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Some 'friends' failed city in state budget

By Dominique Paul Noth
 Editor, Labor Press

Comment

Last December, in an extensive planning session with local unions, new Assembly Speaker and former UAW negotiator Mike Sheridan promised to make up for the self-destruction of Milwaukee's elected members, who managed to ace themselves out of any leadership role in the state legislature.

Sheridan of Janesville pledged to keep Milwaukee's concerns front and center and protect its desperate economic needs. Gov. Doyle had made a similar pledge, mindful that County Executive Scott Walker would be slicing into the poor and working class to score political points with Republican regulars as he pursued his party's nomination to oppose Doyle in 2010.

In other words, both Democrats had good reason to fight for Milwaukee.

Or at least promise to. If you look only at the efforts made in the Assembly version of the budget, you can credit Sheridan with trying, even while he was fighting to mitigate the woes GM was leveling on his hometown.

If you look at what finally emerged after Senate changes and Doyle's vetoes, you can't help feeling that Milwaukee got a stick in the eye to go with the pat on the back. Simultaneously.

It was a city helped by ideological change and hurt by specific reversals of expectation. Such seemed the view in mid-July of Rep. Tamara Grigsby, who wrote a controversial letter to Milwaukee area colleagues chastising them for not standing together for their city.

Removed by Doyle's veto was a .5% sales tax increase to

UFCW double-whammy

Patrick Cudahy fire obscures NC victory at Smithfield pork plant

The Fourth of July weekend launched national triumph and near tragedy for the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). The Milwaukee community anticipated tragedy (and was happily disappointed) while a thousand miles away the least unionized state in the union, North Carolina, saw a 17 year battle end with surprising victory for organized labor.

Both events, intriguingly, involved meat packing plants owned by Smithfield Foods.

(And both reflected the modern news practice - "If it bleeds, it leads." The fire videos in Milwaukee drew national media coverage while the quiet, long lasting success in North Carolina, lacking vivid pictures, was barely noticed.)

On July 5 in Cudahy, the skies rolled with smoke as a stubborn fire kept re-igniting for days as it burned down the older buildings of the vast Patrick



Between loading groceries at the emergency food pantry at Machinists Lodge 66, UFCW's Ike Edwards posed with a boy from a Patrick Cudahy family temporarily out of income.

Cudahy packing plant, though sparing the newer facilities.

A catastrophe -- apparently started by a military flare carelessly launched at a backyard Fourth barbecue -- miraculously spared human life but tossed families out of homes, shut down businesses and threw some 1,400 union workers out of work and out of pay.

Not only firemen and first responders sped into action, Local 1473's president and secre-

tary-treasurer, John Eiden and Grant Withers, also rallied fellow unions and the community with a hardship fund to help workers and their families carry on even as the fires smoldered.

Management lived up to its vow to reopen, returning hundreds of workers to the plant before repair. Only temporary-type employees may not be rehired, but all the UFCW members were told to stand by as the

UFCW continued Page 6

fund transit, leaving Milwaukee in impossible choices on cutting bus routes -- and actually throwing into question the plans to fund regional transit that Doyle said he wanted to protect. Also rolled away by the Doyle veto was Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett's .15% sales tax for public safety.

Gone as well was the Assembly's attempt to cap the school choice voucher program at its current level - there may have been no demand to add thousands of student lambs to the program's slaughter of city of Milwaukee property tax payers, but the final budget did.

Meanwhile, Doyle and Barrett combined to form an advisory committee to lay the hammer to Milwaukee public schools in a concept that some took as interference with the voter-chosen executive board and others took as good intentions. But no extra money came along with the advice.

Gone, too, was an idea that affected Milwaukee congestion and safety more than any other region of the state -- a way to raise revenue and the number of insured motorists as well. The

Budget continued Page 7



A delighted Sheila Cochran (left) receives a whopping check from AFGE Local 003 President Roberta Sharbutt. **See Page 3.**



Downtown janitors and their families launch a classic campaign for justice. **Story on Page 5.**

In Memoriam

Operating Engineers Local 317 represents approximately 500 members who work for We Energies doing operations and maintenance work in power plants and the downtown Milwaukee steam system. The jobs are often dangerous.

On Friday, June 19, members responded to flood conditions downtown. William "Bill" Kaiserling, a 30 year member of Local 317, was among the steam workers who came to work in the middle of the night to pump water from the steam tunnels and address other problems.

In the course of his work, Kaiserling suffered significant burns. Bill's work partner did a great job of getting Bill to safety and finding immediate treatment for him. But Bill, hospitalized in critical condition, unfortunately passed away July 6.

This was a devastating loss

to co-workers of a good friend. A highly skilled steam system mechanic, Bill was also a wonderful, generous man. Many describe him as a friendly person who would give anyone the shirt off his back. He was active in his community and a very important part of his church, where he served on the church council and volunteered much of his time.

Bill had loving family and many friends who will mourn his passing. He is survived by his wife Jean and three adult children.

The entire Local 317 membership will remember his good nature and strong work ethic. We will strive to honor Bill's memory by watching out for our Brothers and Sisters on the job.

The author, Mark Maierle, is business manager for Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 317.

Serving the community



LEFT: The homeless, the unemployed, the children and elderly of troubled families – and the just plain hungry – lined up early at St. Benedict the Moor's June 28 for the summer barbecue by the labor community. Volunteer union families prayed and then served 450 guests – and also gave out canvas bags to hold belongings. The food was bought at union stores and prepared by union members.

Ladish adds to layoff woes

As if fire at the Patrick Cudahy plant were not enough (*see Page 1*), manufacturing issues laid off 70 production workers at Ladish in Cudahy, a company that dates back to 1905.

Blaming the erosion of demand during this recession and insisting management had exhausted every other cost-cutting measure, the company said 70 workers (out of workforce of 850 in Cudahy) would be affected by layoffs of indefinite length, though the company is hopeful reduction won't be permanent.

Ladish produces and markets forged and cast metal components for the jet, aerospace, and industrial markets. A significant portion of sales involve US defense contracts. In 2006, while negotiating lengthy contracts with six unions at its Wisconsin facilities, Ladish inked an unusual six-year deal with the machinists (IAMAW Local 1862), spreading a 17% increase in wages over six years. These longer-term contracts not only at Ladish but at Bucyrus and Joy Global provided stability and profit for management.

Analysts expect the companies to benefit from enduring skilled labor at predictable cost as the recession recedes.

Trapshooting

After 13 weeks of shooting in the 2009 Milwaukee Area Labor Council league, here are results by team, reflecting wins, losses and ties:

Class AA W-L-T

1. Pipers	
Plumbers Local 75.....	10-2-1
2. 6 Volts to Lightning	
IBEW 494.....	7-3-3
3. Blind.....	4-7-2
4. Wire & Fire	
CWA 4603.....	1-10-2

Class A

1. Wirenuts	
IBEW 494.....	12-1-0
2. Pipe Dopes	
Plumbers Local 75.....	9-4-0
3. Team #2	
CWA 4603.....	3-10-0
4. Sparkeys	
IBEW 494.....	2-11-0

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Ron Wahl	309
Jeff Jeske	305
Scott Kruck	305

Submitted by

Ron Wahl, League Secretary

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AFGE local provides serendipity for MALC

The positive version of "sticker shock" stunned the delegates to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council at the July meeting in Serb Hall.

Extraordinary generosity came from a union that few know by acronym, AFGE, and particularly from its local here, which had defied the current economic odds by doubling in size in the last year or so.

With unanimous votes by its executive board and then by its rank and file, AFGE Local 0003 gave \$5,000 to the MALC. This was a huge gift in terms of one local, single-handedly funding the Union Label Booth at the State Fair Aug. 6-16. The largesse earned surprised and sustained applause from the delegates.

The American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (hence, AFGE), includes service to military veterans at facilities around the country.

Local 0003 centers its

MLPA cancels annual confab

The president and executive board of the Midwest Labor Press Association (MLPA) regretfully made the decision in

Official notice

Newly elected officers took their seats July 9 for terms that run to July 14 of 2011 at IBEW Local 2150.

The seated at this International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers local include President Mike Bruening, Vice-President Hollie O'Neill, Recording Secretary Nancy Wagner, Treasurer Linda Keck and Business Manager/Financial Secretary Forrest Ceel.

Contact the union, (262) 252-2552 or (800) 551-1151 for details on meetings.

Nancy Wagner
Recording Secretary



Attending the delegate meeting were officers and council leaders of AFGE Local 0003 including (left to right) Richard Alles (Chief Steward), Roberta Sharbutt (President), Julie Kohlhepp (Secretary/Treasurer), Dave Bump (Vice President), Diane Green (Executive Vice President) and Walter Groth (Chief Steward VBA).

work in Milwaukee at the noted and expanding Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Center on National Ave. Named after a member of the House with a leg-

June to cancel the conference that was to be held this summer in Duluth, Minnesota. That will give the labor community time to regain its feet -- and time for the economy to rebound.

The decision wasn't made lightly but with the attendance down and so many other factors going against Midwest labor journalists, including layoffs and bankruptcies, there was no other alternative. The conference is tentatively being planned to be held in Duluth in 2010.

If anyone who handles a labor newspaper or publication is not a member of this organization of veterans and experts, please do join by contacting Lynnnda Guyton, the vice president for Wisconsin, at (414) 771-7070 or e-mail lynnnda@milwaukeeelabor.org.

endary commitment to veterans of two world wars, it now boasts another Democratic US representative, Gwen Moore, as its congressional champion for attention and expansion.

As chief steward Richard Alles explained in announcing the financial gift to the MALC delegates, his local voted eagerly to give MALC the money as a way to signal the importance of veterans and the importance of his local's work.

Within the AFGE, the local has won awards as the fastest

growing Midwest unit. At the VA here it's risen to some 750 members, including clerical, maintenance, mental health and social work specialists. But size is only one component of Local 0003's ability. Consider that as a federal union at a federal facility, it has to operate under open shop rules. It adds workers and negotiates for them, but membership is voluntary.

The local, as Alles told the delegates, hopes to serve as a beacon to other AFGE locals, a

model of cooperation with local councils and federations such as MALC. Through its gift, the local also thanked MALC for its open welcome and its ongoing backing of Local 0003's issues on behalf of both its members and its main clients, the veterans.

Members of the local's executive board attended the council meeting as President Roberta Sharbutt presented the check to Secretary-Treasurer Sheila Cochran.

Moore helps UWM fund sunny (solar) side of street

If the Energy and Water Appropriations Act that passed the House of Representatives in July becomes law, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee will benefit from a half-million dollar provision secured by Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wis.) - and Wisconsin could benefit from 200 new jobs and revitalization of the nation's foundry and molding industries, according to UWM.

Those are impressive estimates, but they have considerable basis. The provision allows UWM to use "cutting-edge nanotechnologies" it has been key to developing to create production of new solar cells for much less cost than today's models - and with as great or better efficiency.

"The development of solar technology at UWM has an added benefit for our local manufacturing sector," said Moore in announcing the addition to the appropriations measure. "These funds will help transfer new solar technologies to area industries and train Wisconsin's metal manufacturers" who are facing fierce international competition.

Michael Lovell, dean of UWM's College of Engineering and Applied Science, hailed the funds as vital steps to turn solar energy into "a practical energy source."

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Bishops press landmark labor accords

By **Dominique Paul Noth**
Editor, Labor Press

Formalizing long-held teachings on social justice, the US Catholic Conference of Bishops has proclaimed guidelines for the nation's Catholic hospitals on labor organizing, taking unprecedented steps in a report entitled "Respecting the Just Rights of Workers: Guidance and Options for Catholic Health Care and Unions."

The principles in this "call for action" emphasize neutrality and allowing workers to have their own voices. It emerged after a decade of talks between labor unions and Catholic health-care organizations.

Four national labor leaders spearheaded the most recent talks that let to what the bishops describe as a "workers document." One of those leaders who helped create the document with Catholic health associations and the bishops has been arguing for justice from Wisconsin hospitals

and healthcare groups for years. She is Candice Owley, a registered nurse best known as the president of the Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (WFNHP) but she is also a national leader of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, as chairperson of its National Health Care Division.

She describes the discussions that led to the document as an "amazing yet humbling experience."

"Although we came to the table with differing perspectives, the unions and Catholic Health Care reached common cause so that the workers, patients, and communities we serve will be the true beneficiaries."

Codifying the approach to worker justice embodied in Catholic tenets, the bishops' document outlines specific guidance that will prevent conflict, tension, and misinformation. The policy will create equal footing in any organizing



Nurse union leader Candice Owley, shown at a Milwaukee labor event in May, was one of the lead negotiators with the US bishops.

campaign. Since the document is voluntary on member Catholic institutions, both unions and the bishops are eager to see how open to Catholic teachings on social justice will be the healthcare organizations in Wisconsin.

Reaction was sought by the Labor Press from two of the largest. They are Wheaton Franciscan, which provides one-fourth of the total health care delivered in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington, Racine, and Ozaukee counties. It also operates six major acute-care hospitals in southeastern Wisconsin.

The other is Columbia St. Mary's, which operates three acute care hospitals in the region,

a joint venture orthopedic hospital and numerous physicians' clinics. That organization had not responded at press time to the inquiry.

Wheaton Franciscan did respond with what many might interpret as a stall. Anne Ballentine, its vice president for communication and public relations, said senior leaders in "Mission Services and Human Resources" would review the document and specific details "internally."

Pressed, Valentine said she expected the review would not even take place for "several weeks."

Moving far faster on the moral imperative was the pope. In an encyclical released July 7, Pope Benedict XVI decried the "combination of social and economic change" that caused trade union organizations to "experience greater difficulty in carrying out their task of representing the interests of workers."

The pope called on all Catholics to recognize the social doctrines that made unions to be "honored today even more than in the past, as a prompt and farsighted response to the urgent need for new forms of cooperation at the international level, as well as the local level."

The pope also encouraged governments as well as Catholic organizations to respond to the church's teachings.

Governments, "for reasons of economic utility, often limit the freedom or the negotiating capacity of labor unions," noted the encyclical. "Hence traditional networks of solidarity have more and more obstacles to overcome."

Interestingly, the day after

the pope's encyclical, leaders of major hospital consortiums joined Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius at the White House to announce the nation's hospitals had agreed to give up \$155 billion in projected Medicare and Medicaid payments to help defray the cost over 10 years of comprehensive health care reform.

Prominent among the leaders was Sister Carol Keehan, president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association (CHAUSA), which lists both Columbia and Wheaton as members.

The bishops' report details seven guidelines for unions and management to work together.


Owley says the process will create "an atmosphere where employees in Catholic health care facilities that adopt the guidelines will no longer face threats and intimidation when they consider forming a union."

Currently, the nurses at Columbia St. Mary's are seeking to form a union. The hospital's response has been to hire known union busters and run anti union videos and captive audience meetings.

Owley quotes the retired cardinal for the Washington archdiocese, Cardinal Theodore Edgar McCarrick.

"He said, 'Catholic Health Care is a ministry not an industry.'

"I think it's important that we continue to reach out to Columbia St. Mary's and Wheaton to dialogue with them so we can ensure the Cardinal's statement of principle is, in fact, upheld."




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Janitors inspired to keep fighting

For years, the Justice for Janitors campaign has symbolized core values of the union movement: Low-paid workers who lack respect; well-heeled companies that use middlemen (contracting firms) to lowball the workers and escape personal responsibility; working class families struggling to raise and educate their children but having to fight for every scrap of pay and benefit that most of society takes for granted.

SEIU Local 1 represents thousands of building custodians in the Midwest and some 350 who work the Downtown office buildings in Milwaukee, many occupied by the same financial companies that federal taxpayers have been helping out with billions in TARP funds.

This summer the janitors once again are negotiating with such contracting companies as ABM, Modern Maintenance, Regency and Performance Clean, which ostensibly hires them. But once again, as union organizer David Somerscales noted, the strings are being pulled elsewhere. The real fight is the indirect one with the office building owners and tenants, who employ pitifully small cleaning staffs now yet keep pushing the workforce to be "smaller, leaner and cheaper."

Just check the tenant lists at the buildings that house Chase Bank, US Bank, Wells Fargo, and peek as well at the Milwaukee Center and other big structures along Wisconsin Avenue. Just check the lack of affordable housing in the areas where the janitors work and ask who really is making the money that allows long-distance travel to work without jeopardizing children and family finances. Apparently, many of the com-



panies you clean up after don't think you're a good enough risk to loan money to, particularly as they keep attacking your pay.

"Our battle is the same as it was last time: better wages, better health insurance," noted Somerscales. "Everyone forgets that the janitors are going through the same recession as everyone else, but with fewer resources."

The tougher the economy gets, the more the bankers seem to seek an advantage on the workers' backs while the workers are paying taxes to help the banks stay in business, noted the local's Chicago-based president, Tom Balanoff.

He was part of an inspirational lineup when Milwaukee's Downtown custodians launched their campaign July 11 with snacks, T-shirts and video for a convention centered in a conference room at Midwest Airlines Center.

And inspirational speeches were not in short supply.

The Milwaukee Area Labor Council's chief financial officer, Sheila Cochran, wondered

aloud why the people who "keep our city clean of filth and dirt have to work the hardest to earn a living" and are the first targeted for cuts.

State Sen. Spencer Coggs urged the janitors to keep fighting for a living wage as well as respect. "You are not invisible. You are essential," he said.

Milwaukee Ald. Willie Wade credited his own union background, as did Coggs, for deepening their belief in collective power. "What works in this contract campaign is the team," said Wade. "Union is about teamwork, and we all,

union members and public officials, have to know our place on the team."

State Rep. Pedro Colon - one of the few speakers who didn't need the services of



Guest speakers (from left) Pedro Colon, Sheila Cochran, Willie Wade and Spencer Coggs join Downtown custodians and SEIU Local 1 President Tom Balanoff (above) in the Justice for Janitors campaign for a new contract.

translator Jackie Poulakas - moved comfortably from English to Spanish to both praise the contract campaign and to hope that Wisconsin will indeed act on something lost in state budget negotiations and vetoes - a driver license process for undocumented workers.

"In so many cases," Colon said, "we must help each other. You will win your contract and we will win the driver license fight." -- D.P.N.

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UFCW

From Page 1

production workers came back by seniority.

For those workers weeks away from returning, the UFCW, the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, Voces de la Frontera, Hunger Task Force, AFL-CIO Community Services staff and union volunteers turned Machinists Lodge 66 into a food bank and counseling center.

"Given how it started, this was close to a happy ending," noted UFCW's Ike Edwards, also a MALC executive board member. "But it won't be the same for a while." He noted how workers accustomed to 50 hours a week were told to expect only 36; how shifts, duties and work stations would bow to the immediate need and how family incomes could suffer in the interim.

Despite the issues in Cudahy, consider how, in North Carolina, going to work for the first time under a union contract should ease more desperate persistent suffering -- sliced tendons, lost limbs, poverty wages, harassments, firings for complaining, busloads of workers carried across the border in the dead of night under



UFCW member Angelica Perez picks up food for her family.

company direction (according to newspaper reports), then government agents sweeping in on the same undocumented workers also with company support (as Labor Press and other journalists have reported).

Some 85% of the 5,000 workers at this enormous Smithfield Foods' slaughterhouse in Tar Heel -- ostensibly the nation's largest pork factory -- went through plant gates July 2 under a ratified contract, with an emphasis more on having a voice at work and avenues to address safety than on instant good wages. Those were the primary

issues given the history of unsafe conditions and ignored complaints by workers.

The UFCW contract was approved last December but it took six months for worker committees, UFCW bargain experts and plant management to hammer out an agreement.

There's a \$1.50 an hour raise over the next four years -- not as much as the workers wanted -- but the UFCW helped the workers win benefits similar to those at other Smithfield plants, eight of which are unionized, including Patrick Cudahy.

UFCW outlined the details for North Carolina newspapers, which are rather unused to seeing such sweeping union advances in their state. (In fact, this success may be the opening salve in unionizing several southeastern US meat plants.)

The contract guarantees workers at least 30 hours of work each week, when before the management could punish with less income those who spoke up. It keeps modest the increases in health insurance costs. Union dues of about \$7 a week will start in late summer -- but those who decided not to join the union in this "right to work for less" state will not have

to pay dues but will still be covered by the contract.

Twice before over the years federal officials stepped in and threw out the results of two previous union elections in the plant, saying that the company unfairly influenced the results by harassing and firing union supporters.

Perhaps most important for workers is the chance to speak about working conditions and injuries, things many said got them fired in the past. UFCW spokesperson Jill Cashen told the state's News and Observer newspaper: "It's difficult to explain in words how exactly this plant is going to change now that they have a voice and they have this clause that says they can't be fired without just cause."

What has the workers salivating are things many union workers take for granted, such as time and a half for being made to work on holidays, actual vacation days and sick leave -- in the past workers were given disciplinary points that could lead to firing if they stayed home sick.

With this contract they also

got safety committees with teeth and grievance procedures, all new to the rural community 80 miles from Raleigh in eastern North Carolina.

Workers kill and butcher as many as 32,000 hogs a day at this plant, cutting and packaging the meat as it moves along conveyor belts. The speed and pressure magnify the complaints and injuries -- the lines moved too fast, that knives were too dull, the repetitive work caused serious injuries. And yet if injured workers couldn't perform their jobs, they were often fired, the union said. The large immigrant population was easy victims of injury, firing and forced silence.

Now the contract requires company-funded safety training and access to the union's extensive safety training. Workers can use the grievance procedure to address conditions.

In Cudahy, the celebration of the Fourth went carelessly awry. In North Carolina, the Fourth solidified the holiday's meaning of independence and individual respect.

-- Dominique Paul North



Edwards and ATU retiree Nick Rudelich prepare the food boxes.



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Budget

From Page 1

budget failed to allow a limited driver license for undocumented workers.

And one veto aimed state-wide undid some heroic negotiations by a Milwaukee legislator. So don't even ask Rep. Barbara Toles what happened after successfully improving rules for apprentices on state projects and finessing it through both the Assembly and

the Senate. Doyle -- though noticed by few -- went to page 450 of the budget to excise it.

Milwaukee along with the entire state does benefit from improvements in prevailing wage laws and the repeal of the qualified economic offer system (QEO) that limited teachers' pay while feeding the runaway increases in health costs. The city also gains from allowing state-resident tuition levels for high-achieving children of undocumented workers. And the budget

finally closed some loopholes long used by corporations to escape their fair tax burden.

But advocates for urban workers could also argue that there was no imperative in the admittedly difficult budget to speed relief to the 45,000 Milwaukee workers who have lost jobs in the first five months of 2009 or deal directly with the unemployed African Americans of working age, estimated in recent surveys as more than 50% in many areas of the city.

While there is more transparency in how federal stimulus money is used, it is a transparency with complexity and delay. Much of these funds must move through the state and its mechanisms. Initially, for example, highway projects are benefiting but other construction projects - from weather-stripping old houses to fish waterways on the Milwaukee River -- move more slowly. So do urban-centric grants for dislocated workers and educational credits, though more help is certainly in the pipeline.

This, after all, was always intended as a two-year one-time recovery stimulus.

So the patient Wisconsinite will concede that this budget pays better attention to the state's only first class city (in size) -- and that a new cooperation means the federal government is also paying better attention. The impatient Milwaukeean will note how much more could have been and should have been included -- and the financial and human cost we all pay as a result of turtle-dome.

Trust issues still dominate union campaign at WTMJ

The Wisconsin Broadcast Engineers re-elected their main officers in June. IBEW Local 715 returned Christopher J. Albrecht as president, business manager, financial secretary and delegate to the international convention; Rachele Cehanovich as recording secretary and executive

board member, and Gregory Haladej as treasurer.

The local is also using hard-hitting video in its ongoing dispute with the Journal company, which has stalled negotiations and imposed cross-training of stagehands (members of IATSE Local 18). Before this, Local

715 had some four dozen engineers at Journal Broadcast Group's WTMJ-TV, WTMJ-DT, WTMJ-AM and WLWK-FM (formerly WKTI-FM) stations.

Journal Company has seen its stock fall 72% after limiting employee ownership and opening up to public trading. Its profits have similarly plunged and it has responded by freezing retirement benefits, reducing wages and engaging in layoffs and buy-outs - while increasing pay for CEO Steven Smith by 22%.

Its unilateral decision about broadcast engineers breaks the smooth negotiations of more than 70 years. The full story and updates, along with youtube video, is available at whytrustt-mj4.com

Calendar

For updated master list of events, visit www.milwaukeeelabor.org

Monday, August 3

Laborfest Planning Meeting, 5 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, August 5

Monthly Delegate Meeting

6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Thursday, Aug. 6-16

Union Label Booth, State Fair

Monday, August 17

Laborfest Planning Meeting, 5 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, August 27

Executive Board Meeting, 2 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Monday, August 31

Laborfest Last Planning Meeting, 5 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, September 3

Monthly Delegate Meeting

6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Monday, September 7

Laborfest!!!

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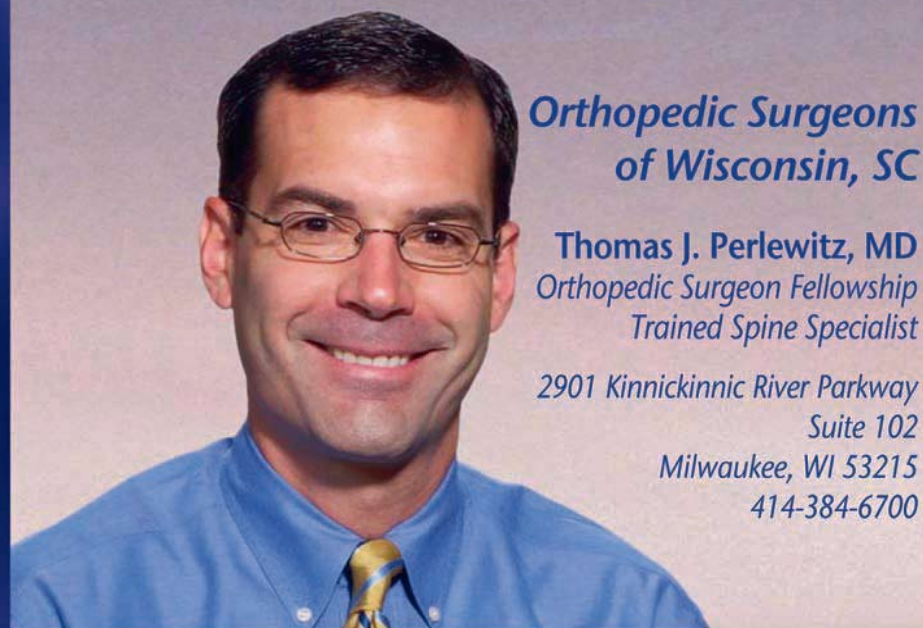
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Trumka pursues top job



RESOURCE FAIR: Visitors crowded around speakers for information. Table after table (left and below) offered sources of help for working families in need during these tough economic times. The Milwaukee Area Labor Council had turned Yatchak Hall into a Resource Fair July 9. Many groups participated as AFL-CIO Community Service liaisons Annie Wacker, Jay Reinke and Mike Balistriere served as the gatekeepers at the all-day event.

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On July 9, the current AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer, Richard Trumka, announced an open secret -- that he was running to replace the retiring John Sweeney as national president.

At press time, he was the only announced candidate.

Trumka also revealed his running mates:

Incumbent AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker, who will run for re-election.

As secretary-treasurer, the highest ranking woman in the IBEW, Elizabeth Shuler, executive assistant to President Edwin Hill.

On June 8, a labor leader who lives in the Milwaukee area announced his candidacy for secretary-treasurer: Gregory Junemann, president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE).

But on July 21, after a talk with Trumka expressing his concerns for financial stability at the AFL-CIO, Junemann announced he was withdrawing his candidacy and would address his issues through a seat promised him by Trumka on the finance committee.

Wielding voting power by per capita membership, delegates from AFL-CIO unions will elect



Trumka was keynote speaker at the 2005 Milwaukee Laborfest.

the AFL-CIO's new officers at the 26th Constitutional Convention in Pittsburgh Sept. 13-17,

Sweeney announced earlier this year that he would retire in September after completing his fourth term as president.

Trumka has served as AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer since 1995 and was widely viewed as the most likely candidate in the AFL-CIO to succeed Sweeney. Aside from taking the lead on trade issues and other causes, he made an astounding impact last summer when youtube presented his speech to the USW convention in Las Vegas.

In blunt terms he defended presidential candidate Barack Obama and took on racism in the labor movement head-on. Such tough candor, belief in union values and persuasion on the stump have become hallmarks of the third-generation coal miner who holds a law degree

from Villanova University Law School and served as president of the Mine Workers (UMWA) from 1982 to 1995. That's when he joined Sweeney on a slate for the AFL-CIO.

Trumka's running mate for secretary-treasurer, Shuler, joined IBEW Local 125 in Portland, Ore., in 1993 where she worked as an organizer and state legislative and political director. In 1998, she was part of the IBEW's international staff in Washington, D.C., as a legislative and political representative.

Holt Baker has spoken several times in Milwaukee. She served as executive assistant to Linda Chavez-Thompson, who retired as executive vice-president in 2007.

Holt Baker was also AFSCME's international union area director in California from the late 1980s to 1995 and also worked as an organizer and international representative.



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