor or, as in Minnesota's case, a state agency. The governing agency establishes clear-cut standards apprenticeship programs must meet to become registered.

Those standards spell out how long apprentices spend learning on the job site and in the classroom. Standards ensure apprentices get supervision, mentorship, safety training and, not least of all, fair pay.

This system of "registered apprenticeship," supporters say, was designed to ensure rigor. And rigor



A panel discussion on apprenticeship at the Minnesota Building Trades' convention in Brainerd July 26 included (L to R) Larry Gilbertson, training director of Ironworkers Local 512; John Aiken of the Labor Department; Brian Farmer, apprenticeship coordinator for Cement Masons Local 633; and Sarah Lechowich and Pat Wagner of the Construction Careers Foundation.

Union Advocate photo

shouldn't be optional when it comes to an industry as dangerous and physically taxing as construction.

Construction workers, Building Trades President Sean McGarvey said, "are often exposed to extreme temperatures, heavy machinery, toxic substances and hazards related to oncoming traffic on road and bridge projects.

"To guard against these inherent dangers and promote first-rate work, workers must receive the highest quality education and training. And the building trades' registered apprenticeship programs provide just that."

But allowing IRAPs in the construction industry would create a shortcut around the rigorous stan-

dards of registered apprenticeship. The Trump administration's proposed rule makes no mention of minimum wage rates, safety instruction or apprentice-to-journeyperson ratios.

That creates potential blurred lines between apprenticeships and other job-training paths, like internships.

"I want to see more apprentices," Aiken said. "But I'm not interested in flooding the marketplace with apprentices who aren't ready for work."

If it ain't broke ...

Both locally and nationally, construction apprenticeships make up the overwhelming majority of registered programs. Most are sponsored by unions, which, in partnership with

their employers, invest \$1.6 billion annually in apprenticeship training.

As a result, union training centers have developed into world-class institutions of education. They utilize craft-specific curriculums and advanced technology, and they turn out highly skilled, safety-minded tradespeople who build our communities.

Union apprenticeships also provide men and women with a pathway into family-sustaining, middle-class careers without the burden of student-loan debt. The earn-while-you-learn model offers a paycheck from Day 1.

It's no surprise, then, that policymakers in recent years have looked for ways to encourage other industries to replicate the construction apprenticeship model. While IRAPs may fit the needs of those other industries, unions say, the new model would undermine high standards already in place for apprenticeship programs in construction.

"Based on our 100 years of experience running the world's most successful job training model, we know what works to meet specific demands of employers and an entire industry, while also providing workers with pathways to the middle class," McGarvey said.

The Labor Department was accepting public comment on the proposed rule change through Aug. 26. Learn more at www.saveconstructionapprenticeships.org.

LABOR DAY GREETINGS

To all our union brothers
and sisters and their families

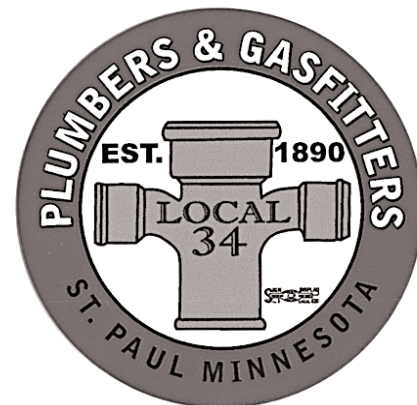


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****BUY UNION!****



This Labor Day

**Wishing all Working Men and Women
Health, Respect and Prosperity**



Delores Flynn spoke at a "Care Force One" bus-tour stop in St. Paul last month about the lifesaving impact the Affordable Care Act has had on her family. Her son, shown in a photo held by SEIU Healthcare Minnesota organizer Tyler Frank, suffered a head injury and "is a living, breathing pre-existing condition," she said. Flynn is an active supporter of SEIU's efforts to raise wages and working conditions in the home health industry. Union Advocate photo

McCollum, Ellison join activists denouncing Trump ploy to dismantle Affordable Care Act

Obamacare may be a talking point for politicians in Washington, but for Delores Flynn of Roseville – and thousands of other Minnesotans – it's a matter of life and death.

While President Trump and Republicans seek to dismantle the Affordable Care Act by any means possible, Flynn's son, Scott Semo, relies on a key provision of the ACA, Medicaid expansion, for the care he needs to stay alive.

Semo suffered a head injury when he was 2 years old. Additional complications arose when he was an adult, and Semo now requires round-the-clock care, which Medicaid provides.

"My son is a living, breathing pre-existing condition," Flynn said, flanked by her member of Congress, Rep. Betty McCollum, during a press conference last month. "If Republicans and the Trump administration are successful in revoking this aspect of the ACA, my son would die."

"I don't even want to think about what would've happened to Scott before Medicaid was around."

Flynn, McCollum and Attorney General Keith Ellison joined an event staged in St. Paul by the advocacy group Protect Our Care. The organization is sponsoring a bus tour – the bus is dubbed "Care Force One" – across the country to highlight what's at stake in Trump's war on the ACA.

In Minnesota, more than 250,000 additional people have gained health insurance coverage since the law went into effect a decade ago, lowering the state's uninsured rate from 9% to 6.3%. A study by the nonprofit Urban Institute estimated that repeal would cost 265,000 Minnesotans their coverage.

Repeal threatens to strip coverage from young adults, who are eligible to stay on their parent's insurance through age 26 under the ACA, as well as

people with pre-existing conditions, who may no longer be denied coverage under the ACA. Some analyses suggest as many as 2.3 million Minnesotans have a pre-existing condition.

Additionally, Minnesotans benefit from provisions of the ACA requiring insurers to meet minimum coverage levels and keep certain preventative measures free for policyholders.

GOP efforts to repeal the ACA, McCollum said, show where the party's loyalties lie.

"The Republicans want to eliminate the ACA and patient protections for tens of millions of Americans," the 4th District DFLer said. "And they always make sure that profits of insurance and drug companies are protected – as if they need our help."

Trump and other Republicans have attacked and weakened the ACA on multiple fronts. The most immediate threat is a lawsuit, *Texas v. United States*, filed by 18 state attorneys general who argue the ACA became unconstitutional when Congress eliminated the penalty Americans face for not having health insurance, known as the individual mandate.

Trump ordered his administration's attorneys not to defend the ACA against the lawsuit, but several Democratic attorneys general, including Ellison, have stepped in to defend the law.

"Every legal argument (Republicans) are making against the Affordable Care Act is wrong," Ellison said. "And I believe the courts will say so."

"After all these years, it's still hard to understand what Republicans have against affordable health care for the greatest number. But it's not hard to understand why Americans need it and want it and are fighting to keep Republicans for taking it away from them. I'll keep fighting for them and with them."

– Union Advocate staff

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Trump's pick for labor secretary is – shocker! – no friend of working people

Unions and other watchdogs for workers' rights have raised concerns with President Trump's nominee to head the U.S. Department of Labor, shining a light on Eugene Scalia's controversial track record as an advocate for corporations, financial institutions and the rich.

Scalia likely faces a confirmation hearing this month in the Senate, where he can expect deep scrutiny of his extreme views opposing worker health and safety protections.

One worker advocacy group, the Economic Policy Institute, called Scalia the "go-to lawyer for corporations wanting to avoid worker and consumer protections."

Women's groups, meanwhile, pointed to a 1998 essay in which Scalia argued workplace sexual harassment laws should be eliminated.

"Eugene Scalia has spent his entire career making life more difficult and dangerous for working people," AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said. "His extreme views are in direct conflict with what America deserves from a secretary of labor."

No benefit of the doubt

At this point, working people have good reason to be skeptical of anyone Trump nominates for the Department of Labor's top post.

Trump's first nominee, fast food

mogul Andrew Puzder, backed out before even getting a confirmation hearing in the Senate, after being shamed by workers at Hardee's and Carl's Jr. who alleged violations of the very labor laws Puzder would have been in charge of enforcing.

But it wasn't the only stain on Puzder's reputation. The nomination drew outcry for Puzder's use of misogynistic language – "ugly ones don't sell burgers," he said of women in his ads – and his company's track record of outsourcing American jobs. He also gushed publicly over the cost savings his restaurants might achieve by replacing human workers with robots.

After Puzder stepped aside in February 2017, Trump nominated Alexander Acosta. At the time, labor advocates raised concerns about a plea deal Acosta negotiated 10 years earlier, while serving as U.S. attorney in Florida.

Under the agreement, billionaire hedge fund manager Jeffrey Epstein served just 13 months in a county jail – with work release 12 hours per day, six days a week – for pleading guilty to charges of soliciting prostitution from a minor. But Epstein faced complaints from 36 underage victims, and a trial conviction could have locked him up for life.

That Acosta personally oversaw



negotiations of the billionaire pedophile's lenient deal revealed a troubling deference to wealth and power that made him a bad choice for labor secretary, opponents warned.

Acosta resigned in July after Epstein's arrest in New York prompted renewed scrutiny of the 2007 plea deal. But even before the Epstein case bubbled back to the surface, Beltway insiders reported Acosta was losing favor with Trump for moving too slowly to dismantle worker and consumer protections introduced by the Obama administration.

Troubling track record

A look at Scalia's career suggests he won't share Acosta's deliberate approach to defanging worker protections. Some of the lowlights include:

- Scalia represented SeaWorld when it unsuccessfully tried to fight off an OSHA citation and fine for failing to protect a trainer killed on the job by a killer whale.

- Scalia led the legal team fighting against so-called ergonomics rules, regulations that protected workers from injuries caused by unsafe workplace design. Extensive studies produced by the Labor Department found the rules would have prevented 600,000 work-related injuries per year, but Scalia, representing the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, called it "junk

science" and "quackery."

- Scalia led the Chamber of Commerce's successful court challenge to Labor Department rules that made it harder for financial advisers to steer their clients' retirement savings into investments that personally benefit the advisers, known as the fiduciary rule.

- Scalia represented Boeing Corporation in a bitter dispute with members of the Machinists union who work at the company's plant outside Seattle. They filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board accusing Boeing of illegally transferring work to a non-union plant in South Carolina as retaliation against union workers who exercised their protected right to strike.

Trumka, the nation's highest-ranking labor leader, said he doesn't expect to agree with Trump's labor secretary on everything, but at minimum the post requires a "fair arbiter" who will listen to both labor and management with an open mind.

"The Labor Department's work is essential to protecting America's working people and should be subject to less influence from corporate lobbyists, not more," Trumka said. "Scalia's views are dangerously outside the mainstream and leave us no choice but to oppose his nomination."

– Union Advocate staff

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VA workers standing up to Trump's attack on their union rights

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

employees I've seen," Gregg James, a regional vice president of AFGE, said of the VA workforce. "These folks are concerned about the veterans, care so much and do whatever is needed.

"But they deserve to be treated fairly and not have this additional stress."

Contract talks covering some 260,000 VA workers nationwide began in May. Federal workers are legally prohibited from bargaining for wages and benefits, so negotiations mostly involve work rules, procedures and other language.

Andrew Peterson, president of Twin Cities-based AFGE Local 1969, said the Trump administration opened bargaining with a proposal to gut VA workers' contract "down to about a third of what it originally is" – and hasn't budged since.

"It feels like an attack," Peterson said. "Morale is down because of all the attacks on federal workers recently, and especially the attacks on VA employees."

Peterson, James and other AFGE leaders believe Trump's appointees at the VA are looking to achieve through collective bargaining what the president has failed to achieve by executive order.

In May 2018, Trump issued three executive orders intended to chip away at federal workers' due process and collective bargaining rights, and put up barriers to union representation in federal worksites. AFGE sued, and the executive orders are on hold as a result.

Rather than wait for an outcome in the courts, the Trump administration opened a new front in its war on federal workers: negotiations at the VA. Many

of the agency's demands in contract talks are lifted straight from the stalled executive orders.

AFGE members at the VA continue to work under the terms of their previous contract, but that could change soon.

If ongoing negotiations fail to result in an agreement, as seems likely, the VA could file for assistance from the Federal Service Impasses Panel, which has the authority to declare an impasse and impose whatever contract terms its members deem appropriate.

That outcome would be bad news for VA employees.

All seven members of the impasses panel are presidential appointees. And, no surprise, there isn't a union-friendly face to be found among them. One appointee, E Vincent Vernuccio, boasts a Twitter feed stocked with his cable-news appearances and op-ed pieces, in which he smears public employees and their unions and cheers the Supreme Court's decision in Janus v. AFSCME, which weakened public workers' bargaining rights.

"We're standing up and saying we want a fairly negotiated contract," Local 1969's Peterson said. "But it seems like they want to bring it to impasse and shortcut the process."

AFGE officials say the administration wants to eliminate contract language that guarantees VA employees are adequately trained, ensures workplace safety and protects whistleblowers from retaliation when they stand up for veterans in their care.

"If they bust the union, there's going to be no outlet for the employees except to go right back to the same managers that put them in that position in the first place," James said.

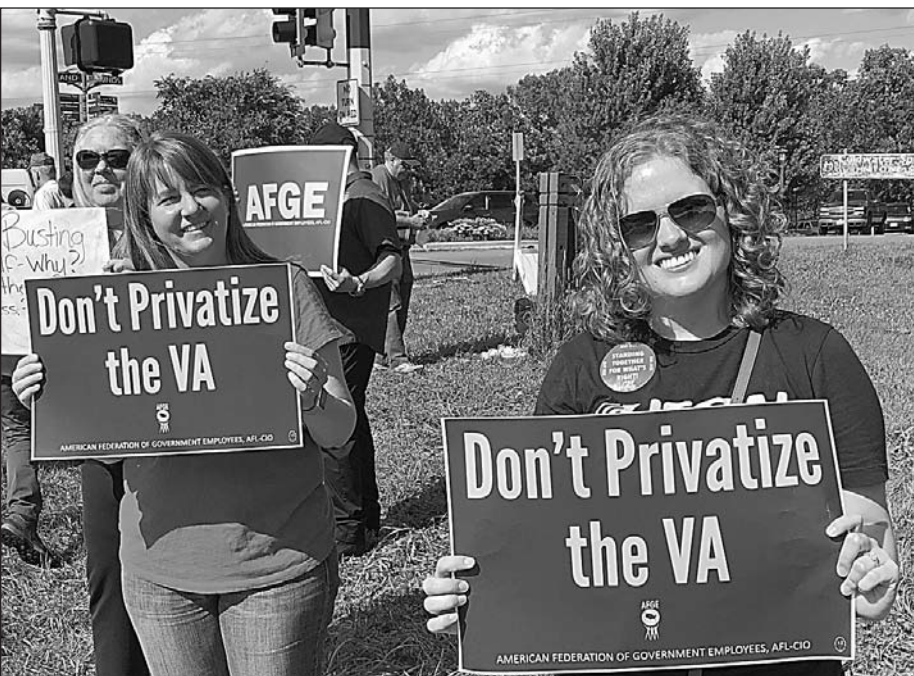


Ednika Dabney (L) and Miranda Kiwelu, AFGE members who work at the local VA Hospital, rattled off a list of provisions enshrined in their union contract that are under attack, from bereavement and sick-leave procedures to workers' access to union representation. Dabney called the administration's approach "union busting." She added: "It makes us feel like we're unimportant, like we're just here to be utilized the way they want to utilize us. And if you don't like it, you can find another job."

Union Advocate photos

St. Paul Regional Labor Federation President Bobby Kasper, who attended the rally, said the labor movement stands behind federal workers.

"This president claims to be a friend of working people," Kasper said. "But it's clear to anyone paying attention that's not the case."



The solidarity was strong on AFGE's picket line Aug. 7. Supporters from other unions included Diana Tastad (R) of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189 and Kera Peterson, political director of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation and a member of Machinists Local Lodge 459.



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Prepared and paid for by Friends for Jim Carlson, 1247 Carlson Lake Lane, Eagan, MN 55123 & the Masin Campaign Committee, P.O. Box 21523, Eagan MN 55121.




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Labor Day greetings to union families!

A message from the International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 9


www.local9.com



Happy Labor Day to all working people!

Carpenters Local Union 322

www.local322.net




On Labor Day let us remember the men and women that have fought tirelessly for Workers Rights.

United we Stand.

Happy Labor Day!

— A message from the St. Paul Building & Construction Trades Council

Wishing a happy and safe Labor Day to all workers!



Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
Local Union 1 MN/ND/SD

www.bac1mn-nd.org

Union volunteers help make Action Day a success



Volunteers descended on Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul Aug. 8 for Greater Twin Cities United Way's Action Day 2019, with more than 50 union members among them. The annual, daylong volunteer event drew a record number of attendees, who weaved from station to station on the arena floor, stuffing backpacks with school supplies for children in need. Volunteers packed 40,000 backpacks – reaching the United Way's goal – that were donated to partner agencies across the nine-county metro area. Union volunteers, pictured clockwise from top, included: UNITE HERE Local 17's Wade Luneberg (L), Geoff Paquette and Daremyesh Geda; Brad Malm of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 110; and (L to R) Bill Wessinger of the National Association of Letter Carriers, Clare Zupetz and Dave Graf of Twin Cities Musicians Union, and retirees Bruce Yernberg, Martha Johnson and Carolyn Thornton.



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The Minnesota State Fair starts August 22 & runs through Labor Day!

Stop by the Minnesota AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion! We'll have demonstrations for all ages, music, and giveaways every day of the fair. Individual unions will have kiosks and activities set up all day.

See the full schedule at
aflcio.mn/statefair19

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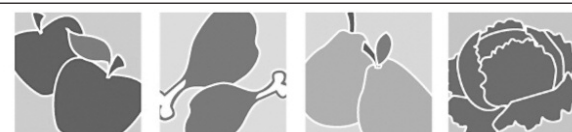
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Give it a try!

East Metro Locations – September 2019

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Burnsville: Diamondhead Ctr.
Sept. 25, 3 to 5 p.m. | • Roseville: Real Life Church
Sept. 17, 3 to 5 p.m. |
| • Cottage Grove: All Saints
Sept. 4, 4 to 6 p.m. | • St. Paul: Hallie Q. Brown Ctr.
Sept. 19, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Eagan: Easter Lutheran Church by the Lake
Sept. 10, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • St. Paul: Hazel Park UCC
Sept. 4, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Forest Lake: VFW
Sept. 25, 4 to 6 p.m. | • St. Paul: West 7th Community Ctr.
Sept. 6, 10 a.m. to noon |
| • Maplewood: Redeeming Love
Sept. 9, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • South St. Paul: Central Square
Sept. 24, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • North Branch: Trinity Luth.
Sept. 11, 2 to 4 p.m. | • Stillwater: Community Thread
Sept. 17, 4 to 6 p.m. |
| • Northfield: St. Dominic
Sept. 12, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | • White Bear Lake: Community of Grace Lutheran
Sept. 13, 2 to 4 p.m. |
| • Oakdale: Grace of God Luth.
Sept. 23, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. | |

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

Happy Labor Day!

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HAPPY LABOR DAY!

Labor and Community Events

Social justice artist Ricardo Levins Morales invites participation in 50th anniversary exhibit

For decades, images created by Minneapolis-based artist Ricardo Levins Morales have helped tell the story of the worldwide struggle for social and economic justice. Now, Levins Morales is planning a local exhibit this fall, "featuring fifty years of movement history as told through my art."

"Another World is Possible: Five Decades of Revolutionary Art with Ricardo Levins Morales" will run Oct. 6 through Nov. 22 at CTUL, 3715 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis.

Inviting community participation via a Facebook post, Levins Morales said the exhibit "will feature events and discussions on history, art and organizing, art-making, movement strategy and youth activism. We're inviting more folks to join the organizing team ... leading up to the opening."

To get involved, e-mail ricardo@rlmartstudio.com.

Levins Morales is a member of the Minnesota Newspaper and Communications Guild.

To view or purchase his artwork, visit rlmartstudio.com.

— Minneapolis Labor Review

Golf tourney to benefit Minneapolis nonprofit Working Partnerships

Working Partnerships, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, is the community services arm of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and helps union members and their families during seasonal unemployment, layoffs, lockouts, strikes and other emergencies.

Individuals, unions, businesses and organizations can support Working Partnerships by participating in its seventh annual golf tournament, planned Monday, Sept. 23, at Bunker Hills Golf Club in Coon Rapids.

Event organizers are seeking golfers, sponsors and prize-donors.

For golfers, the registration deadline is Thursday, Sept. 12.

The entry fee is \$145 per person and includes 18 holes of golf, cart, light breakfast and catered lunch, sleeve of golf balls, goody bag, practice range and access to a silent auction, raffle and door prizes.

Visit workingpartnerships.org to register online or download a registration form.

To become a sponsor or donate a prize, call 612-379-8130, ext. 111.

— Minneapolis Labor Review

Union Sportsmen's Alliance to sponsor free 'Get Youth Outdoors Day'

Know a kid who's interested in learning firsthand about trap shooting, riflery and archery?

Sign them up for "Get Youth Outdoors Day" Sunday, Sept. 15, at Wild Marsh Sporting Clays in Clear Lake Township. Sponsored by the Union Sportsmen's Alliance, the event is free and open to boys and girls ages 9 to 17.

Local union volunteers trained in firearms safety and instruction will provide participants with a hands-on introduction to the shooting sports, and a free picnic lunch will follow the event, scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All participants must be accompanied by an adult chaperone.

Space is limited to 125 participants. Register at gyodmn.eventbrite.com.

Union Sportsmen's Alliance brings union members together around conservation and the outdoors. Learn more at www.unionsportsmen.org.

Freedom Library to screen 'The Killing Floor'

The East Side Freedom Library in St. Paul will screen "The Killing Floor" Thursday, Aug. 29, at 7 p.m.

Celebrated by The Village Voice as the most "clear-eyed account of union organizing on film," the 1984 production tells the true story of how a group of black and white slaughterhouse workers attempted to break race barriers to build an interracial union during World War I in the brutal Chicago Stockyards – only to see their efforts engulfed in the late July 1919 race riot.

"The Killing Floor" brings its audience into the heated discussions among Eastern European workers, among Black workers from the South, and between both communities as they debated what to do.

This event is free and open to the public.

The ESFL, an independent, non-profit library, is located at 1105 Greenbrier St. Learn more about ESFL events and programming online at eastsidefreedomlibrary.org.

HAVE A HAPPY & SAFE LABOR DAY WEEKEND!



*A message of solidarity
from the members of
Machinists Local Lodge 459.*

St. Paul RLF issues labor endorsements in 2019 local elections

In advance of Nov. 5 local elections, the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, endorsed the following candidates for St. Paul City Council:

- Rebecca Noecker (Ward 2)
- Chris Tolbert (Ward 3)
- Mitra Jalali Nelson (Ward 4)
- Amy Brendmoen (Ward 5)
- Nelsie Yang (Ward 6)
- Jane Prince (Ward 7)

Three candidates for St. Paul Board of Education – Chauntyll Allen, Zuki Ellis and Steve Marchese – have been granted labor endorsement by the RLF.

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:
Sept. 26, 4:30 p.m., Wyoming
Public Library, 26855 Forest Blvd.

Dakota County Assembly:
Sept. 12, 7 p.m., Dakota County
United Educators,
6950 W 146th St., Apple Valley.

www.stpaulunions.org

Ramsey County Assembly:
Sept. 23, 6 p.m., St. Paul Labor
Center, 353 W. 7th St.

Washington County Assembly:
Sept. 25, 6 p.m., Washington
County Gov't Center, Stillwater.



**TRADES WOMEN
BUILD NATIONS**
It Is Our Time
9TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE - MINNEAPOLIS
OCTOBER 4-6, 2019
HILTON MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

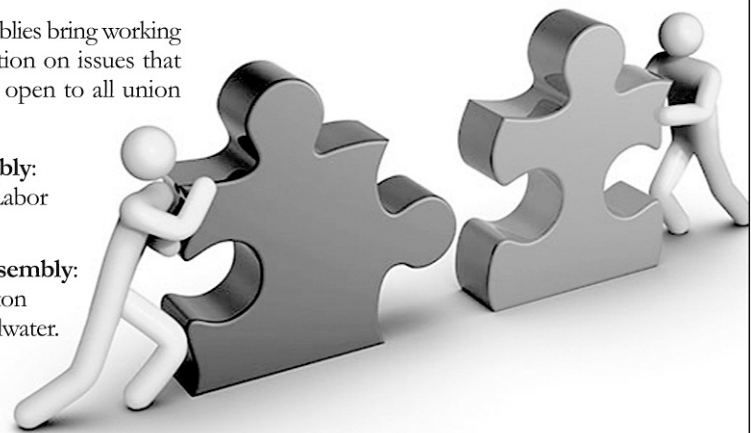
Trades Women Build Nations is for women of all ages and skill levels who work, or aspire to work, in the construction trades. The conference provides opportunities for networking, learning, and leadership development for all attendees.

**For registration information,
visit nabtu.org/twbn**

Trades Women!

Please come and volunteer at one of our Day of Service projects! We have two exciting projects planned including Haven House and Second Harvest Heartland. Haven House is a women's shelter in the Minneapolis area and Second Harvest Heartland helps package and disperse food locally to those in need. Transportation will be provided.

A choice of seven different shifts over October 4-6 are available. To sign up, visit nabtu.org/twbn and click on the link for "Conference Volunteer and Day of Service Signup."



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Minutes of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation

JULY 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, DeRoy, Dreyer, Engeldorf, Gibbons, Gorman, Guertin, Haugen, Kasper, Luneburg, Madden, Maki-Green, Markham-Kocurek, McNamara, Meyer, Sansom, Schmidt, Seath, Slattey, St. Aoro, VanDassor and Varco. Absent were: Faber, Hoppe, McCarthy, Monsour, Mullin, Robles, Ryan, and Weed.

GUESTS

• Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer, Executive Director of Exodus Lending and Meggie Wittorf, Executive Director of Women Winning, spoke to the Executive Board and at the Delegate meeting.

CREDENTIALS

• Credentials were received from IUE-CWA Local 1140 and Plumbers and Gas Fitters Local 34. President Kasper administered the Oath of Obligation to those new delegates and alternates present.

COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION (COPE) MINUTES JULY 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 Angrimson, Beedle B, Beedle G, Beissel, DeRoy, Dreyer, Edwards, Engeldorf, Froemke, Gibbons, Gorman, Guertin, Haugen, Hoerth, Kasper, Luneburg, Madden, Maki-Green, Markham-Kocurek, Mayer, McNamara, Meyer, Sansom, Schmidt, Seath, Slattey, St. Aoro, VanDassor and Varco. Absent were: Faber, Hoppe, Krey, Lohmann, McCarthy, Monsour, Mullin, Qualy, Robles, Ryan, Weed and Wise.

Items to come before this board included:

• Kera Peterson, Political Director, updated the committee on the upcoming screenings including Ward 6, Saint Paul School Board.

• Vicki Beebe, Political Organizer, encouraged attendance at the Senate District 56 Listening Session with Representative Hunter Cantrell 56A and Representative Alice Mann 56B, being held on Thursday, July 18, 2019 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the ISD 191 Diamondhead Education Center in Burnsville.

• President Kasper reported on current endorsements and encouraged union members to run for the office. If you are interested please contact the St. Paul RLF.

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$500 CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2019 MINNESOTA DFL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP EVENT BEING HELD ON FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2019 FROM 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.**

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$500 CONTRIBUTION TO THE FRIENDS OF THE DFL WOMEN TO SUPPORT OUR NON-INCOMBENT DFL WOMEN CANDIDATES.**

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$2,000 CONTRIBUTION TO THE 17TH CD2 DFL FALL CLASSIC BEING HELD ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2019 AT GLENHAVEN EVENTS IN FARMINGTON.**

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$1,000 CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN WINNING.**

• **THANK YOU NOTES:** received from Representative Peter Fischer 43A for the RLF's \$200 contribution; Congresswomen Angie Craig for the President's support and continued friendship; State Representative John Lesch, HD 66B, for the RLF's \$200 contribution; Rafael Ortega, Ramsey County Commissioner District 5, for the RLF's \$250 contribution; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner District 7, for the RLF's \$200 contribution; the House DFL Caucus for the RLF's \$250 contribution toward the 2019 Post-Session Fund Raiser; and from the Minnesota DFL Party for the RLF's \$1,250 sponsorship of the Eighth Annual DFL Humphrey-Mondale Dinner.

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES JULY 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 reported on attending the Minnesota AFL-CIO Strategic Retreat on July 15-16, 2019. IUE-CWA Local 1140 increased their per capita and he would like to appoint Howard Terry to the Executive Board. He also shared that due to difficulty in raffling off Minnesota United Tickets for St. Paul Trades night we will be cancelling that event and having a barbecue at the August RLF meeting. We may look into purchasing Minnesota Wild Tickets.

– **M/S/C TO APPOINT HOWARD TERRY, IUE-CWA LOCAL 1140, TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD.**

– **M/S/C RETIREMENT BONUS: ALL SAINT PAUL REGIONAL LABOR FEDERATION AND THE ST. PAUL LABOR STUDIES AND RESOURCE CENTER EMPLOYEES SHALL RECEIVE ONE DAY'S PAY FOR EVERY YEAR OF SERVICE AS BONUS PAY.**

• **ORGANIZING/UPDATES/CAMPAIGNS**

– Minnesota Nurses Association updated the delegation on their organizing efforts.

• **REQUESTS:**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$350 CONTRIBUTION TO THE SECOND ANNUAL MINNESOTA SHOOT FOR A CURE "LABOR AGAINST CANCER" BEING HELD AT THE CARIBOU GUN CLUB IN LE SUEUR, MN, ON AUGUST 20, 2019.**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$500 CONTRIBUTION TO IUPAT'S 17TH ANNUAL PATCH GOLF FUNDRAISER BEING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2019, AT THE MAJESTIC OAKS GOLF CLUB LOCATED AT 701 BUNKER LAKE BOULEVARD NE IN HAM LAKE WITH A 8:30 AM SHOTGUN START.**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$1,000 CONTRIBUTION TO THE TEAMSTERS LOCAL 120 HOMES FOR TROOPS MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC BEING HELD ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2019, AT AQUATORE PARK, 9191 LINCOLN STREET NE IN BLAINE, MN WITH A START TIME OF 12:00 PM.**

– **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A \$1,000 CONTRIBUTION TO AFSCME'S FAMILY PICNIC BEING HELD ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, FROM 1 - 5 PM AT BATTLE CREEK REGIONAL PARK IN MAPLEWOOD.**

• **M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO PURCHASE TWO \$25 GIFT CARDS FOR THE SHEET METAL WORKERS GOLF TOURNAMENT.**

• **THANK YOU NOTES:** received from the Heat and Frost Insulators Local 34 for the RLF's \$400 contribution to the Al O'Neill Memorial Golf Tournament; the St. Paul Labor Studies and Resource Center for the RLF's Platinum Sponsorship of \$3,000 towards their Ninth Annual Labor Bowl; and the Minnesota AFL-CIO State Retirees Council for attending their fundraiser and for the use of the grill.

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

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

• Kasper reported that the Soccer event has been cancelled due to difficulty in being able to raffle off the tickets as the Minnesota United has a new ticket policy. We will be barbecuing at our August RLF meeting.

• The St. Paul RLF has grown over the last ten years, we have added Teamsters 320 and IUE-CWA Local 1140. Howard Terry has been appointed to the Executive Board. He is on the manufacturing side of the communication workers.

STAFF/LABOR LIAISON REPORTS

• Lynne Larkin-Wright, AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison, announced United Way's Day of Action will be held on August 8, 2019, at the Xcel Energy Center. This is a family friendly event and we are asking union volunteers to participate in assembling 40,000 backpacks for students. Please come in your union shirts. If you are interested in volunteering please contact either Lynne Larkin-Wright or Colleen Nocerini.

• We are gearing up for the Labor Day Parade at the Minnesota State Fair on Monday, September 2, 2019. We are limited to 250 participants so please sign up tonight.

NEW BUSINESS

• Vicki Beebe, Political Organizer, AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison for the St. Paul Labor Studies and Resource Center and IAM Union member, has accepted a position with the St. Paul Federal Credit Union. Her last day is Friday, July 12, 2019, and we wish her all the best.

GOOD AND WELFARE

• All union members are encouraged to inform 3M of your disagreement in their decision to reduce and/or eliminate retiree life insurance benefits. This decision will impose the most detriment on those who can afford it the least.

M/S/C FOR THE SAINT PAUL REGIONAL LABOR FEDERATION TO SEND A LETTER TO 3M IN OPPOSITION OF THEIR DECISION TO REDUCE AND/OR ELIMINATE RETIREE LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS.

• **M/S/C FOR THE SAINT PAUL REGIONAL LABOR FEDERATION TO MATCH THE JEAN JONES SCHOOL SUPPLIES COLLECTION UP TO THE ALLOWABLE AMOUNT.**

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

Submitted by,
BERNADINE ENGELDORF
Secretary-Treasurer

Endorsement notice

The RLF may consider endorsements during its Sept. 11 delegate meeting, including for Ramsey County Board (District 1), school board and suburban municipal offices.

Kasper honors Ironworkers' Davies



RLF President Bobby Kasper (L) presented a 2018 Labor Leader Award to Barry Davies, business manager and financial secretary/treasurer of Ironworkers Local 512, during a local union meeting in July. Davies, who lives in Farmington, joined Local 512 as an apprentice in 1990 and has served as an officer in the union since 2012. He was elected business manager in fall of 2015. "I wanted to give back to the local that's been pretty good to me over the years," he said. The Labor Leader Award recognizes Davies' successful efforts to drive Ironworkers' involvement in the local labor movement, including participation in the Labor 2018 political push. "Our voice is much stronger when we work together," Davies said. "We can accomplish a lot more than we could individually. It's the same belief that workers have in their unions." submitted photo

Meet and greet in Senate District 56



State Rep. Alice Mann of House District 56B and Rep. Hunter Cantrell of District 56A were the featured guests at a "meet and greet" co-sponsored by the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation in Burnsville July 18. The legislators, who ran for office with labor endorsement, talked about their accomplishments during the last legislative session – and what issues they plan to prioritize next year. submitted photo

Head of teachers union to Walmart: Stop selling guns, or we'll stop shopping there

By Mark Gruenberg

PAI Union News Service

Having had it up to here with gun-caused carnage, including at the nation's schools, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President Randi Weingarten has a blunt message for the nation's biggest retailer, Walmart: Stop selling guns, or we'll stop shopping there.

Weingarten put Walmart on notice in a letter sent Aug. 7 to CEO Doug McMillon. He has yet to reply.

"Walmart has millions of customers and they all should feel safe while shopping," Weingarten wrote after a gunman, armed with a semi-automatic weapon, entered the Walmart in El Paso, Texas, and slaughtered 22 people, most of them Hispanic.

The gunman previously posted an anti-immigrant internet screed and used phrases associated with Republican President Donald Trump, but Weingarten didn't mention Trump in her letter.

Instead, she unveiled her warning to Walmart: "If you choose to act, it could change our national conversation in an instant. And if Walmart continues to provide funding to lawmakers who are standing in the way of gun reforms, teachers and students should reconsider doing their back-to-school shopping at your stores."

Even without gun-control laws, Weingarten urged Walmart "to be part of the solution."

That solution should not only include a total gun ban in Walmart, but withdrawal of Walmart campaign contributions to the notorious gun lobby, the National Rifle Association, she said. Weingarten noted five of the top current congressional recipients of gun lobby money also got dollars from Walmart's campaign committee, its owners and its

executives.

OpenSecrets.org, run by the non-profit Center for Responsive Politics, tallies, annotates and explains campaign contributions. It reports the top 20 gun money recipients are incumbent GOP senators, ranging from Mitt Romney of Utah (\$13.64 million, including fund spent to slam his opponent) to Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky (\$1.27 million, again including money against his foe).

Weingarten and Lily Eskelsen-Garcia, president of the nation's largest union, the National Education Association, have been part of a national crusade for tougher gun controls – including bans on semi-automatic weapons, universal background checks, "red flag" laws and more – ever since the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida on Valentine's Day 2018, when 14 students and three AFT-member teachers were murdered by a semi-automatic-wielding shooter.

That slaughter led to a nationwide push, led by survivors of the Douglas school shooting, for tighter gun controls, and it's also turned the national discussion of the issue around. The students followed up their massive protests with huge voter turnout efforts in advance of the 2018 midterm elections. Several notable NRA-backed lawmakers, notably in Texas, went down to defeat that fall.

Walmart has so far resisted calls to curb its current role in arms sales, though several years ago it stopped selling guns – or so it says – in its stores to anyone under age 21. It also pulled several types of guns from half of its 5,274 U.S. stores, but it still sells both guns and ammunition online.

Those sales, in turn, led to a brief walkout by 40 of its online workers, on principle, just after the El



Randi Weingarten, pictured here listening to public educators during a visit to the St. Paul school district in 2010, is president of the 1.7 million-member American Federation of Teachers. file photo

Paso massacre. Walmart responded by retaliating against the walkout's organizer, briefly suspending his in-store e-mail account, which had reached 20,000 readers.

Weingarten's warning to Walmart may not be empty. Her union has 1.6 million members, and NEA has double that.

And while total school supply spending at Walmart is unknown, the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation reported that in 2018 – the last year they could do so – teachers alone itemized \$200 million worth of spending on school supplies for their students, and used that as a deduction on their tax returns.



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