



# Retiree Bulletin

Minnesota AFL-CIO Retiree Council

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**August 2016**

## **CONVENTION SET FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**

The Twentieth Annual Convention of the Minnesota State AFL-CIO Retiree Council will be held on Sunday, September 25, 2016 at the DECC in Duluth, Minnesota. Registration will begin at 10 a.m. and the session starts at 11.

Credential packets were mailed to affiliates on July 14. If your affiliate has not received the convention material, please contact the Retiree Council at 651 227 7647 or 1 800 652 9005.

Since this is an important election year, in addition to regular convention business, there will be some political speakers and educational programs.

Important information and deadlines related to the convention are as follows:

### **CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS**

In order for resolutions to be included in the delegate packet, they must be passed out of the Retiree Council Board at its August meeting (Aug. 24). Please send Resolutions to the Retiree Council by **Friday, August 19**.

Late resolutions will require a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the convention to allow consideration. The recommended Resolution Form (and other forms) may be downloaded from our website: <http://www.mnaflcio.org> (Click on ABOUT US; then, click on "State Retiree Council" and scroll to the bottom of the page.).

### **NOMINATION OF OFFICERS**

Elections will be conducted at the convention for Board members. Candidates must be convention delegates. Committee interviews of candidates will be conducted between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. (or a little later) on September 25.

Nomination forms should be returned to the Retiree Council by **Friday August 19**. However, the absolute deadline is 10 a.m. on September 25, at the convention

### **CONVENTION AWARDS**

The Retiree Council presents awards in seven (7) categories, and Affiliate Excellence Awards. Nominations for convention awards will be accepted on the Convention Award Nomination Form, which should be accompanied by a description of the qualifications of the individual nominated for the award, or, in the case of the Affiliate Excellence Award, on the form for that award. **PLEASE THINK OF WORTHY NOMINEES AND SUBMIT THEIR NAMES AND BACKGROUND FOR CONSIDERATION!!** Nomination forms can be found on the website.

### **CREDENTIALS**

The convention call includes a credential form that can be duplicated for as many delegates as you are entitled to have. Once you have selected your delegates and alternates, please complete a form for each one. Send **the bottom portion** to the Minnesota State Retiree Council AFL-CIO, 175 Aurora Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103, by September 16. The delegate or alternate should **retain the top portion** to present at the

the convention registration desk.

Please send a **\$25 convention registration fee for each delegate, alternate and guest**, along with the credential forms. A lunch is included in the registration fee. Checks should be written to Minnesota State Retiree Council AFL-CIO.

## **MOTIVATING MYSELF DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

I'm not much into political candidates. Maybe it's because I was born in Chicago, where the party was the important thing. I was living in Illinois the first year I could vote. I just pulled the lever at the top for the Democratic ticket.

In 1967 and early '68, I volunteered for Gene McCarthy's presidential campaign, organizing precinct caucus turnout in Dubuque. I liked McCarthy, and when Hubert Humphrey temporized on the war and McCarthy withheld his half-hearted endorsement 'til just a week before the election, I was bitter and voted for the Socialist Worker candidate. A year or so later, a friend ran for County Attorney in Dubuque and I worked for his election, not just because he'd been a McCarthy activist, but because I knew him and his family and liked them a lot.

Since then, I've worked on many campaigns, but, with the exception of Paul Wellstone, haven't felt much of a personal connection with candidates. It's their records I've cared about – that they've worked for peace and justice and taken practical, positive action on labor issues. A good friend has berated me for years, saying that's pretty abstract and not enough for most people. Personalities are important in politics, he insists. Most people vote, not for platforms or policies, but for other people they like and feel good about.

He's probably right. But what happens when none of the candidates are particularly likeable and the airwaves and mailboxes are crammed with repulsively negative political advertising? Will voters, then, give greater weight to their own values and issues and base their choice more on parties' and candidates' records than on personalities? Or will they just tune out and stay home?

We'll find out soon enough. But I don't think, as trade unionists – even retired and tired ones – that we want simply to wait in front of our TVs for the outcome.

The Minnesota Labor 2016 program aims specifically to get labor voters talking about what's important to them, and thinking about what party and which candidates are most likely to address their concerns in a constructive way. Hopefully, this approach will encourage union households to stay engaged and turn out for working family candidates on Election Day.

But that won't happen unless each of us turns out, in the coming weeks, to make phone calls, write postcards and visit union households (hips and knees permitting). There are tens of thousands of people to communicate with, one-on-one. And it's our challenge – and privilege – to reach as many as we possibly can.

If not us, who? If not now, when?

I've taped this note to the bathroom mirror.

**November 8 is coming!**

**What will I do today to turn out the labor vote?**

In Solidarity,

*Bill Moore*, President

## PHONE BANKING: LABOR 2016 STYLE

By Dan Mikel

Whoa! There IS something new under the sun.

As part of the roll out at the campaign schools by the Minnesota AFL-CIO in Duluth, Alexandria, St Paul and Rochester, we reviewed our Labor 2016 goals. The primary effort we will be making is to retain a working-family-friendly majority in the Minnesota State Senate, and recapture a working-family-friendly majority in the Minnesota State House. Two Congressional seats are also key – to keep Rick Nolan in District 8 and elect Angie Craig in District 2.

Our main work will be on the House and Senate races and we learned a new way to reach out to our fellow retirees by phone.

Basically, we will be doing **in depth, conversational phoning**. We are not looking for extended exchanges with solid labor voters or rock-ribbed conservative voters. But we do want and expect longer, higher quality discussions with people with whom we can have a persuadable conversation. **Such voters are the key to election victory in November.**

How are we going to achieve this goal of reaching out to persuadable retirees? Here's how:

We will introduce ourselves PERSONALLY and identify our PERSONAL issue interests. We involve the person in discussing an issue s/he cares about and also try to get that person thinking about issues that affect other people they care about.

Following up on the issue or issues the person has identified as important, we ask about how the person thinks political parties have done in addressing these concerns. After we listen and reflect on that discussion, we share information about labor-endorsed candidate(s) and ask for support for these candidate(s).

As with traditional phone banking we can make a sample script "our own" with appropriate changes. This new system that emphasizes two-way PERSONAL issue discussion has been tried and tested and it works!

From the description above, you can realize quickly that these calls will take more than one or two minutes. Consequently we will need more volunteers than ever during 2016. **We need you.**

Contact your local regional labor federation or area council for dates for phoning. If you don't know the telephone number, just call us at MN AFL-CIO State Retiree Council at 651-227-7647 or 1-800-652-9004. and we can direct you.

So there IS something new under the sun insofar as phone banking is concerned. Our methods may change, but our commitment to electing public officials who understand and support labor's issues remain constant.

## **“NO EXCUSE” ABSENTEE VOTING**

Minnesota Law has changed as of 2014 to permit absentee voting without requiring any reason. Under prior laws, a person had to be absent from the precinct on election day (or meet certain other criterion) to obtain an absentee ballot, but that is no longer necessary.

This year you can vote from your home by mail, or you can get an absentee ballot and vote in person at a county-designated location for absentee voting.

As of September 17, absentee ballots will be available for the general election on November 8. **Click here** (<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting>) on September 17 or later so you can get an absentee ballot mailed to you. At the website, click on “other ways to vote”, then on “vote early by mail” or “vote early in person”. You then go to the on-line application. You submit that application, and a ballot will be mailed to you. It is important to follow the directions for submitting the absentee ballot carefully, for you want it to be counted. But it’s not rocket science!

After one Senate recount and one Governor recount in the last ten years, those of us here in Minnesota know EVERY VOTE COUNTS!! So we can avoid lines and hectic activity on election day by using the absentee ballot. DO IT!!

## **POST CARD PROJECT**

For the second consecutive election cycle, the State Retiree Council, AFL-CIO is reaching out to fellow retirees in key Minnesota House of Representatives Districts with a post card message. The hand-written post cards will urge support for AFL-CIO endorsed House candidates and advise about absentee ballot availability on September 24.

**You can help with this grass roots project. We need volunteers to write a message on about 30 blank post cards. Sample messages and postage will be provided!**

It is our goal to write most of the cards at the Labor 2016 Days of Action on August 17 and September 8 (see posters in this Bulletin for details known at this time). Not everyone has good knees or good hips to participate in a labor door knock on the Days of Action. Not everyone wants to phone retirees. Everyone can write post cards.

**Join the Days of Action. We can also arrange other dates and times. For more information, contact the State Retiree Council at 651-227-7647 or 800-652-9004. Our e mail address is [retirees@mnaflcio.org](mailto:retirees@mnaflcio.org).**

## **NURSES CONSIDER STRIKE**

Minnesota Nurses Association members will hold another strike vote this month. Negotiations with Allina are stalled again and the Nurses Bargaining Committee will recommend rejection of Allina’s latest offer.

**Click here to read more.** <http://www.workdayminnesota.org/articles/nurses-say-allina-talks-are-over-another-strike-possible>.