Biden-Harris leads Labor 2020 slate

COVID-19 death toll soars above 213,000 in US as countdown to election continues

MINNEAPOLIS — Early voting continues in record numbers as Minnesota voters count down the days until the General Election Tuesday, November 3. Polls will be open that day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Voters may vote before election day in-person at local election offices through November 2. For more information, about early voting, or to request and absentee ballot, visit mnvotes.org.

Offices on the Minnesota ballot include U.S. President, a U.S. Senate seat, all eight of Minnesota’s Congressional seats, the entire Minnesota House of Representatives and the entire Minnesota Senate.

In addition, voters in some communities will weigh in on important local races for county commissioners, mayors, city council members and school board members.

Besides the all-important race for President in Minnesota, the contest for control of the Minnesota Senate also will be closely watched.

Legislation to boost working families has passed in the Minnesota House, but gone nowhere in the Minnesota Senate.

“It’s obvious that the Senate is not working for us right now,” said Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, president of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, speaking to MRLF delegates August 11. A gain of two seats in the Minnesota Senate would create a pro-labor majority.

To reach union members in other ways, the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO seeks union members to volunteer a few hours between now and the November 3 election.

This is not the year to just sit home and fret. Take action!

MRLF seeks volunteers: Phone from home as part of virtual phonebanks

The stakes couldn’t be higher in the 2020 elections for working families and their unions. Yet following COVID-19 precautions prevents sending out traditional doorknocking teams to engage with union members in-person about the issues and labor’s endorsed candidates — and also prevents gathering union volunteers at phonebanks in union offices.

To reach union members in other ways, the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO seeks union members to volunteer a few hours between now and the November 3 election. Help to distribute worksite flyers. Talk to your co-workers. Reach out by phone or by text, not just to fellow union members, but also to neighbors, friends and family members.

This is not the year to just sit home and fret. Take action!

For more information or to volunteer, contact MRLF campaigns manager Casey Hudek at 612-913-6743 or casey@minneapolisunions.org.

You can join a virtual phonebank from the safety of your own home.

To volunteer for a shift, send an e-mail Joanna DeLaune at joanna@minneapolisunions.org. Training is provided online via Zoom: Monday through Thursday at 3:00 pm; Tuesday and Wednesday at 10:00 am; Saturday at 10:30 am.

Virtual Labor Day of Action: October 24

Saturday, October 24, join a special virtual Labor Day of Action at 10 am, sponsored by the MRLF and AFSCME.

Special guest to be announced! Visit the MRLF Facebook page for more details — facebook.com/minneapolisunions — or RSVP to casey@minneapolisunions.org.

General Election:
Tuesday, November 3
- Polls open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- State law allows you to take time off the morning of Election Day to vote, if you notify your employer.
- Minnesota allows same-day voter registration if you’re not already registered. Bring ID such as MN drivers license AND current utility bill with your name and current address.

VOTE NOVEMBER 3
AFL-CIO Endorsements
Page 24

To Find Your Polling Place
Anoka County 763-323-5275
Hennepin County 612-348-5151
Scott County 952-496-8161
Carver County 952-361-1910
McLeod County 320-864-1210
Meeker County 320-693-5212
Wright County 763-682-3900

For voting information, including how to vote early, visit the MN Secretary of State’s website: mnvotes.org.

Inside
9-11 For pro-labor majority, MRLF targets MN Senate races
12-13 Minnesota House races
14-15 Anoka County Board: 4 labor-endorsed candidates
16 Carver County District 3: Randy Maluchnik
17, 19 Hennepin County Board
21-22 Local Union News
24 AFL-CIO endorsements
The stakes of the 2020 election keep growing — Vote! Volunteer!

By Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, President, Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation

Amidst a global pandemic, essential workers find themselves forced to march off the job to get basic safety demands met. The necessary workplace tools to battle this pandemic are falling short and leaving workers behind — from sanitization, to access to COVID-19 tests, to proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Some essential workers are making the ultimate sacrifice, while others live in fear of bringing the disease home to their families.

Essential workers should not have to walk off the job for basic safety demands. Despite the conditions, workers are continuing to care for our kids, teach our learners, drive our buses, deliver our mail, stock our shelves, fix our streets, manufacture our PPE and care for the most vulnerable — because they know it is their duty. Essential workers should have all minimum safety standards met — plus hazard pay, proper training and a say in the safety plan.

This is the backdrop that frontline workers are facing as they think about the monumental election ahead of us. Layer on the economic insecurity of the rest of the workforce and the stakes of this election just keep growing.

Hopefully, many of you already have voted by mail or in person at an early voting location. If not, make your plan to vote!

Because we need a groundswell of workers marching to the polls to vote for safety, to vote for dignity and to vote for a better future. We need a groundswell of workers marching to the polls to protect our very democracy.

While no one election alone will determine the destiny of our labor movement, it will significantly shape the ecosystem in which we will organize.

That ecosystem starts with the White House and goes all the way down to our school boards. Every level of elected leadership needs to step up in this moment and deliver what working families need.

In addition to support for our main labor principles, commitments to adequate resources, support of pro-active policies and demonstration of effective leadership are a few of the issues we considered when making our 2020 endorsements (see our AFL-CIO endorsement list, page 24).

This year, we all must take on a special duty to talk to our co-workers, our neighbors, and our families about the issues and our endorsed candidates. Normally, we would be knocking on thousands of doors, but this year we have needed to be more creative. We need you to join the team of volunteers making calls, handing out signs and texting our friends.

When the noise of election machines gets to be too much to bear, think about the nurse who is reusing their PPE mask for the third time this week. Think about the educator who is Zooming a room full of kindergartners. Think about the worker laid off since March, trying to survive another month of rent and groceries.

I hope all of you can find your own personal way to contribute to the collective work called for by this moment.

To volunteer for virtual phonebanks, contact joanna@minneapolisunions.org.

A Note of Thanks

I would like to extend a special note of thanks to the staff and volunteers of the MRLF who have shown exemplary fortitude throughout this pandemic and election season. Nothing has been easy. The entire labor movement should be proud of them.

—Chelsie

Working Partnerships offers two COVID-19 emergency help funds

MINNEAPOLIS — Union members and hospitality industry workers who are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 disruptions now can apply to Working Partnerships for emergency financial assistance.

Working Partnerships is the non-profit community services arm of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

For any union member needing emergency assistance, contact:
wpfund2020@gmail.com or 612-305-8747

For hospitality industry workers, union or non-union, contact:
tchospfund@gmail.com or 612-405-6985

Note: If you choose to call the listed phone numbers, please be sure to leave a message with your name and phone number. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Working Partnerships is a partner agency of Greater Twin Cities United Way.

Corrections

Chris Brazelton is the AFL-CIO endorsed candidate for Minnesota Senate District 29 in Wright County. Her name inadvertently was left off of the list of AFL-CIO endorsed candidates published in the September 25, 2020 issue of the Labor Review. Chris Brazelton is a member of AFSCME Local 34. Her campaign website is www.brazeltonformnsenate.net.

Randy Maluchnik is the AFL-CIO endorsed candidate for Carver County Commissioner District 3. The August 21, 2020 and September 25, 2020 issues of the Labor Review ran an incorrect district number. See candidate profile, page 16 of this issue.

‘Welcome’ to new Minneapolis Labor Review readers

As a member of a union affiliated with the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, you now are receiving a subscription to the monthly Minneapolis Labor Review. Several affiliates recently have updated their Labor Review mailing lists. For subscriber service, see page 23.
‘Fare For All’ continues to offer discounted grocery packages at drive-through-only sites

MINNEAPOLIS — Fare For All, which sells discounted grocery packages, has shifted to offering drive-through-only sales at selected sites until further notice.

The Fare For All distribution site at the Laborers Local 563 hall in northeast Minneapolis, hosted for many years by Working Partnerships, is one of the sites where sales have been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here is the remaining October schedule for Fare For All’s drive-through sites in the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation’s seven-county region:

- **St. Louis Park**, Wednesday, October 21, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Vista Lutheran Church, 4003 Wooddale Ave. S.
- **Bloomington**, Friday, October 23, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Ave. So.
- **Anoka**, Thursday, October 29, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church, 1601 4th Ave.
- **Chaska**, Thursday, October 29, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Crown of Glory Lutheran Church, 1141 Cardinal St.

The sales are weather dependent. The specific grocery packages which will be offered for the dates and locations above will be announced the week of the sale on the Fare For All Facebook page.

Fare For All is open to anyone who wishes to save money on groceries and has no income requirements.

The drive-through sites accept payment by credit card, debit card, or EBT. Check the Fare for All website — fareforall.org — for more information, including other drive-through dates and locations.

October 31: Submit photos for Women Building Success apprentice photo contest by deadline

MINNEAPOLIS — Women who are apprentices in Minnesota’s Building Trades unions are invited to submit photos for the third annual Women Building Success photo contest.

October 31 is the deadline to submit photos.

More than $1,500 in prizes will be awarded.

The winners will be determined via an online vote by participants in a Zoom webinar coming Thursday, November 12.

Apprentices may submit a photo for one of the following categories:

- a photo at work;
- a photo of the job site or building;
- a photo of tools or craftsmanship.

Submit photos by October 31 along with your name and e-mail address to events@womenbuildingsuccess.org.

While the contest is open only to women apprentices, everyone is welcome to join the November 12 Zoom webinar.

At the November 12 online event, the finalists will be presented and the winners will be selected via an online vote.

The November 12 event will run from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Registration is free and is available at womenbuildingsuccess.org/events.

The third annual Women Building Success photo contest is taking place again in conjunction with National Apprenticeship Week November 9-13.

Through November 1: Art exhibit, ‘The Labor We Wear,’ highlights garment industry, workers

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minneapolis Institute of Art re-opened July 16 and features an exhibit by local artist Rachel Breen, “The Labor We Wear.” The exhibit will run through November 1 at the MIA, 2400 Third Ave. So. in Minneapolis. The exhibit highlights the relationship among the garment industry, garment laborers, and fashion consumers.

In utilizing used clothing to create her installations, Rachel Breen holds us, the consumers of fashion, complicit in the troublesome cycle of garment production and consumption—from dangerous factory conditions to problems caused by textile waste. Breen makes these relationships visible in order to find ways to break the toxic chain.

For more information about the exhibit, including a four-minute video, visit new.artsmia.org/exhibitions.

In the video, Breen discusses how her art was inspired by the tragic deaths of workers in the 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh and the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City.

General admission to the Minneapolis Institute of Art is free, but timed tickets are required for museum entry due to COVID-19 precautions. Reserve your ticket online at artsmia.org, in person, or by phone: 612-870-3000.
MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD:

VOTE FOR THE DFL TEAM ON OR BEFORE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

1. Vote From Home
   You can request your ballot to be sent to you in the mail for the general election

2. Vote Early In Person
   Vote early, in person, at your local elections office

3. Vote on Election Day
   Head to your polling location and vote on November 3, between 7am - 8pm

QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING?
Visit iwillvote.com/MN
or call 833-DFL-VOTE
(833-335-8683)


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Empowering young people to learn about the skilled trades

Learn more about the Explorer Post sponsored by the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council

OPEN HOUSE*
and recruitment event
October 26, 6:00 p.m.
Base Camp
6202 Bloomington Rd.
Fort Snelling

Exploring is a program for youth ages 14-20 which encourages career exploration through immersive activities and mentorships. Planned events for this new Skilled Trades Explorer Post will include tours of local construction projects and more. The October 26 event aims to provide more information to youth and their families. To register or FFI, contact Kimberlee Buller at 612-261-2337 or kbuller@northernstar.org. *COVID compliant event — face coverings required.

Paid for by Eaton for Senate, 7007 Dallas Road, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430 • www.Eaton4Senate.com

Paid for by the Mike Nelson Volunteer Committee, 7441 Hampshire Ave. N., Brooklyn Park, MN 55428

Paid for by the Committee to Elect John Hoffman, 8224 109th Place N., Champlin, MN 55316 • johnhoffmanmn.com
Health care is on the ballot this November

By Buddy Robinson

Health care remains a top priority of voters. The cost continues to increase, while restrictions on what’s covered and which doctors you can see can keep tightening. The COVID pandemic has made the problems in health care access and cost all the more alarming.

If President Trump is re-elected, he and the Republicans in Congress won’t reduce these trends — they’ll accelerate them. Here’s what they seek, for the various forms of health coverage we have:

Medicare

Medicare is the federal program for people 65 and older and many disabled Americans. The Republicans want to put Medicare in the hands of insurance companies. That wastes vast amounts of taxpayer funds, and lets those companies control who you can see and whether specific treatments get paid for.

Their chief goal is to turn Medicare into a voucher system, where the government gives you a set monthly amount to help you buy an insurance policy. The insurance companies, not the government, will then decide what will be covered. The government voucher won’t rise with medical inflation, and so it will pay for less and less each year. If Medicare is changed to a voucher system, the average 65-year-old, in 2022, will pay $12,500 out-of-pocket annually, instead of $6,150, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

If Republicans don’t win their voucher system, their Plan B is to greatly increase the use of the Medicare Advantage program — in which insurance companies already control the Medicare of those who choose it. It’s a voucher system on training wheels, and Trump is trying to expand it.

Medicaid

Medicaid is the federal system for low income people of all ages. Much of Medicaid goes for health care for non-seniors, but two-thirds of it pays for long-term care, especially nursing homes. It is critical for all seniors who end up in nursing homes. It’s paid for by roughly half federal money and half state money.

The Republicans want to turn Medicaid into a flat grant system. That means the federal government gives each state a total set amount per year, or per enrollee. It will rise according to overall inflation, but not fast enough to cover medical inflation.

Therefore, over time, the federal share covers an increasingly smaller portion of the overall cost. That forces states to either jack up taxes to cover the shortfall, or start reducing Medicaid benefits and/or eligibility.

ObamaCare (aka Affordable Care Act)

Many people understand that the Republicans want to repeal ObamaCare, and that Trump is trying to eliminate it in court. If that were to happen, tens of millions of people would be hurt. If a new Supreme Court justice to replace Ruth Bader Ginsburg is rammed through quickly, that could tip the balance against ObamaCare.

ObamaCare increased the income eligibility for Medicaid, which most states took advantage of. Those newer enrollees would be thrown off Medicaid.

The other major part of ObamaCare: subsidies to help many people afford to buy insurance. If those subsidies disappear, another set of millions won’t be able to afford good coverage.

ObamaCare stopped insurance companies’ ability to deny coverage for pre-existing conditions, and closed up the Part D “Donut Hole.” These would be reversed, too. Although Trump and the Republicans say they’ll protect pre-existing conditions, they actually intend to let insurance companies decide.

Biden and the Democrats, in contrast, would push for an improvement of Obamcare, in the form of a Public Option, to allow all Americans to buy coverage at a more affordable price.

Employer Coverage

What about the majority of Americans, who get employer health coverage? For most of them, that coverage is the best deal around. However, that deal slowly deteriorates every year: Higher premiums, deductibles, and co-pays, plus greater restrictions on which doctors you can see.

Employer health coverage will continue to get less affordable every year. The only fix for that is a very big one — a universal public health care system, which everyone would get regardless of their work status.

That won’t be enacted anytime soon. Our immediate need is to block Trump and the Republicans’ intention of making everyone’s health care much worse.

Buddy Robinson is former staff director of Minnesota Citizens Federation Northeast.

The Minneapolis Regional Retiree Council asked Buddy Robinson to explain why "Health Care is on the Ballot in November." The Retiree Council is actively reaching out via phone calls and post cards to retirees with the message that Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are all on the 2020 ballot. Union members and retirees need to vote and elect union-endorsed candidates who will protect and improve our earned retirement and health care benefits. To help, contact Graeme Allen at graeme@minneapolislunions.org or 612-481-2144.

Guest Column
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Prepared & Paid for by Malik for Minnesota
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“I’ve worked closely with Paul Thissen for many years. He’s a good friend to working men and women across this state. Please remember to turn your ballot over and vote in the Supreme Court election.”

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Smart public policy rewards the worker. Wages are part of that equation, but so is affordable healthcare, child and family care, housing, transportation and a secure retirement.

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Minneapolis Senate

Gretchen Piper: Seeks ‘common sense solutions’

WAYZATA — “I really admire the work ethic and the relationship-building it takes to do bipartisan legislation,” says Gretchen Piper. “I want to be part of constructive, common sense solutions that benefit our community and our state.”

A first-time candidate, Piper is running for the Senate District 33 seat, which includes Chanhassen plus communities surrounding Lake Minnetonka and then extends west and north to the west edge of Hennepin County.

Piper is endorsed not only by the Minnesota AFL-CIO, but also by AFSCME Council 5, Education Minnesota, the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, SEIU Minnesota State Council, and the United Food and Commercial Workers. Piper also is endorsed by the DFL Party.

She’s challenging the two-term Republican incumbent, David Osnek, who has earned a lifetime voting record of only 11 percent on working family issues tracked by the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

Piper grew up in the district and has lived there most of her life.

She says the demographics of the district have been changing rapidly. Minnesota Senate District 33 is part of the Third Congressional District, which sent DFL-endorsed and labor-endorsed Dean Phillips to Congress two years ago. That same year, DFL-endorsed and labor-endorsed Kelly Morrison won the House District 33B seat.

“Kelly and Dean and I have known each other pretty much our entire lives,” says Piper, who supported their campaigns. “I’m so inspired by their example.”

For Piper, getting big money out of politics is a key issue. She’s refusing Political Action Committee donations.

Come January 21, Piper says, “job number one for the Minnesota legislature needs to be pandemic recovery,” including balancing the budget and passing a bonding bill and other forms of stimulus.

A consultant for non-profits, Piper says “throughout my life, I’ve advocated for jobs that support family-sustaining wages.” Instead of big corporations, “I think of workers as being the engine of Minnesota’s economy and the United States.”

Website: gretchenpiper.com

Bonnie Westlin: ‘Flip the Senate, get things done’

MAPLE GROVE — “When we flip the Senate, we can get some things done,” says Bonnie Westlin. Right now, “we literally have people holding hostage the business of the state… They aren’t interested in making things better for people.”

Endorsed by the Minnesota AFL-CIO and DFL Party, Westlin is making a second run for Senate District 34 in Maple Grove, Osseo, Dayton and Rogers.

Eight-term Republican incumbent Limmer has earned a lifetime voting score of only 21 percent from the Minnesota AFL-CIO — and in 2019 voted in support of working families just three times out of the 15 votes tracked.

August 12, Limmer joined the Republican majority in the Minnesota Senate on a party line vote to oust the state’s labor commissioner, Nancy Leppink, who has been leading the state’s efforts to keep people safe at work during the pandemic. “People’s lives are pawns in their game,” Westlin says.

The Republicans hold only a 35-32 majority in the state Senate, and Westlin believes Senate District 34 is one where voter frustration with that majority could lead to a change. Two years ago, DFL and labor-endorsed Kristin Bahner won the “B side” of the district for a seat in the House. That year, Westlin managed DFLer Dan Solon’s run for the House District 43A seat. He lost, but won 43 percent of the vote in a 9 percent gain for the DFL candidate from 2016.

This year, campaigning in a pandemic is different. No door-knocking. “We have a very robust phonebank field plan,” Westlin says, and “we’re asking people to reach out to their personal networks.”

Westlin has lived in Maple Grove since 2004. She grew up in Crystal, then earned her undergraduate and law degrees from Hamline University. She has worked in the financial services industry and in 2004 opened her own law practice. Westlin has two sons and two grandchildren.

“We’ve had members of my family who have been union members,” Westlin says. “Labor unions provide good-paying jobs across the state… We want to strengthen our unions, not weaken them.”

Website: bonniestinlformnsenate.com

For a strong and growing economy, we need to elect candidates who will invest in public infrastructure and education!

We encourage all our members to vote!
Support Labor-endorsed candidates

You can vote before election day either in-person at local election offices or by mail by absentee ballot.

For information: www.mnvotes.org

Ann Johnson Stewart: An engineer for the job

MINNETONKA — “I think we need an engineer to say, come on, we need to start paying attention to our roads and bridges,” says Ann Johnson Stewart. “I want to be the smart person on the side who says we’ve got to start supporting our infrastructure.”

Johnson Stewart is an engineer who literally has helped build roads and bridges and she is running for Senate District 44 in Minnetonka, Plymouth, and Woodland.

The one-term Republican incumbent, Paul Anderson, is not running for re-election. Johnson Stewart is running for the open seat with the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. She also is DFL-endorsed.

“I’m running to ensure that all Minnesotans have access to affordable and comprehensive healthcare, an infrastructure and transit system that is safe and accessible, and excellent public schools,” Johnson Stewart says.

In the 2018 elections, both of the House seats in the district were won by the labor-endorsed and DFL-endorsed candidates, Ginny Klevorn in 44A and Patty Acomb in 44B. Klevorn and Acomb are running for re-election and now that momentum and their campaigns’ success is boosting Johnson Stewart and her race.

“They have a huge volunteer force,” she says. The three candidates’ teams have been making thousands of phone calls.

More than 20 years ago, Johnson Stewart started her own engineering firm, which has grown to 26 employees. Her firm has helped local and state government to build infrastructure across the state and, in doing so, she has seen the value that construction unions add to that work.

Growing up in a union household in Wausau, Wisconsin, “my parents were lifelong teachers in a public school,” she says. “They were union members — they struck — …and really imparted to us the value of unions… and sticking together.”

Johnson Stewart earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and a masters degree in civil engineering at the University of Minnesota.

A 25-year resident of Minnetonka, Johnson Stewart and her husband have four children and three grandchildren.

Website: annjohnsonstewart.com

Justin Stofferahn: ‘The status quo isn’t enough’

WHITE BEAR TOWNSHIP — “I think we can do more to create opportunities for working families,” says Justin Stofferahn. “Some of the other challenges we face, we can only tackle if we make sure working families have economic opportunities.”

Stofferahn is running for Senate District 38, which includes eastern Anoka County as well as part of Ramsey County and Washington County.

In addition to the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, Stofferahn is running with the endorsement of AFSCME Council 5, Education Minnesota, the Laborers, the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, Minnesota Nurses Association, SEIU Minnesota State Council, Teamsters Joint Council 32, United Steelworkers District 11, and other unions. He also is DFL-endorsed.

The 10-year Republican incumbent, Roger Chamberlain, is seeking re-election. On working family issues tracked by other unions. He also is DFL-endorsed.

The 10-year Republican incumbent, Roger Chamberlain, is seeking re-election. On working family issues tracked by other unions. He also is DFL-endorsed.

If we think boldly and creatively, we can do a lot more to enhance worker power and union power,” Stofferahn says. “The status quo clearly isn’t enough.”

Website: justinstofferahn.com

Vote November 3

Support Labor-endorsed candidates
Support your local school levies

...And remember Minnesota law now provides “no excuses” absentee voting. You can vote before election day either in-person at local election offices or by mail by absentee ballot.

For information: www.mnvotes.org

Ann Johnson Stewart
Senate District 44

Justin Stofferahn
Senate District 38

Website: annjohnsonstewart.com

Website: justinstofferahn.com
Steve Cwodzinski: ‘This is the time to invest’

EDEN PRAIRIE — “I don’t know how both sides of the aisle can’t get together around light rail,” says Steve Cwodzinski. He points to all the development taking place around the existing light rail lines and the new stations for the Southwest Light Rail Line from downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie. In addition to the jobs building the actual rail lines, that’s a lot of construction jobs. He asks, “how can someone be opposed to that kind of magic?”

First elected four years ago, Steve Cwodzinski is running for re-election to the State Senate District 48 seat representing Eden Prairie and southern Minnetonka. He is running again with endorsements by the Minnesota AFL-CIO and DFL Party.

A retired Eden Prairie High School teacher, Cwodzinski earned a 100 percent voting record from the Minnesota AFL-CIO for his votes in favor of working families issues in the 2019 legislature. His lifetime AFL-CIO voting record is 98 percent.

Running four years ago, Cwodzinski assured the Labor Review: “I’m with you... I bleed union blood.”

In his four years in the Senate, “one of the places I made a big impact was the Southwest Light Rail,” Cwodzinski says. “I’m proud of that.”

“My opponent four years ago was against it,” Cwodzinski notes. And, as a caucus leader who might have become Senate Majority Leader, “he was in a position to make it not go forward.”

In the Senate, Cwodzinski also has been an advocate for education issues and for veterans’ issues.

Although he taught government for 33 years, Cwodzinski says he’s learned some lessons serving in the state Senate. “I didn’t realize the power of the party caucus,” he says. “That’s been a real eye-opener.”

That partisan dynamic has played out with the Republican House blocking a bonding bill in a feud with the Governor over his emergency powers to combat the pandemic. “The process is horrible,” Cwodzinski says. With low interest rates, “this is the time to invest, putting people to work.”

Website: cwoforsenate.com
Kristin Bahner: ‘My bills are about common sense... putting people first’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

MAPLE GROVE — “A lot of my bills are about common sense, putting people back in the conversation,” says Kristin Bahner. “It’s about putting people first.”

A first-term State Representative, Bahner is running for re-election in House District 34B, which includes Maple Grove and Osseo. Her endorsements include the Minnesota AFL-CIO and the DFL Party.

Bahner first won the seat in 2018 — her second challenge to the Republican incumbent — winning that year with almost 53 percent of the vote.

The 2018 election which brought Bahner and other labor-endorsed DFLers into office not only created a DFL majority in the House, but also changed the way the House looked.

It is among the most diverse classes ever to come to the legislature,” she notes. Among the new DFL lawmakers were more women, more people of color than ever before.

“I actually think that’s pretty exciting,” she says. “We’re seeing folks get a seat at the table who, for many years, have not had their perspectives heard.”

For the 2019 session of the legislature, Bahner scored a 94 percent voting record from the Minnesota AFL-CIO on working family issues.

Reflecting on her first term, she says, “the one thing that surprised me the most... I had this grandiose idea of what happens on the House floor. I very quickly learned all the actual work on the bills — and the haggling — happens in committee.”

“Sometimes the opposition of the two sides is actually a healthy thing,” she adds. “They challenge you to think of the unknown.”

Bahner has focused on working to make health care more accessible and affordable, including writing measures that passed into law that helped in bringing down the cost of prescription drugs. She was a champion for the Alex Smith emergency insulin bill.

For Bahner, her work in the legislature is about “making systems and laws that work for real families and seniors.”

She remains hopeful that the legislature will pass a bonding bill yet this year, which she notes will bring “a lot of important transportation and public works projects” to invest in clean water, safe bridges, and good roads.

Bahner comes from a family of union members. “I always just grew up around hard-working folks who believed in fairness, who believed in treating other people right, making sure we take care of each other each and every day,” Bahner says.

Website: bahnerforhouse.com

Amir Malik: ‘Invest in roads, instead of making everything partisan’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

BLAINE — Two years ago, Amir Malik surprised most observers — and even his own campaign — by coming just 153 votes short of defeating the incumbent and winning election to the District 37B seat representing Blaine in the Minnesota House. Malik is making another run to defeat Republican Nolan West.

Malik is endorsed by the Minnesota AFL-CIO and DFL Party.

In 2019, two-term incumbent West earned a voting score of only 17 percent from the Minnesota AFL-CIO — voting in support of working families just two times out of the 18 votes tracked.

“He just doesn’t seem to get anything done for Blaine,” Malik commented.

In talking with voters this year, Malik reported, “people feel a lot more anxious than they did two years ago. We have a number of people in Blaine who either have been laid off or had their hours cut.” And, due to that loss of work, some folks also have lost their health insurance.

“That is really illogical — that because of a disease you would lose your healthcare,” Malik said. “I believe everybody should be able to buy in to Minnesota Care,” he said. “It’s a good program. It’s already established.”

Malik said district residents want to see improvements to Highway 65, known for terrible congestion and accidents. His own daughter recently was rear-ended. “Nothing has been done to make Highway 65 better,” he said. “It’s a nightmare of a road... It’s caused a lot of problems and our leadership hasn’t done anything to fix it.”

“That’s one issue that unites people across party lines in Blaine,” Malik added. “We have to be investing in our roads instead of making everything political and partisan... That’s what happened with the bonding bill this year,” he noted. “Blaine is very pro-infrastructure. We’re not seeing that from our leadership.”

“I think what Blaine is looking for is coming together as a community, building a better future for Minnesotans, and rewarding hard work,” Malik said.

An attorney, Malik currently works as a wage theft investigator for the City of Minneapolis and is a member of AFSCME Local 9.

When a teenage Amir Malik had a first summer job at the Byerly’s in Golden Valley, he related, he joined UFCW as a full member, even though it was optional for a part-timer. “Even when I was a kid I was pro-union,” he says. “The data make it clear what happens when you have unions and when you don’t.”

Website: malikformn.com

Cedrick Frazier: ‘A voice for labor families in the state legislature’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

NEW HOPE — Cedrick Frazier pledges to be “a voice for labor families in the state legislature.”

Currently a member of the New Hope City Council, Frazier entered the race for House District 45A when longtime DFL incumbent Lyndon Carlson announced he would retire.

Frazier is running with the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO and the DFL Party.

District 45A includes New Hope and parts of Crystal and Plymouth.

An attorney, Frazier has lived in the district for five years, but says he has been connected to the district for twice that time through his daughter’s school.

Frazier was appointed to an at-large seat on the New Hope City Council in August 2018 to fill a vacancy and, he says, he was planning to run for a full term there until Carlson’s retirement created an opening to run for the Minnesota House.

Frazier reports that he is a third generation union member. A grandfather worked for a union paint manufacturing plant in the Chicago area — and was a union steward — while his father is a Teamster working at UPS.

Frazier himself was a member of the Teamsters union, while working as an attorney in the Hennepin County public defender’s office for two years.

Following that time, Frazier worked for eight years for the Minneapolis Public Library, first as director of diversity and equity, later as assistant general counsel.

For the past five years, Frazier has worked as staff attorney for Education Minnesota, the state’s teachers union.

There he is a member of the staff union: The Education Minnesota Professional Organization (TEMPO).

In campaigning for the District 45A House seat, Frazier says he has met some voters who tell him they’ve never voted for anyone for Minnesota House besides incumbent Lyndon Carlson — who first was elected to represent the area in 1972.

Carlson, a former teacher, has endorsed Frazier.

“The day I get sworn in, I don’t want there to be any question where I stand on the issues,” says Frazier, whose website outlines his progressive policy positions.

Frazier’s message for Labor Review readers: “The most important thing I want my labor family to know: I will amplify the issues that affect you on a daily basis: living wage jobs, parental leave, child care leave, sick leave — those benefits that allow you not only to provide for your family, but also to spend time with your family,” he says, “and so you can have a decent retirement.”

Website: cedrickfrazier.com
By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

SHAKOPEE — “People in Shakopee just want to continue living good lives and have the government respond to their needs — and that’s what we’re doing,” says Brad Tabke.

Tabke, formerly a two-term mayor of Shakopee, is running for a second term to represent District 55A in the Minnesota House of Representatives. He’s running for re-election with the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO and the DFL Party.

In the legislature’s 2019 session, Tabke earned a 100 percent voting record from the Minnesota AFL-CIO on working family issues.

While the continuing political polarization at the legislature makes the news on some of the big issues of the day, Tabke notes, “I’m really lucky with my work that I needed to and wanted to get done for my district… There was good bipartisan support.”

He reports getting legislation passed which specifically benefited Canterbury Park, Valley Fair, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and the Minnesota Correctional Facility located in Shakopee. “I’m super happy with that,” he says.

As vice chair of the Transportation Finance and Policy Division in the House, Tabke helped to pass a 2019 safety bill requiring drivers to move over a lane when construction workers are present with flashing lights.

This year, he relates, “I was able to work on a lot of COVID response bills” that related to transportation issues (for example, relaxing some requirements regarding the renewal of drivers licenses).

Making progress on nuts and bolts legislation is important to Tabke, but he also wants to see the two parties address the bigger issues facing the state.

The DFL-controlled House passing the transportation bill he helped write, for example “was really impactful work… to rethink and build for the future of roads, bridges and transit across the state.” Unfortunately, the Republican majority in “the Senate didn’t agree.” If the DFL wins control of the Senate, he says, “it shows we can go if we’re in charge.”

Another concern for Tabke: “It is unconscionable to me that Minnesota can simultaneously rank second best in the nation for raising a family while also being second worst in the nation for racial inequities. This is a concern for all citizens and businesses in the state of Minnesota. We must stop simply talking about this issue and start actively working toward solutions.”

Website: tabkeformm.com

Jess Hanson: ‘Politics is how we care for each other’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

BURNSVILLE — “My social work education informs my political work,” says Jess Hanson. “Politics is how we care for each other.”

Hanson is running to represent District 56A in the Minnesota House of Representatives. She is running with the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO and the DFL Party. District 56A includes Savage and the northwest part of Burnsville.

In 2018, labor-endorsed DFLer Hunter Cantrell won the seat in an election that returned the DFL to the majority in the Minnesota House, Cantrell decided not to run for re-election, however, creating an open seat.

In the 2018 campaign, Hanson had worked to help get Cantrell elected. “I know how hard he worked and I know we’d have to work even harder to keep it,” she says.

This year, COVID-19 precautions are keeping most candidates from door-knocking. “We have to phone bank — that’s the only way we’re going to win,” Hanson says. “When I get people on the phone, people are thrilled to engage.”

Hanson frames her campaign with the theme, “the politics of care.” She explains, “to me, the politics of care means striving to create a Minnesota where families and businesses can prosper.”

Hanson has one foot in the corporate world, one foot in the world of advocacy. Still in her teens, Hanson began working for Anthem, a health benefits company where 15 years later she continues to work as a network representative. “I’ve learned a lot of things in that corporate setting that are important skills,” she says.

Advocacy is Hanson’s passion, however, which she discovered while working with state legislators while working to build a coalition for cannabis legalization.

Hanson is a single mom and lives in Burnsville. She graduated from Farmington High School. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in social work from the University of St. Catherine and is near completing a Master’s Degree in Advocacy and Political Leadership from Metropolitan State University.

Hanson grew up in a union family: Her dad was a Teamster, her grandmother was a UFCW member, her grandfather was in the Carpenters union. She saw what strong unions meant, especially for her grandparents. They re tired with pensions. They still have [health] insurance… It’s like a fantasy to my generation.”

“The work that we need to do for working families is enormous,” Hanson says. Website: jesshansonforhouse.com

Esther Agbaje: Addressing housing crisis demands urgent action

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

MINNEAPOLIS — For longtime tenant advocate Esther Agbaje, the affordable housing crisis demands urgent action. Unfortunately, she says, “across the country our answer… is we’re going to throw you out on the street because you can’t pay rent.” She adds, “there are so many things that flow from having a safe, stable place to live.”

That sense of urgency, Agbaje says, led her to run for the House District 59B seat in Minneapolis, which includes part of north Minneapolis and downtown neighborhoods.

Running against DFL incumbent Ray Dehn, she won the DFL endorsement and then defeated AFL-CIO endorsed Dehn in the August 11 primary election. Following the primary, Agbaje won the endorsement of the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

The daughter of Nigerian immigrants, Agbaje was born in St. Paul and grew up in Brainerd and Faribault. She graduated from George Washington University in the nation’s capital with a degree in political science, later earning a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania and a law degree from Harvard University. She currently works as an attorney in Minneapolis.

During her time as an undergraduate student in Washington, D.C., Agbaje had a two-year internship with the AFL-CIO’s Solidarity Center — which works to support worker organizing and unions across the globe. “It was my first entree into the labor world,” she says. From that experience, she learned “when fighting for human rights, you’re fighting for workers’ rights, too.”

In addition to her concern for affordable housing and advocacy for tenant rights, Agbaje supports investing in public transit — and, prior to COVID, she says “I rode transit all the time.”

“I want to make sure we have a reliable, consistent Metro Transit system so it becomes a first choice,” she says. Bus routes, she continues, need to connect neighborhoods and not just move people in and out of downtown. And workers commuting to nighttime jobs need to be able to count on transit.

Redrawing the route for the Blue Line light rail, she says, offers the opportunity for economic development “to make the north side a destination, not just a pass-through.”

“We need more legislators “who understand how transit intersects with economic growth, housing, and the environment,” she says.

Agbaje adds: “I definitely look forward to a future where more jobs are union and more people have an opportunity to be in a union.”

Website: estheragbaje.com

October 16, 2020 • Minneapolis Labor Review • Page 13

www.minneapolisunions.org
Local 363 proudly represents members who work for the Cities of St. Paul, Minneapolis, St. Francis, and Becker; St. Paul Public Schools; Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; Minneapolis Public Housing Authority; St. Paul Public Housing; Metropolitan Mosquito Control District; and Kanabec County.

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Members,

Ramsey — John LeTourneau is running for the District 1 seat on the Anoka County Board with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Currently the mayor of the city of Ramsey since winning a special election in 2018, LeTourneau has previously served as a Ramsey city council member since 2013 and before that as a member of the Ramsey Economic Development Authority.

As mayor of Ramsey and as city council member, LeTourneau says, his main concern “was about meeting the expectations of residents and making sure they were well-represented in the decision-making process. It was about collaboration and it was about engagement and it was about transparency.”

LeTourneau’s emphasis on engagement and transparency, he says, is missing on the Anoka County Board with “the current command-and-control style of leadership.”

He adds, “they run this kind of ‘lights-on only’ vision of government that isn’t very forward-thinking.”

He sees that philosophy impacting the quality of life in Anoka County in a negative way.

“We’re not getting the industry and commercial opportunities that other communities are getting,” LeTourneau says, noting that “58 percent of workers are leaving Anoka County” to go to work each day. “You shouldn’t really have to drive to Minneapolis for a high-paying job.”

“When you do, you’re likely stuck in traffic, or you might be working more than one job to afford your Anoka County housing. But that can change.

A county board that invests in local infrastructure can improve life for all.

“I need your support now, so your voice can be heard,” he wants union members to know. “Your voice is important to me… My role in running [for County Commissioner] is to invite your voice to the table.”

Website: electletourneau.com

Anoka County Board

John LeTourneau: ‘Your voice is important’

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Website: electletourneau.com

Nyle Zikmund: ‘We also need to invest’

Blaine — Nyle Zikmund is running hard to win the District 3 seat on the Anoka County Board. It’s his second attempt to unseat incumbent Robyn West, who has served since 2007. “I’ve walked over 1,000 miles and knocked on 10,000 doors,” Zikmund reports.

Zikmund is running with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

When Zikmund sought the District 3 seat four years ago, he voiced concerns about the dysfunctional way the current board majority operates. “They’re still fact- natical — cut, cut, cut,” he reports. “We also need to invest.”

Traffic congestion on Highway 65 remains the biggest local issue four years later, Zikmund says. “Blaine is the Hoover Dam when it comes to Highway 65.” Nothing has happened to address the problem, he says, — except another study.

“They own plan says funding sources will continue to decline,” he reports, with the goal only to repair and maintain Highway 65. “We should have a goal where we plan to invest,” he argues. “Why have a plan if you have no intention of funding it?”

“We’re the only metro county that repealed the wheeled tax,” Zikmund points out. The repeal puts the county at a disadvantage, he says, because the county is not bringing its own money to the table when seeking state dollars to help fund road improvements.

The lack of transparency in the way the current board majority operates continues, Zikmund says. “They won’t let people speak at a county board meeting.”

Zikmund served for 21 years as the Zikmund served for 21 years as the

Federation, AFL-CIO.

When Zikmund sought

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John LeTourneau

District 1

John LeTourneau

District 1

Nyle Zikmund

District 3

Nyle Zikmund

District 3

Website: votenyle.com

Website: votenyle.com

www.minneapolisunions.org
Noel Lutsey: Restore prevailing wages

HAM LAKE — Seeking District 2’s seat on the Anoka County board, Noel Lutsey is making his first run for public office. “My career is built on connecting jobs and people and education and grants,” he says. “I have the connections and the experience needed.”

Lutsey is running with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Lutsey works as director of training at Anoka Technical College, where he is a 10-year member and current steward of Local 1301 of the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees. He previously served the local as president for seven years and earlier as vice president.

Lutsey is an active community volunteer and “because I’m so active in so many organizations, I started paying attention to the county budget,” he relates. He became dismayed that Anoka County board meetings include no open forums at all for comments or questions.

“It wasn’t my lifelong dream to be a county commissioner,” he shares, but he decided “instead of just complaining, I should do something.”

During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic slowdown, “leaders step up now,” he says. “I didn’t see that from my commissioner.”

“This board got rid of prevailing wages,” he notes. “We know how disastrous that is to the economy.” He adds: “we need to strive to getting it back.”

“We could do a lot better job with county employees,” Lutsey says. “Supporting employees is number one.” But that’s not happening. “We lose a lot of people through turnover” to other counties. That’s expensive. “We need to retain these employees,” he says.

“I’m working for your vote,” Lutsey wants to tell union members. “My door is always going to be open… I will fight for transparent and honest communication, a responsible budget that respects your tax dollars, and an economic plan that will grow jobs and our local economy.”

Website: vote4noel.mailchimpsites.com

Cindy Hansen: ‘Giving people a voice’

LINO LAKES — The race for Anoka County Board District 6 will be one of those contests where just a handful of votes could decide the outcome. Cindy Hansen is running for the seat with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

In the August 11 primary, Hansen placed second, trailing incumbent Jeff Reinert by just 216 votes. Hansen, Lino Lakes, is a former nine-year mayor of Spring Lake Park.

“I have a reputation of working well with others, listening to others, and giving people a voice,” says Hansen. I think that’s one of my biggest assets.”

Currently, she says, “people feel like they do not have a voice because of the way the county has their meetings. There’s no open discussion. People feel there’s a lack of transparency.”

The November 3 general election will be the fourth race between Hansen and Reinert since a November 5, 2019 primary for a special election to fill the then-vacant District 6 seat.

“We haven’t stopped campaigning since,” Hansen says. “It’s been non-stop for a year.”

Hansen is proud to run on her record serving as Spring Lake Park mayor and attracting $55 million in development there, among other accomplishments.

Her opponent is distracting from the real issues in the race, she says, by stirring up controversy over what should be a non-issue.

After she and her husband, a retired Teamster, bought their current home in Lino Lakes, she continued to live in her Spring Lake Park home 51 percent of the time — as required by law — “which I gladly did,” she says. “I am proud that I fulfilled my obligation to the voters.”

“I support unions,” Hansen says. “I would really appreciate people sharing my message. This is going to take every vote; it’s going to be close.”

Website: cindyfor6.com

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www.sizigoyah.com
Kevin Anderson: Investments in transportation, environment, health will benefit all

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

MAPLE GROVE — Kevin Anderson has been talking to a lot of folks in Hennepin County District 7. “I’ve heard repeatedly, it’s hard to get things done at the County. We don’t have a partner at the County.”

Anderson is running for the District 7 seat on the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. District 7 includes western and northwestern Hennepin County, stretching from St. Bonifacius on the south to Champlin on the north.

Anderson is running with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. His other labor endorsements include AFSCME Council 5, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 292, Laborers District Council, Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, Operating Engineers Local 49, and Teamsters Joint Council 32.

Anderson also is DFL-endorsed. The District 7 incumbent, Jeff Johnson, who first was elected in 2008, is not running for re-election.

Anderson placed first in a three-way race in the non-partisan August 11 primary election. His opponent for the November general election is incumbent Johnson’s longtime assistant.

Anderson is focusing on three issues in his race: transportation, health services, and the environment.

“When I think of the County, I think roads and bridges,” Anderson says. “When that job isn’t being done, somebody needs to stand up.”

District 7, he notes, is Hennepin County’s largest district in square miles. “It’s huge,” he says. But, he reports, “we get less than two percent of the transportation funding that Hennepin County allocates... That kind of imbalance translates to our roads being neglected.”

He adds: “if we could just balance that out, we would have jobs in this district.”

Road projects even go up to the District 7 border — and stop, he notes.

“If you’re not advocating for projects to get put in your district, you’re not going to get them,” Anderson says.

District 7 communities along the Interstate 94 corridor “are growing like gangbusters,” he observes. Transportation infrastructure needs to keep pace with that growth. “We need to start planning for the future.”

District 7’s rural areas and protected green spaces are one of its top attractions, notes Anderson. “We need to have leaders who will work to conserve and preserve our environment.”

“I grew up in a state park the first 10 years of my life,” he says — his father was the manager of Old Mill State Park in northwestern Minnesota. “When you grow up surrounded by nature... that’s something that becomes a part of you.”

Anderson wants to see Hennepin County play a strong role in maintaining water quality, combating invasive species, and doing its part to reduce impacts causing climate change.

With a mother who worked as a nurse, Anderson relates, “another thing that was baked-in to me — how do we take care of people?”

Hennepin County’s health and human services budget is $800 million plus, he notes, a major share of the overall budget. “If we try to invest more in our preventative services... we’ll have better outcomes.”

For example, he says, “Minnesota has one of the worst ratios of counselors to students” in the public schools. He’d like to see the county do more to partner with schools to provide services right where students and families are everyday.

“I would love to see it where we are building a society where we are actively looking out for each other,” Anderson says.

Anderson says his concern for the common good is rooted in his faith and also grew from his participation in ISAIAH, a nonpartisan coalition mobilizing faith communities to work for racial and economic justice in Minnesota. “It was through my faith that led me to advocate for labor and making sure people are paid fairly and have benefits and all the things that are important for every family across Minnesota.”

“Working people deserve a voice at the table and somebody who is going to speak out for them,” Anderson says.

Anderson has worked for 20 years in the information technology field. He lives in Maple Grove with his wife and four young children.

Website: votekevinanderson.com

www.minneapolisunions.org

Carver County Board

Randy Maluchnik: ‘I have the skills, the relationships... to carry on the good work’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

CHASKA — “Carver County is number-one in the nation in seven different areas,” says Randy Maluchnik. “I’m running to carry on the good work.”

First elected in 2006, Maluchnik is seeking re-election as Carver County Commissioner for District 3, which includes Chaska’s Ward 1 and Ward 2 and Victoria’s Precinct 2 and Precinct 3.

Maluchnik is running with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Maluchnik’s other labor endorsements include: Carpenters Local 322, Chaska Education Association, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 292, Iron Workers Local 512, Operating Engineers Local 49, Laborers District Council, Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council, Pipefitters Local 539, and Sheet Metal Workers Local 10.

“Randy has been a great friend of the Building Trades for many years,” says Andy Snope, legislative and political director for IBEW Local 292. “He would specifically go out of his way to assure the paying of high area standard wages and benefits on Carver County-funded projects.” Snope added: “Randy has our back and we have always supported him.”

“I’ve got 18 years in public service,” says Maluchnik, who previously served from 2003-2007 on the Chaska City Council and was a longtime appointed member and chair of the Carver County Planning Commission.

“I grew up in the kind of union house where you’re supposed to make life better for the next generation through your efforts,” Maluchnik says.

“In my family, it was always considered important that working men and women in this country are represented,” he says. On his mother’s side of the family, Maluchnik reports, four or five generations of union railroad workers also served as elected local public officials.

Over the years, Maluchnik has been a member of three unions: the American Federation of Government Employees, the Teamsters and the United Steelworkers of America, serving in positions including local vice president and shop steward.

“I’m honored to work with the union employees of Carver County,” Maluchnik says. “They do an amazing job for the taxpayers of Carver County.”

Maluchnik’s work on the Carver County board has included leadership, advocacy — and results — for job-producing infrastructure, social services, and education, among other concerns.

In the case of the new County Road 101 bridge, which opened in 2015, “the County had to take the tough vote,” Maluchnik says. “We actually loaned the state the money to get it built.” Building support for the project included partnerships with Scott County and the City of Shakopee. “We all worked together to get it done,” Maluchnik says.

Originally, he adds, the Minnesota Department of Transportation wanted only a two-lane bridge. “Thanks to the Governor and our advocacy at the legislature, we made sure that was a four-lane bridge.”

The next big roads project will be completing the reconstruction of Highway 212 project: $30 million.

Maluchnik also has led county efforts to build a new mental health center, to support food security programs, and to partner with local schools. He’s also supporting the Carver County sheriff in seeking body cameras for his officers.

In running for a fifth term, Maluchnik says, “there’s work left to be done. I have the skills, the relationships, to continue that work.”

Website: randymaluchnik.org
Virtual Labor Day of Action: October 24

Saturday, October 24, join a special virtual Labor Day of Action at 10 am, sponsored by the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO and AFSCME. Special guest to be announced!

Visit the MRLF Facebook page for more details — facebook.com/minneapolisunions — or RSVP to casey@minneapolisunions.org
De’Vonna Pittman: ‘Someone who’s going to fight for everyday families’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

NEW HOPE — With a $2.5 billion budget, “the county board has the power to change lives,” says De’Vonna Pittman. Pittman is running for the District 1 seat on the Hennepin County Board with the endorsement of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

District 1 includes Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, New Hope, Osseo, and Robbinsdale.

The longtime incumbent, Mike Opat, first was elected in 1992 and chose to not run for re-election this year.

Pittman’s other labor endorsements include AFSCME Council 5 and Teamsters Joint Council 32.

She also has been endorsed by the Hennepin County DFL.

Pittman’s résumé includes 18 years working for Hennepin County in a variety of roles in administration, corrections, housing, community development and transit. She is currently a project coordinator focused on disparity reduction.

“I have worked directly with leadership and with the people who work on the ground,” she says.

The aim of Pittman’s campaign, she says, is “making sure people are represented and their voices are at the table.”

Pittman adds, “we need someone who’s going to fight for everyday families. That’s who I am.”

If elected, Pittman says, one priority will be getting the Bottineau light rail project back on track — which recently has encountered some setbacks. “The goal is to connect people to jobs and housing,” she emphasizes. Moving forward, she adds, decisions and planning need to do a better job considering and engaging “the people who need the line the most.”

“I would like to see the Blue Line happen,” she says. “I would like to go back to the drawing board.”

With the current COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, “people are really going to be struggling,” she says. “People have lost their jobs.”

“Prior to the pandemic, there were these really vibrant conversations about the opportunity to create green jobs,” she says. “The conversation was about making sure our workforce was ready for the jobs that were coming.”

Now, she says, workforce development programs — and affordable housing — will be more important than ever.

“Come 2021, it’s going to be a challenging year,” Pittman knows. “That’s why we need to have people on that board who have a heart for what needs to happen.”

Pittman grew up in the Chicago area, where her father was a union electrician and her brothers were union laborers.

She came to the Twin Cities in 1992, encouraged by a friend who said jobs were available. Her first job here: working at a White Castle.

Pittman went on to earn her degree in Criminal Justice from Metropolitan State University and later earned her Master’s of Science in Law Enforcement Leadership from the University of St. Thomas.

Pittman has lived in new Hope for the past 12 years. She and her husband have a blended family of four adult children and now two grandchildren, ages 3 and 7.

“Although I haven’t been a member of a union, I have benefited from union members’ fight for fair wages and healthcare,” Pittman says. “I strongly consider myself right there with the union folks.”

Website: PeopleForPittman.com

Chris LaTondresse: ‘We need good government more than ever’

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

HOPKINS — “We need good government more than ever and that path to good government starts with us,” says Chris LaTondresse.

Endorsed by the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, LaTondresse is running for the District 6 seat on the Hennepin County Board.

District 6 includes northern Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and the smaller communities surrounding Lake Minnetonka.

Jan Callison, the three-term incumbent who first was elected in 2008, is not running for re-election. She has endorsed LaTondresse.

LaTondresse also has endorsements from AFSCME Council 5, IBEW Local 292, Laborers Local 363, and Teamsters Joint Council 32. He also is DFL-endorsed.

“My whole career has been devoted to public service, working inside of government or outside government for advocates, groups to make government more responsive to the needs of its citizens,” LaTondresse says.

LaTondresse currently works as vice president of strategy for a non-profit addressing education equity issues.

Two years ago, LaTondresse won election to the Hopkins School Board, where he is serving as vice chair. “I’m the only candidate in this race with local government experience,” he notes. “I’ve led our district through the COVID-19 crisis.”

LaTondresse previously served two years in the Obama administration, where he worked as an advisor to the U.S. Agency for International Development. He led efforts to mobilize civil society and faith based groups to address food insecurity.

His experience, LaTondresse says, helps make him someone “who knows how to navigate large, complex systems.”

“Many issues facing our communities are woven together,” LaTondresse notes: Student success, affordable housing, health care, living wages. “What’s abundantly clear is that so many of the challenges our students and their families face are a part of their reality before they ever walk through the doors of our schools,” he says.

County government, he adds, is unique because it impacts people’s lives on all the biggest issues.

“I’m running because I believe we are living in extraordinary times,” LaTondresse says, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the resulting economic crisis and the “urgent need to address long-standing systemic racism.”

LaTondresse grew up in Hopkins and attended the local public schools, later graduating from Bethel University in St. Paul as a political science major. He lives now in Hopkins with his wife — a nurse practitioner — and their two young sons.

“I grew up in a union household,” LaTondresse reports. His mother, Barbara LaTondresse, taught in the Hopkins school district for 40 years. “It was the union that stood up for her… until she wanted to retire on her terms,” he relates. In retirement, he adds, union pensions allowed his parents to remain in their home — and also to travel.

“My commitment to being a champion for labor is rooted in my own experience,” LaTondresse says. “People who work union live better, with fair wages, insurance, pensions.” As county commissioner, he says, he will work with labor “as a partner and ally.” He adds: “I will be a smarter commissioner and make better decisions because of my relationship with labor.”

Website: latondresse.org

Minneapolis opens early voting centers

The Minneapolis Early Vote Center has opened at 980 E. Hennepin Ave. Minneapolis residents can come here to vote early in-person or to drop-off their completed absentee ballot.

Through October 18, the hours will be:

- Weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Closed on weekends.

Extended hours will be offered from October 19 through November 2, including weekdays and also Saturdays and Sundays.

Beginning October 27, a North Early Vote Center will open at the Urban League Twin Cities, 2100 Plymouth Ave. N.) and a South Early Vote Center will open at Langfellow Park Recreation Center, 3435 36th Ave. S.

More: vote.minneapolismn.gov

Any Hennepin County resident may vote early at the Hennepin County Government Center, 300 6th St. S., Minneapolis.

Hours through October 23:

- Weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Closed on weekends.

Extended and Saturday hours will be offered October 24 through November 2.

More: hennepin.us/residents/elections

Early in-person voting also is available at other counties’ election offices and in some local cities and towns. Visit mnvotes.org for more early voting information.
"And so we shall have to do more than register and more than vote; we shall have to create leaders who embody virtues we can respect, who have moral and ethical principles we can applaud with enthusiasm." – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Do your part to elect leaders with morals & principles this election day, November 3rd – Get out and Vote!

From our AFSCME Local 34 family members
Hennepin County Social Services and Related

VOTE YOUR JOB!

VOTE FOR JOBS
VOTE FOR SAFETY
VOTE FOR A FAIR RETURN ON OUR WORK

LABOR ENDORSED

Heat and Frost Insulators & Allied Workers Local #34
Webiste: www.insulators34.org

Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota is proud to endorse candidates for the state Legislature who believe we need to fully fund education and provide all our students – no matter what they look like or where they come from – a place to achieve their dreams.

We hope you join us to support these candidates, create your vote plan and vote safely. Vote early in person, by mail or on Election Day for candidates who will put educators and students first.

Go to www.edmnvotes.org/voter-guide to see our endorsed candidates.

www.edmnvotes.org
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005: Members authorize strike

Depositing ballots in a ballot box outside the United Labor Centre, members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005 voted overwhelmingly September 22 to reject a contract offer from Metro Transit and to authorize a strike. The vote to reject the contract and authorize a strike — recommended by the Local 1005 executive board — had the support of 94 percent of the members who voted.

“It was a strong turn-out by the membership,” reported Ryan Timlin, Local 1005 president.

“We’re trying to get back to the table,” Timlin told the Labor Review October 9. He said that just one negotiation session has been scheduled, coming up October 26. “We want more dates than just one date,” he said, “and we want them to actually negotiate with us.”

So far, however, Timlin said the two sides are far apart, with “no agreement even close.”

“They want a one-year deal but we can’t reach agreement,” he said. Because of that stalemate, he added, “we want to open up a full-blown negotiation” for a normal two or three year agreement. Metro Transit, so far, refused to do that.

Instead of offering a pay increase in the proposed one-year deal, Metro Transit offered a one-time payment. “They didn’t want to put anything in the base wages,” Timlin said.

Metro Transit workers continue to face health risks on the job because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. But Metro Transit’s proposal offered hazard pay for only a limited period of eight weeks, from March 21 through May 15.

The union is seeking hazard pay of $3 per hour for every hour worked since March 21.

So far, Timlin reported, 88 of the approximately 2,350 Local 1005 members have come down with COVID-19. “Thankfully, nobody has died yet but we have had a few members get very ill.”

While Metro Transit has outlined safety protocols, “there’s concern that there’s not enough consistency throughout the whole company,” Timlin said.

The biggest problem: bus riders and light rail riders not wearing masks.

Nationally, Timlin said, ATU is exploring a safety solution that looks at the air circulation flow in buses, which normally moves from the back of the bus past all the passengers and then up to the operator at the front of the bus.

Local 1005’s current agreement expired August 1. The two sides have been working with a mediator since August.

IBEW Local 292:

Union seeks volunteers for virtual ‘IBEW for Biden’ phonebanks October 24, 31

IBEW Local 292 is seeking members to volunteer for “IBEW for Biden” phone banks Saturday, October 24 and Saturday, October 31. These phonebanks will be virtual phonebanks from 1:00-3:00 p.m. that members can participate in from anywhere. Callers will be contact-

IBEW Local 292 also is conducting labor union member to labor union member voter outreach daily (except Friday and Sunday) from now until election day.

**Plumbers Local 15:**

New building for hall and apprentice training purchased in Maple Grove

Plumbers Local 15 has completed the purchase of a new building in Maple Grove, where the local will relocate its offices and training facility.

“It is a building we will be renovating to accommodate the use,” said Scott Gale, Local 15 business manager.

The 90,000-square-foot building is located at 8625 Monticello Lane N., just to the west of Hwy. 169 and just to the north of Interstate 694.

Gale said the property purchase price was $5.45 million and that the improvement costs will be $12.5 million.

J.E. Dunn will be the general contractor.

Gale said Local 15 will sell its 24,000-square-foot office building and two adjacent properties in the Elliot Park neighborhood in Minneapolis, which the local has owned since 1994.

Plumbers Local 15’s current training facility, which is next door to Dunwoody College of Technology in Minneapolis, rents a building owned by Dunwoody.

Dunwoody and Plumbers Local 15 have had a relationship since the 1930s which has taken different forms over the years, Gale said, with Local 15 renting...
The new building will be built on 4-1/2 acres of land in Blaine, about 2-1/2 miles further north of the old site. The facility under one roof started at a cost of $5.7 million, according to the contract. The new building will be completed by July 2021.

The new building will be the largest building in the area, and will house the offices of the local union, the union's training center, and the union's library. The new building will also include a gym, a cafeteria, and a union hall. The new building will be a place where members can come together to learn and to work.

The new building will be open to the public, and will be a place where the community can come together to learn and to work. The new building will be a place where the community can come together to learn and to work.
For Sale: Fishing equipment — Mitchell, Shakespeare, Daiwa, Berkley, Fin-Nor, 5-ft. to 7-ft., 6-in., includes 10-ft. surf rod and reel and 8-ft., 6-in. fly rod and reel. 11 rods and reels. $75 takes all. Bob, 952-356-5491.

Wanted: Lead ingots, wheel weights, lead water pipes, any form of lead to make fishing sinkers and jigs. Call Ozzie, 763-566-4257.

Wanted: Old coins, collections, bullion, paper money, gold coins, proof sets, mint sets, etc. Anything from pennies to paper. Best of all, I’ll pay cash and come to you. Please call Dick at 612-986-2566.

Wanted: Guitars and amplifiers made in the USA pre-1980. Also interested in drums and some other instruments. Bob, 612-521-4596.

Wanted: Old and broken outboard motors, old gas engines and chainsaws, also engine-related items like old spark plugs, tools, gas and oil cans, etc. Tom, 763-785-4031.

For Sale: Mopar 1965 B-Body rear axle assembly, complete, $55 sure-grip differential, needs brake shoes, $750 OBO. 612-592-4478.

For Sale: Emerit’s Indoor/Outdoor grill, 175-450 degrees each side, DW safe, like-new, $65; New oxygen tank with regulator, $125 asking $65; Motorcycle trunk, $45; 5-ft. clawfoot tub, $350. Or best offer. 763-777-0656 after 6 p.m.

For Sale: 7 outboard motors, $100 each or all for $600; 2 metal detectors, $50 each. John, 652-240-8811.

For Sale: Mopar 1965 B-Body rear axle assembly, complete, suitable differential, needs brake shoes, $750 OBO. 612-592-4478.

For Sale: Vintage indoor/outdoor, 20-ga. shotgun, $125 asking $100; C Promax, 3:55 axle assembly, complete, $824-0872.

For Sale: Aluminum trailer, $1,500 asking $650; Motorcycle trunk, $45; Oxygen tank with regulator, $125.

For Sale: 7 outboard motors, $100 each or all for $600; 2 metal detectors, $50 each. John, 652-240-8811.

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Minnesota AFL-CIO
Committee On Political Education: 2020 Endorsements

General Election
Tuesday, November 3
Early in-person voting now underway at county election offices and local election offices
For voting information, to request an absentee ballot to vote by mail, to learn how to vote early, or to learn where to vote, visit the Minnesota Secretary of State’s website:
mnvotes.org

Minneapolis Labor Review
• October 16, 2020

President & Vice President of the United States
Joe Biden & Kamala Harris

U.S. Senate
Tina Smith

U.S. House

1st District: Dan Feehan
3rd District: Dean Phillips
5th District: Ilhan Omar
7th District: Collin Peterson

2nd District: Angie Craig
4th District: Betty McCollum
6th District: Tawnja Zahradka

Minneapolis Regiona Labor Federation Committee On Political Education: 2020 Endorsements

Anoka County Commissioner: John LaTourette, District 1
Nyle Zikmund, District 3
Cindy Hansen, District 6
Carver County Commissioner:
Randy Maluchnik, District 3

Hennepin County Commissioner:
De’Vonna Pittman, District 1
Debbie Goettel, District 5
Chris LaTondresse, District 6
Kevin Anderson, District 7

Brooklyn Center City Council:
Alfredo Daniels, At Large
Sizi Goyah, At Large

Brooklyn Park City Council:
Christian Eriksen, Ward C
Lisa Jacobson, Ward E
Susan Pha, Ward W

Columbia Heights Mayor:
Amáda Márquez Simula

Columbus City Council
Robert “Rob” Busch, At Large
Coon Rapids City Council:
Christopher Geisler, At Large
Shalonda Shipp-Gordon, Ward 1
Kari Rehauer, Ward 2

Crystal City Council:
John Budziszewski, Ward 3
David Cummings, Ward 4

Edina City Council:
Ukacha Dakane, At Large
Maple Grove City Council:
Kristy Jangie, At Large

Ramsey City Council:
Jeff Manth, At Large

Richfield City Council:
Simon Trautmann, Ward 1
Sean Hayford Olson, Ward 2
Ben Whalen, Ward 3

Robbinsdale City Council:
Tyler Kline, Ward 1
Sheila Webb, Ward 2

School Boards
Buffalo–Hanover–Mantorville:
Amanda Lawrence, At Large

Minneapolis:
Kerry Jo Felder, District 2
Christa Mims, District 4

Osseo:
Tamara Grady, At Large
Jackie Mosqueda-Jones, At Large

Miamon Queeglay, At Large

Osseo (Special Election):
Thomas Brooks, At Large

This list current as of October 9, 2020. For updates: www.minneapolisunions.org

Minneapolis Senate

Chad Tschumperle 18
Chris Brazelton 29
Diane Nguyen 30
Gretchen Piper 33
Bonnie Westlin 34
John Hoffman 36
Jerry Newton 37
Justin Schiffman 38
Chris Eaton 40
Mary Kunesh-Podein 41
Ann Johnson Stewart 44
Ann Rest 45
Ron Latz 46
Addie Miller 47
Steve Cuozzolinski 48
Melisa Franksten 49
Melissa Halvorson Wiklund 50

Sahra Ohowa 55
Bobby Joe Champion 59
Kari Dziedzic 60
Scott Dibble 61
Omar Fateh 62
Patricia Torres Ray 63

This list current as of October 9, 2020. For statewide endorsements and updates: www.mnunions.org

Minnesota House

Erina Prom 20A
Renée Cardarelle 29A
Joe Rosh 29B
Brad Kovach 30B
Brad Brown 31A
Kelly Morrison 33B
Brian Raines 34A
Kristin Bahner 34B
Mike Erickson 35A
Zack Stephenson 36A
Melissa Hortman 36B
Erin Koegel 37A
Amir Malik 37B
Kris Fredrick 38A
Mike Nelson 40A
Samantha Vang 40B
Connie Bernardy 41A
Sandra Feist 41B
Ginny Klevorn 44A
Patty Acomb 44B
Cedrick Frazier 45A
Mike Freiberg 45B
Ryan Winkler 46A
Cheryl Youakim 46B
Dan Kessler 47B
Laurie Pryor 48A
Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn 48B
Heather Edelson 49A
Steve Elkins 49B
Michael Howard 50A
Andrew Carlson 50B
Brad Tabke 55A
Jessica Hanson 56A

Minnesota Senate

Fue Lee 59A
Esther Agbaje 59B
Sydney Jordan 60A
Mohamed Noor 60B
Frank Hornstein 61A
Jamie Long 61B
Hoban Hassan 62A
Aisha Gomez 62B
Jim Davnie 63A
Emma Greenman 63B

This list current as of October 9, 2020. For updates: www.mnunions.org