

assembly 30 YEARS AND COUNTING

Conference Attendance

We are happy to report a total of 90 Delegates, Alternates, Board, staff and guests attended MSEA's 30th Anniversary Delegate Assembly! Thirty-six bargaining units from 28 school districts were represented at the Assembly to approve the 2010-11 budget, fill two Board positions, attend workshops and take action on five resolutions.

In addition to the regular business, MSEA member Brett Duenow addressed the Assembly on Saturday morning to share with those present the struggle facing the Fergus Falls custodian unit. The unit campaigned to save their jobs after being notified that the school district was considering subcontracting all of their custodial positions. Unit members attended school board meetings, provided quotes for the local newspaper and offered their perspective on the local radio station. They also presented a proposal to meet the district's goals without the need for subcontracting. Brett asked the Board, Delegates and Alternates for their support during this difficult and uncertain situation that would seriously impact the lives of 36 families in the Fergus Falls area.

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just say no! CHRISTINA'S CORNER

CHRISTINA L. CLARK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Subcontracting

Good news! The subcontracting threat to members of MSEA's Fergus Falls custodial unit ended on May 19th, when the district announced it will not hire a private contractor for custodial services and our members will continue to be the district's custodians. If you had not heard, the Fergus Falls district took bids from three contractors to take over custodial, grounds, and maintenance services at the end of this school year. Our members rallied around the issue and got the district to agree to accept MSEA's proposal stating why continuing with its own employees is the better option.

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2010 Sue Ezell Leadership Award

NONA BAUER

has been an active MSEA member since September 1993 and has served on the MSEA Board since September 2004.



Nona is also the Chief Steward for the Austin Food Service unit and has served on her unit's negotiation team for many years. It's pretty obvious, she really likes to stay involved!

Never one to give up, co-workers know that Nona is always available to help or to answer questions. Her unit members know if they have a problem, she will work with them and their field rep to find a resolution.

Nona has also worked hard to help her co-workers become more aware of their rights and rewards as union members. She demonstrates leadership and loyalty and spends time recruiting members to become more active in MSEA. Organized and educated on all aspects of her union, Nona's contributions have been invaluable to her unit. Since MSEA began tracking units with 100% full membership in 1987, the Austin Food Service unit has maintained 100% full membership for 22 out of the last 24 years!

Every smart leader knows, one of your first tasks is to find your own replacement. Nona has been doing just that; she mentors other members in her unit to help prepare them for future leadership roles.

Thanks for all your hard work, long hours and commitment to making MSEA the best it can be. Congratulations Nona!

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Field Rep John Rostad

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT

*Required Notice

Members Welfare Benefit

MSEA MEMBERS WELFARE BENEFIT PLAN

This is the summary annual report for the MSEA MEMBERS WELFARE BENEFIT PLAN, EIN 41-1994256, Plan number 501 for the period Sept 01, 2008 to Aug 31, 2009. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

Insurance Information. The plan has a contract with insurance carriers to pay Life and Dismemberment claims incurred under the terms of the plan. Carriers are Hartford Life and Horace Mann. Total premiums paid during the plan year were \$14,146.

Visit the *MSEA Policies* page on the MSEA website to download the complete annual summary report:

www.msea-mn.com

quote

POET WALT WHITMAN

*Have you
learned lessons
only of those who
admired you....
and stood aside
for you? Have you
not learned great
lessons from those
who braced them-
selves against you,
and disputed the
passage with you?*

FROM THE PRESIDENT



WOW! Another Delegate Assembly has gone by - and by the time you read this most of us will be on our summer break. It's been quite a year for MSEA. The Board has approved a three-year strategic plan and have also finished and approved a plan of goals for MSEA over the next ten years. I know, at least for me, it has been a long time coming for these plans to get done and I thank you for your patience.

One of the key things that both the strategic plan and long term goals address is taking MSEA from what we have essentially become, which is a fee for service organization, back to being a union that addresses what our Mission Statement says we are suppose to be.

Two things are critical for this success, the first and most critical is the training of local leaders and members in what is expected of them when it comes to the job of being a leader. If you are a Steward, Treasurer, negotiator, or hold some other leadership role for your unit, MSEA, should and must provide the training needed so that members that step up and do these important jobs don't feel so intimidated by the whole process. The training will also provide leaders with the basics needed in dealing with the school district on a more local level.

What all this really comes down to is having local leadership feeling more qualified and comfortable enough to communicate and handle some of the preliminary dealings with the district. A unit does not, and cannot, expect to get any respect from the district if every time there is a problem we call our Field Rep and he or she handles it. The Field Rep gains that respect but we, as members don't, and respect is what all members want, whether it is in our jobs, or at the negotiation table.

The other key is having the Field Reps assigned to and eventually living within their assigned regions. This is so important for the overall success of the plans because it is doing nobody any good for the Field Reps to be driving and looking out a windshield for 5 hours just to get to a unit. That is 5 hours of work time lost that they could be working and training within the units that they are assigned to, and that time doesn't include the 5 hours to return back to their office.

Finally, one of the things that the plan does address is setting up an intern program for members. This is an exciting program that will make it possible for members to gain knowledge and experience to become an employee of MSEA.

In Unity,
Evan Mapes (evan@msea-mn.com)

30TH ANNUAL 2010 Delegate Assembly

delegate assembly pg 1

Reports & Goals

President Evan Mapes and Executive Director Christina Clark presented the State of the Union and annual report, with President Mapes focusing on member empowerment and Christina detailing the many, many projects, events, and just plain work we completed this year. They also explained the 3-year strategic plan and 10-year goals developed by the MSEA Board of Directors. The strategic plan has four parts:

- strengthening the union by increasing self-sufficiency and member empowerment
- growing the union by organizing more new units
- expanding the union by a more focused and ongoing legislative engagement
- improving the union with new technology

Other Business

In between all the DA business, delegates and alternates also participated in training sessions. Mary Bellman from the U of M's Labor Education Service(LES) led a review and discussion of labor history during MSEA's first thirty years, while Christina used songs about money to work with unit treasurers and chief stewards on how to manage their unit dues and accounts.

After carefully considering the three "new logo" concepts that reached the finals in the logo contest against the existing MSEA logo, delegates and alternates decided that "we like what we have" and chose to continue with the existing MSEA logo. Thank you to the 16 members who designed and submitted 33 logo concepts for the contest!



(Little Falls) Cindy Trettel and Penny Flansburg

Friday Banquet

President Evan Mapes kicked off the Friday evening festivities with a champagne toast congratulating MSEA on a successful thirty years while looking ahead to the future. Members were also treated to the "Willmar 8 Revisited" video and a slide show of MSEA pictures throughout the past 30 years. Unfortunately, that also meant revisiting several leisure suits and bad haircuts for some of us!

Board members then presented the banquet awards, recognizing the achievements and efforts of units and members throughout the 2009-10 school year. Messages of congratulations and fond memories from retired MSEA members, former Executive Directors and other labor colleagues were printed in the banquet program. Members were welcome to take their etched champagne flutes and programs with them as remembrances of the evening; and if they were really lucky, they took home one of the fabulous door prizes as well!

banquet awards

The following awards were announced during the Friday evening banquet.

sue ezell leadership award
Nona Bauer, Austin Food Service

100% full membership
Austin Food Service
Blooming Prairie
Clearbrook/Gonvick Sec/Cust
Lester Prairie
Little Falls Accounting
Little Falls Specialists
Murray County Central
Rushford/Peterson Cust
Windom Custodians
Windom Food Service

fair share conversions
130 conversions in 36 units

unit newsletter of the year
Minnetonka *Tonka Paraphrases*

\$500 nancy crippen educational scholarships

MEMBERS
Toweya Brown-Ochs, St. Paul
Dawn Plonski, Shakopee
Jessica Swanson, Centennial

DEPENDENTS
Lia Ashley, Centennial
Casey Gunderson, St. Cloud
Jessica Hunt, Bemidji
Cassel Iden, Centennial
Erin Jalloh, Bemidji
Tawnya Taylor, Moorhead
Stephanie Tillman, Sartell

field staff recognition
Bob Schrank - 25 years
Don Gilbertson - 10 years



(Rochester) Diana Vogt, Dorothy Stobaugh, Jesse James, Nan Peters, Field Rep Don Gilbertson, Sharon Kingsley

Assembly



Kim Fultz, Bagley

Orianna Kingbird, Redlake



Jane Anderson, Frazee

Pat Gangl, St. Cloud



Ballots Cast & Counted

On Saturday morning, Angie Lien (Willmar) and Janine Cummins (St. Paul) were elected to fill the two open Director positions. Their three-year Director terms begin on July 1, 2010. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Director Nona Bauer for her many years of dedication and service on the MSEA Board of Directors. We so appreciate your passion and commitment!

Delegates considered five resolutions, and adopted three of the five, which resulted in approving the MSEA Board's actions since the 2009 DA, amending the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to clean up some of the statutory references, changing the registered office to MSEA's St. Paul address, and moving the provisions on amending the Bylaws from the Articles to the Bylaws. Delegates voted down two resolutions, one that would have added language about voluntary revocation of membership and one that would have changed existing provisions on how members can retain active membership status during an unpaid leave of absence.

A complete summary of the Assembly resolutions, elections, reports and awards is available on the MSEA website.

www.msea-mn.com

Now....on to the next 30 years!

elected to serve

director positions (3-year terms)

angie lien

WILLMAR SPECIAL ED PARA

"I've had the pleasure of serving on the Board for a year and really enjoyed everything I've learned. I'm anxious to continue that learning process and help MSEA move forward with the Strategic Plan and become a stronger union within Minnesota. Our members need to realize just how important they are and be proud of what MSEA has to offer!"



janine cummins

ST PAUL CONF SECRETARY

"Members need to be aware of the goals, objectives, the Strategic Plan and the benefits MSEA has to offer. I believe I would be able to give fresh and objective ideas and viewpoints to the Board. By doing this it will enable MSEA to progress within its mission and meet the goals of the Strategic Plan."





Political/Legislative

MSEA members already know what school districts got this year from the 2010 Minnesota legislature: nothing, zilch, zero, nada, zip. Oh, and by the way, the legislature and governor used school districts to balance the state's books by adding another \$208 million to the more than \$1.7 billion in previously delayed state funding.

Should we be happy that the state did not cut education funding? Or that most districts will choose to borrow money and make additional interest payments while they wait for the state payments, rather than cutting further into their own already trimmed-to-the-bone budgets? Probably not. Chances that state payments will be delayed again next year are high, meaning that the exercise is really just another kind of delay – a delay in admitting that the delay is actually a reduction, like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Is there anything to celebrate? On the federal level, the House passed a bill to establish an annual Classified School Employee of the Year award, and the bill is now in the Senate. Both Minnesota senators have pledged their support, and Senator Franken sits on the committee that will hear the bill.

Back on the state front, MSEA cooperated with AFSCME Council 65 for this year's Day on the Hill, with SEIU Local 284 for tracking bills and monitoring the 2010 legislative session, and with two coalitions of unions and non-profit groups, advocating for single-payer health insurance and voting rights. These efforts provide MSEA members with quality information about the legislative process, an opportunity to have our voices heard, and greater unity with our fellow unions. In unity is strength! We might be disappointed in the legislative outcomes, but we appreciate these opportunities to advocate for the issues that affect MSEA and its members.

What about politics at the local level? You read in Christina's Corner in this issue about the successful organizing effort in Fergus Falls to defeat a subcontracting threat. Our school boards make these decisions. MSEA members elect the school board members. Who is running for school board in your district this fall? How would the candidate(s) vote on a decision to subcontract? Or to close a school? Or charge employees for parking? Or start using timeclocks? Work with your unit leadership to ask these questions and elect school board candidates who will support MSEA's interests.

A primary focus of the union's proposal is that subcontractors don't understand or fulfill the many extra services provided by in-house staff, such as a willingness and ability to handle the unexpected, repairing a student's eye glasses, setting up an incubator for a teacher's chicken egg hatching or other science project, cleaning up after students vomit or soil their clothes, covering a late ending of an event, serving as mentors to students with disabilities, being the eyes and ears of the building, and helping the many clubs and associations that use the building. Our members also submitted a plan suggesting some improvements to the current system for cleaning and maintaining the district's facilities.

Community members, other district staff, and MSEA members in other units also contacted the district by phone, email, cards, letters and personal visits. They reminded the district that its custodial employees are also district residents, taxpayers, and parents, meaning that a decision to subcontract would hurt, not help the local economy and wellbeing.

The local paper also did a good job of informing the community with accurate information about the issue. Representatives from the Fergus Falls unit spoke to the MSEA Delegate Assembly in April about their fight to keep their jobs, and received a standing ovation.

This positive outcome is a welcome relief, not only to our members in Fergus Falls, but to other MSEA members facing subcontracting threats in Warroad and elsewhere. In Warroad, they are considering subcontracting both custodial and bus services, and have hired a consultant to assist them with the process. In a few other places, districts have decided against pursuing the option after realizing that the cost savings promised by the subcontractors are not realistic. Be aware: subcontracting is a serious threat – it is the same as a raid, except that it is led by a private company instead of another union. When subcontracting happens, we lose units, we lose members, and members are out of a job.

If your district starts talking about subcontracting services currently provided by MSEA members, please call your field representative. Do not pass Go, do not collect \$200: call your field rep. We will strategize and plan to combat and defeat a district's misguided look at subcontracting. And always remember:
¡ Sí, se puedel



2010 August Rally Effective Leadership

With scenic Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge as our setting this year, MSEA leaders are registering for the 2010 August Rally in record time. Registrations are coming in quickly, and space is limited; so please mark your calendars and register **NOW** if you haven't done so already.

Rally information and online registration are available at:
www.msea-mn.com. We'll see you in August!

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NEWS & NOTES

MN Food Service Conference Aug 8-11, Rochester Mayo Civic Center

Registration for the 54th MSNA Annual State Conference is now open. The Food Service Conference schedule is once again packed with relevant workshops, fun events, industry vendors, time to network and don't forget the food! For registration forms, conference details and hotel information, visit www.mnsna.org.

NOTE: Unfortunately, the MSEA August Rally is also scheduled for August 10-11, so some members may have to choose which event to attend. Try as we might to avoid booking our events during other important conferences and workshops, sometimes overlap occurs.

Valleyfair Club Fun Discounts Available now from MSEA!

Planning a trip to Valleyfair this summer? Contact Melissa(melissa@msea-mn.com or 800.622.0289) for Club Fun coupons to save as much as \$13 off each regular admission to the park. What a great way to save as you play!

MSEA \$2000 Life Insurance Benefit Coverage for Members on Medical LOA

The Board of Directors updated the MSEA General Policy and Procedure Handbook in March 2010 with the following language:

Section I. B. 4. i: *Conditions/Clarifications regarding administration of MSEA's life insurance benefit on behalf of the member or another person.* When the MSEA receives written notice that a member is on an unpaid medical leave(due to the medical/health needs of either the member or another person) at a time when such member's coverage by the MSEA's member-only life insurance policy has not yet lapsed, the MSEA will take the steps necessary to continue the member's coverage until such time as the member either returns to work with his/her employing school district or ceases employment with the employing school district.

History/Rationale: MSEA depends primarily on school district offices to keep us informed of members going on and off of a leave of absence. Please help us maintain our records by notifying Lynn Jansen when you take a leave of absence and once again when you return to work. (lynn@msea-mn.com)

did you know?