2023 MN legislative session passes half-way mark

SAINT PAUL — As the Labor Review went to press March 17, the 2023 session of the Minnesota legislature had passed the half-way mark.

Historic legislation already had been passed and signed into law — the clean energy bill — or was on its way to Governor Tim Walz for his signature — the bill to provide free school meals for every public school student.

Other legislation backed by the Minnesota AFL-CIO and affiliated unions was moving forward, with calls to invest a record state budget surplus in the state’s future.

Partisan politics reared its head, however, when Republicans in the Minnesota Senate succeeded in blocking action on a bonding bill that had passed the Minnesota House with bi-partisan support. Similar Republican moves prevented passing a job-creating bonding bill in the 2021 and 2022 sessions, delaying critical investments in public infrastructure across the state.

See pages 6-7 for more on the 2023 legislature.

Letter Carriers food drive returns Saturday, May 13

Volunteers will be needed at local post offices to help collect food, unload trucks

By Steve Share,
Labor Review editor

MINNEAPOLIS — With family food budgets hard-hit by higher grocery prices, this year’s “Stamp Out Hunger” food drive organized by Branch 9 of the National Association of Letter Carriers is going to be extremely important to help stock local emergency foodshelves.

The food drive will take place Saturday, May 13 and NALC Branch 9 is putting out a call for volunteers from local unions and community groups.

The local letter carriers food drive is part of a nationwide food drive organized by NALC — now going on 30 years — and is the largest one-day food drive in the United States.

This year marks the first year since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020 that the food drive will be returning in its traditional manner — with letter carriers picking up non-perishable food items donated by people who live along their mail routes.

“Due to COVID, we haven’t done it for the past three years,” said Latasha Mccaleb, who is Branch 9’s food drive coordinator. Mccaleb, Richfield, also is a full-time letter carrier and seven-year member of Branch 9.

This year, she said, “we’re going back to our grassroots.”

Food collected by letter carriers will be delivered directly to local foodshelves and also will go to local churches which maintain an emergency food pantry. (For several years prior to the COVID pandemic, food collected by the letter carriers food drive was collected at Cub Foods parking lots and delivered by semi-trailers to the Second Harvest Heartland warehouse for distribution to local foodshelves. This year, however, Second Harvest is not participating in the NALC food drive.)

“We’re going to be reaching out to local churches and local foodshelves and also will go to local churches which maintain an emergency food pantry.”

AFL-CIO endorses April 11 bond request by Jordan schools

By Steve Share,
Labor Review editor

JORDAN — If you live in the Jordan school district, mark Tuesday, April 11 on your calendar. That’s the last day to vote on a local referendum to approve a bond request by the Jordan Public Schools.

The Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO has endorsed a “yes” vote. Support also is urged by the local teachers union — Education Minnesota Jordan — and by the Laborers union, as well as by a local citizens committee, “Safe Schools for a Strong Community.”

“The nearly $35 million bond referendum would fund needed improvements for Jordan Elementary School and for Jordan High School, with the bulk of improvements at the elementary school.

“We’re going for essential needs,” said Jordan resident Sara Sievers, who is president of Education Minnesota Jordan and a special education teacher at Jordan High School.

The estimated tax impact for 2024 for a home with a $300,000 market value would be only $27 per month, according to the JORDAN page 5
Take action to help pass legislation for paid family and medical leave

By Chelsie Glaubitz Gabiou, President, Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation

Throughout history, the labor movement has been on the front lines of every fight to improve basic working conditions. From the 40-hour work week, to safe workplace conditions, the labor movement has led the way. Now it is our time to lead again. Here in Minnesota, we have the historic opportunity to expand access to paid family and medical leave to all workers through statewide legislation. After a decade of stalling out, 2023 is the year we can win this legislation in Minnesota. Working Minnesotans need the freedom to care for themselves and the people they love.

Many of us in the labor movement have some access to paid leave through our collectively-bargained contracts. We’ve fought for healthcare, sick leave and family leave provisions to care for our families. In some cases, we’ve sacrificed wages or other working conditions to win those healthcare and leave benefits. But even these hard-fought family and medical leave provisions are not consistent and often include too many cracks for individuals to fall through.

And, outside of the labor movement, broad sectors of workers across industries have little to no access to any paid leave benefits.

By enacting a paid family and medical leave policy in Minnesota, every worker will have access to these benefits. Outside of labor unions, broad sectors of workers across industries have little to no access to any paid leave benefits. Under the proposed legislation (House File 2, Senate File 2), paid family and medical leave will be administered statewide through existing payroll services and fees. It will allow for partial wage replacement for up to 12 weeks for medical leave. It will give room for our unions to enhance our existing leave benefits.

To get this legislation across the finish line, we need all workers to weigh-in. We all have stories about times when we have needed to care for ourselves or for others in our family.

I have my own stories. I’ve used paid leave to care for myself and my newborn children. I’ve used paid leave to care for my husband after he had critical open-heart surgery.

Others have used paid leave to care for aging parents, for mental health care, or for precious time to welcome adopted children.

Contact your legislator and tell them you want paid family and medical leave for all Minnesotans. And share your personal story with them.

The MRLF and Minnesota AFL-CIO are part of a broad coalition — Minnesotans for Paid Family and Medical Leave — which includes unions, nonprofit community organizations, and faith-based organizations.

For more information about the proposed legislation:
PaidLeaveMN.org.
To take action:
aflcio.mn/paidleave

MRLF endorses union member Tony McGarvey for Brooklyn Park City Council special election

Primary election is scheduled Tuesday, May 9

MINNEAPOLIS — Delegates to the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO voted March 8 to endorse long-time union member Tony McGarvey in a special election for Brooklyn Park City Council.

McGarvey will face two other candidates in a non-partisan primary election coming Tuesday, May 9 to fill a vacancy in one of the two seats for the Brooklyn Park City Council’s West District.

The top two vote-getters will advance to the special election Tuesday, August 8.

Early voting for the primary election will be available March 24-May 8. In-person early voting will take place Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Brooklyn Park City Hall, 5200 85th Ave. N. Voters also may request a mail-in ballot.

McGarvey, 55, is a 17-year resident of Brooklyn Park and lives in the Lakeland Park neighborhood.

He is a 21-year member of Minneapolis Painters and Tapers Local 386. He worked 13 years in the field before becoming a union organizer.

Since 2017, McGarvey has worked as director of government affairs for International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 82.

Following the March 8 MRLF endorsement vote, McGarvey thanked the MRLF delegates meeting at the United Labor Centre. “This endorsement means the world to me,” he said.

McGarvey recalled how nearly 21 years ago — in June 2002 — he took an oath in the very same meeting room when he was sworn in as a new member of Painters Local 386. Growing emotional, McGarvey said, “it was a moment that changed my life and my family’s life forever.”

For many years, McGarvey has participated in the MRLF’s candidate screening process as a member of the MRLF’s Committee On Political Education (COPE). He told delegates March 8 that it was very different experience for him to be sitting on the other side of the table.

ENDORSED page 10
March 25: Worker center CTUL brings back annual pancake brunch fundraiser

MINNEAPOLIS — Worker center CTUL brings back its annual pancake brunch fundraiser Saturday, March 25 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St., Minneapolis.

Join with CTUL members, community members, and labor union supporters to enjoy a pancake brunch, support CTUL’s work, and build community.

CTUL — the Center for Workers United in Struggle — is a worker-led organization where workers organize, educate, and empower each other to fight for a voice in their workplaces and in their communities.

Tickets are free for CTUL members.

For other supporters, tickets begin at $10 and up.

For more information about CTUL, visit ctul.net.

For more information about the event or to purchase tickets online, visit tinyurl.com/ctulpancakebrunch.

To volunteer for the event, contact sof@ctul.net.

April 11: How university graduate employees organized, struck and won at University of CA

SAINT PAUL — In November 2022, some 48,000 graduate student employees went on strike across 10 campuses of the University of California system. Organized by the United Auto Workers, they stayed on strike for five weeks and reached a first contract in mid-December.

The East Side Freedom Library will present a program discussing the organizing campaign, strike and wins Tuesday, April 11 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. The free program will be online via Zoom.

University of California graduate student employees will discuss what their experiences can teach other workers.

They will be part of a panel discussion featuring graduate student workers from campuses across the country.

Their strike was the largest strike in the history of U.S. higher education and is part of an upsurge in graduate employee organizing nationwide, including at the University of Minnesota.

The panel will be moderated by labor scholar and activist Ruth Milkman, Professor of Sociology at the City University of New York’s Graduate Center.

For more information, or to get the Zoom link, visit eastsidefreedomlibrary.org/events.

April 13: Fundraising dinner to benefit Union Sportsmen’s Alliance’s conservation projects

SAINT PAUL — The Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council will host a fundraising dinner to benefit the local conservation projects of the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance. The event will be Thursday, April 13 from 5:30-9:30 p.m. at IBEW Local 110, 1330 Conway St., Suite 110, in St. Paul.

Individual tickets are $75 per person and include a one-year membership in the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance.

Table sponsorships and other underwriting opportunities are available.

Individuals should RSVP by April 10 to Jennifer Hathaway, 651-287-9999, or jhathaway@mntrades.org.

April 21-23: MN Orchestra performs score for ‘Star Wars: The Force Awakens’ in concert

MINNEAPOLIS — Making “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” even more thrilling, the Minnesota Orchestra will perform the film’s score live in concert with a screening of the 2015 film.

Performance times include: Friday, April 21 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, April 22 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, April 23 at 2:00 p.m.

The members of the Minnesota Orchestra are members of Twin Cities Musicians Union Local 30-73.

Sarah Hicks will conduct as the Orchestra performs the score by John Williams.

The performances will run 2-1/2 hours including a 20-minute intermission.

The film is rated PG-13.

For tickets and other information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org/tickets/calendar.
April 28: Minneapolis and St. Paul Building Trades will observe Workers Memorial Day

SAINT PAUL — Local building trades unions will gather at the Workers Memorial Garden on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol Friday, April 28 for a ceremony marking Workers Memorial Day.

The program, which will begin at 11:00 a.m., is sponsored jointly by the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council and the St. Paul Building and Construction Trades Council.

Workers Memorial Day is observed nationwide each year to honor the memory of workers who lost their lives on the job or died from workplace-related illnesses. The day also serves to strengthen calls for improvements in workplace safety standards.

Save the Date: Twins will face Boston Red Sox June 20 for Trades Night at Target Field

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Twins are scheduled to play the Boston Red Sox Tuesday, June 20 — which will be the night for this year’s annual Trades Night at Target Field. Game time is 6:40 p.m.

Prior to the game, the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council — which hosts Trades Night — also tentatively plans its traditional pre-game picnic at the Minneapolis Farmers Market.

More information about ticket availability for the game and picnic will be available in the weeks ahead from the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council.

‘Fare For All’ offers savings of 40 percent on groceries at monthly community pop-up sales

MINNEAPOLIS — Stretch your grocery dollars by visiting a community location for a Fare For All pop-up food sale, which offers discounted grocery packages.

Fare For All offers a savings of 40 percent on grocery items.

Fare For All’s regular offerings include a produce pack for $10, a mini meat pack for $11, a combo produce and mini meat pack for $20, a mega meat pack for $25. Other monthly specials also are available.

Fare For All is open to everyone and has no income requirements.

Cash, credit cards, debit cards, and EBT cards are accepted. Checks are not accepted. No need to call or register in advance — just stop in to shop!

Here is the schedule for April for Fare For All’s sites in the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation’s seven-county region, listed alphabetically by city:

- Anoka, Thursday, April 27, 4:00–6:00 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church, 1601 S. 4th Ave.
- Blaine, Thursday, April 20, 3:00–5:00 p.m., Christ Lutheran Church, 641 89th Ave. NE.
- Bloomington, Friday, April 21, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Ave. So.
- Buffalo, Tuesday, April 11, 4:00–6:00 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church, 1200 Highway 25 South.
- Chaska, Thursday, April 27, 4:00–6:00 p.m., Crown of Glory Lutheran Church, 141 Cardinal St.
- Fridley, Friday, April 21, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Animal Humane Society, 845 Meadow Lane N.
- Hutchinson, Thursday, April 6, 3:30–5:30 p.m., Oak Heights Church, 1398 South Grade Road SW.
- Minneapolis, Friday, April 14, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Laborers Local 563 union hall, 901 14th Ave. NE. (one-half block west of Central Ave. on 14th Ave. NE).
- New Hope, Wednesday, April 12, 3:00–5:00 p.m., Laborers Local 563 union hall, 901 14th Ave. NE. (one-half block west of Central Ave. on 14th Ave. NE).
- Richfield, Tuesday, April 25, 1:00–3:00 p.m., Richfield Community Center, 7000 Nicollet Ave. So.
- St. Louis Park, Wednesday, April 12, 4:00–6:00 p.m., Vista Lutheran Church, 4003 Wooddale Ave. So.

The program, which will begin at 11:00 a.m., is sponsored jointly by the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council.
Food drive: volunteers needed

continued from page 1

food pantries to see if they're willing to accept food," McCaleb said. The goal is for each of Branch 9’s local stations to connect with a local foodshelf.

“It’s a challenge because there are 36 stations,” McCaleb noted.

“We’re looking for volunteers,” she said, who can help with all the logistics: unload carrier trucks at local stations, help collect food along carrier routes, or help bring the food to local foodshelves.

“We could use any help,” McCaleb urged. “Anyone who wants to be involved, we’re excited to work with them in any way.”

“It’s a fun event,” McCaleb said. “Normally, we barbecue at the stations each year” and friends, family, NALC retirees and other volunteers turn-out to help.

The food drive also is looking for sponsors who will help to fund the purchase of printed bags for letter carriers to distribute along their routes to promote the food drive a few days before May 13.

“The food pantries right now really need the support of our food drive,” McCaleb emphasized “The increased [grocery] prices are putting a weight on a lot of families.”

Letter carriers are out in the community six days a week, often talking with residents and seeing community needs first-hand. “We understand, we care,” McCaleb said. “Giving back is at the core of what we do.”

To volunteer, or to become a food drive sponsor, contact the NALC Branch 9 office at 612-781-9858 or contact Latasha McCaleb directly at latasham@branch9nalc.com or 312-221-9817.

Jordan: AFL-CIO endorses ‘yes’ vote on referendum

continued from page 1

school district website (jordan.k12.mn.us).

A link to a tax calculator on the school district website even allows homeowners to learn the estimated tax impact for their individual property.

One of the most important planned improvements for both the elementary school and the high school will be “safe and secure entrances” to better control visitor access, Sievers said.

At the elementary school, other planned improvements include updating a wing of 1970s classrooms, building a six-classroom addition, building a new gymnasium, and creating additional cafeteria space.

Right now, limited cafeteria space means that lunch periods begin as early as 10:50 a.m. and continue as late as 1:05 p.m., with some students eating in classrooms or in multi-purpose rooms, Sievers said.

In addition, a space shortage means that the elementary school has been turning away families who want to enroll their children in pre-K programs.

“We sure would like to not have to turn away any students because of space,” Sievers said.

Adam Hutchens, a local marketing director for the Laborers International Union of North America, sees support for the bond referendum as a win for students, for the community and for workers.

“LIUNA is always looking for ways to support community growth through quality, family-supporting jobs,” he said. “Our members live and work in Jordan and we hope to do our part to help pass the bonding referendum.”

“After the district sought community input for the bonding request, the community members agreed for the need to update the security and safety systems in the schools,” Hutchens noted. “Every child deserves a safe school and with LIUNA members working on the project, they will take pride in ensuring a quality place for students to learn and grow.”

Hutchens reported that LIUNA is working to enlist other trades to support the Jordan bond referendum and welcomed trades volunteers for a coming phonebank. The phonebank will be Wednesday, March 29 from 4:30-7:00 p.m. at the United Labor Centre, 312 Central Ave. SE in Minneapolis.

To volunteer for the phonebank, contact Hutchens at ahutchens@liunagroc.com.

Hutchens added that LIUNA has made a contribution to help cover the cost of a mailer to the community about the proposed improvements.

Investing in local public schools, after all, is about investing in local students and the future of the community. “This is a really exciting opportunity to provide our future community members the environment they need to thrive in,” Jordan teachers union president Sara Sievers said. “I can’t think of a better way to spend our funds.”

Election day voting on the referendum will take place Tuesday, April 11 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the CERC, 500 Sunset Drive, Jordan.

Early in-person voting will be available through April 10 at school district offices, 500 Sunset Drive, Suite 1, weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information: jordan.k12.mn.us
Senate Republicans fail to heed trades’ call to pass bonding bill

At a March 16 rally urging passage of a bonding bill, Laborers Local 563 member Carolyn Wood (at microphone) talked about how her life has changed for the better since she began working as a union laborer. To the right of Woods, looking on, Senator Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul), chief Senate author of the bonding bill, and Representative Fue Lee (DFL-Minneapolis), chief House author.

Proposed bill would hold construction firms accountable for subs’ labor practices

By Michael Moore, editor, Saint Paul Union Advocate

SAINT PAUL — Construction firms in Minnesota would bear greater legal responsibility for the labor practices of their subcontractors under legislation introduced by DFL lawmakers last month.

Building Trades unions and worker advocacy groups say the measure is necessary in the wake of reported abuses on non-union construction sites, most notably the Viking Lakes development in Eagan, where last year 40-plus workers alleged being cheated out of more than $100,000 in combined wages.

Under the proposed Construction Worker Wage Protection Act, tradespeople hired by a subcontractor or labor broker would be empowered to seek unpaid wages from the larger contractors responsible for bringing their boss onto the jobsite.

Advocates say holding so-called “upstream” contractors accountable will create a much-needed incentive to do business with responsible subcontractors. The measure also would give construction firms legal authority to request payroll information from their subcontractors, so they can avoid liability.

“Compliance would finally be incentivized,” the Carpenters union’s Adam Duininck told members of the House Labor Committee during a hearing on the bill March 2.

Minnesota Building Trades unions lobbied to pass the nation’s strongest wage theft legislation four years ago, but Duininck and other labor leaders say the new law has not deterred developers and general contractors, like the Wilf family’s MV Ventures, from turning a blind eye to the “wage-theft model” on their projects.

A report approved by Ramsey and Hennepin county attorneys last year found “rampant wage theft” in the non-union construction industry, estimating that employers in those two counties steal over $3 million in wages each year and divert over $11 million from Social Security and Medicare funds by misclassifying employees as independent contractors or paying in cash.

During the March 2 committee hearing, Alvaro Chavez, with assistance from a Spanish language interpreter, explained to lawmakers how he witnessed the wage-theft model firsthand. After working for several weeks framing the bottom floor of a multifamily development in St. Paul, Chavez and his crew abruptly learned they were being replaced for the project’s next phase.

“They never paid us for the work we had already done,” Chavez said. “When the supervisor of our group called the owner of the company, Strong Framing, who was a subcontractor on this project, he wouldn’t answer the phone.”

Chavez said he and other members of the crew approached the local worker center CTUL for assistance recovering their lost wages. Their first call was to the project’s developer, Yellow Tree.

WAGE PROTECTION ACT page 7
A young girl was proud to catch her first fish!

RUSH CITY — Warm winter weather drew more than 100 youth and their families to East Rush Lake in Rush City Saturday, March 4 for the annual Union Sportsmen’s Alliance Minneapolis Area "Take Kids Ice Fishing Day."

Hosted by the Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council, International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC) Local 9, and a coalition of additional labor unions and other supporters, the free event aimed to introduce the next generation of anglers and conservationists to the joys of ice fishing.

"It was a great day on the lake — by far, the best event we’ve had,” said Dave Morin, an IUEC Local 9 officer and the event organizer. “Every other year, we’ve had freezing rain, negative digits, six inches of snow — every condition except optimal. This year, we had beautiful weather, the kids caught lots of fish, everyone won a prize, and there were tons of smiles."

Morin’s favorite part of the event was seeing a young girl catch her very first fish. “She was showing the perch off to everyone, kissing it, and telling everyone she wanted to put it on the wall. She was so proud,” he said.

Each young angler received a fishing rod and reel to continue to pursue fishing in the future. Fifteen union volunteers from various trades of the Minneapolis Building Trades Council helped the kids get comfortable with their new gear and assisted with setting lines, replacing hooks, drilling new holes, and having a blast.

“My family and I have always had a passion for the outdoors, especially fishing, and to be able to share that with young kids at the event was unbelievable,” said Isaac Stoe, a volunteer and member of IUEC Local 9. “The outdoors is becoming secondary for a lot of people, so the more we can get youth outside enjoying Minnesota’s outdoor resources, the better."

The Minneapolis-area event was part of a series of community-based “Take Kids Fishing Day” events organized through the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance’s Work Boots on the Ground conservation program. Work Boots on the Ground organizes union volunteers to complete projects that improve public access to the outdoors, conserve wildlife habitat, restore America’s parks, and educate and engage youth in the outdoors.

Thanks to the support of local labor unions, Union Sportsmen’s Alliance, Flickabirds Resort, Thorne Bros. Custom Rod and Tackle, Vados Bait & Tackle, Joe’s Sporting Goods, and Rush Lake Improvement Association, the event was completely free to participants, and every child won a prize in the raffles held during lunch.

For more information: unionsportsmen.org

---

Union Sportsmen’s Alliance hosts annual ‘Take Kids Ice Fishing’ event

---

Wage Protection Act: Report finds ‘rampant wage theft’ in non-union construction industry

continued from page 6

They told us they had contracted with U.S. Framing to do the work and we should call them,” Chavez said. “When we called U.S. Framing, they told us they contracted with Strong Framing, the company of the person who was no longer taking our calls.

“None of these companies wanted to take responsibility for paying our wages."

Dan McConnell, president of the Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council, said that responsibility rightly belongs with those with most control over the construction site.

“Managing a project and making sure everybody gets paid is literally what owners pay a general contractor to do,” he said.

But too often, by the time workers like Chavez discover they have been cheated out of their wages, it’s too late to hold their immediate employer accountable, Simon Trautmann, a labor attorney and member of the Richfield City Council, told lawmakers.

“You’ll have the subcontractor who has an LLC with zero assets,” Trautmann said. “That creates a policy problem where there is literally no money and literally nobody (to hold) accountable. This is a business model.”

Members of the House Labor Committee voted to approve measure, House File 1859. Its companion bill, Senate File 1988, so far has passed through two committees.

“The bottom line is if you control the worksite, then you can prevent wage theft,” said Representative Sandra Feist (DFL-New Brighton), the bill’s lead author in the House. “We want to level the playing field so ethical business practices can win the day, and they’re not going to be underbid by unethical subcontractors.”

March 25, 2023 • Minneapolis Labor Review • Page 7
Workday Minnesota labor news website expands focus as Workday Magazine

By Steve Share, Labor Review editor

MINNEAPOLIS — When the Workday Minnesota website launched in 2000 with the support of Minnesota unions, workdayminnesota.org became one of the first-ever online news sources focused on labor news.

What became an award-winning labor news website, produced by the Labor Education Service at the University of Minnesota, in October 2022 expanded its focus and relaunched with a new look and a new name: Workday Magazine.

The new site can be found online at workdaymagazine.org — but if you type workdayminnesota.org into your web browser out of habit, you will be redirected to the new site.

“We’re very much still a Minnesota-based organization,” assured Sarah Lazare, who became Workday Magazine’s new editor last October. “Two of our three staff are based in Minnesota.”

Lazare works remotely, from her home in Chicago, while senior associate editor Amie Stager work out of the Labor Education Service offices at the U of M in Minneapolis.

Lazare came to the Workday Magazine editor’s job from Chicago-based In These Times, an independent monthly magazine where she worked five years as a web editor and reporter. Her experience includes 10 years working full-time in journalism, including at independent media centers.

“I learned a lot about how to do labor reporting and labor editing,” she said.

With a renewed wave of labor organizing nationwide, “there’s a resurgence of labor journalism,” Lazare noted, “but a lot of the journalists are focused on the coasts.”

“There’s a need to have more solid coverage in the midwest,” Lazare said. In her vision for the new Workday, “it felt like an opportunity to have a contribution from the midwest to this resurgence of labor journalism.”

So far, Lazare said, reaction to the new Workday Magazine has been positive. “There have been stories that have had a positive impact,” she said, and Workday Magazine is starting to get a national audience for Minnesota-based stories.

“We always want more feedback and input,” Lazare added.

The new Workday also is publishing stories jointly with partners including In These Times and The American Prospect, an online and print magazine based in Washington, D.C.

When Workday Minnesota launched in 2000 the state’s three labor newspapers — Minneapolis Labor Review, St. Paul Union Advocate, Duluth Labor World — all were publishing about twice a month. Since then, the Labor Review and Union Advocate have cut back to 10 issues per year.

As originally conceived, the Workday Minnesota website sought to provide weekly classes, beginning March 21 for 10 sessions, include:

- Campaign and Organizing Strategies, Tuesdays, 6:00-8:30 p.m.
- Labor in Film, Wednesdays, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

To learn more: newbrookwood.org
AFSCME Council 5: Workers at Science Museum of Minnesota vote to unionize

In voting results announced January 20, workers at the Science Museum of Minnesota in downtown Saint Paul voted to unionize with Council 5 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers (AFSCME).

Museum workers petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for a union election in November 2022. “Workers at the Science Museum of Minnesota have voted overwhelmingly to join together in a union with the AFSCME Council 5 family, calling for dignity and respect for the work they do,” Council 5 executive director Julie Bleyhl said. “In spite of a significant anti-union pressure campaign by Science Museum of Minnesota management, these workers spoke decisively that they see a voice in the workplace, fair pay for a day’s work, dignified paid leave policies, and more.” About 250 Science Museum employees were eligible to participate in the union election. The bargaining unit will bring together a wide range of full-time, part-time and seasonal workers, including scientists, researchers, lab technicians and accounting specialists.

Like other nonprofit workers who have formed unions in recent years, Science Museum employees said they joined together in a union with the AFSCME to “take control of their own destiny,” according to a statement from the museum. “Employees want their voices heard,” said Nicole Dzenowski, political organizer for the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Many workers described their motivation to unionize as a desire to have a voice in decisions that affect their work and their compensation. “It was really important for us to be very conscientious of what we were trying to do, keeping our membership’s best interests in mind, making decisions with a high level of integrity and getting the things we needed right,” said Jessup, who works at the Mill City Museum in Minneapolis.

Parental leave and higher pay were among workers’ top demands. MNHS staff members currently do not have access to paid family leave, and an overwhelming majority of employees are earning wages in the lowest quintile of the pay scale for their positions, regardless of their tenure with the organization.

New longevity-based pay scales in the tentative agreement, Jessup said, would compensate a “significant portion” of the bargaining unit “for their work ethic and for their institutional knowledge.” “We’re just tremendously proud of our members for pushing for these things that they really deserve,” she said. “And we are so grateful to our friends and family and community members and employees past and present.”

AFSCME Council 5 executive director Julie Bleyhl said the contract demonstrates the power of collective bargaining. “These workers’ hard-fought campaign for a fair and equitable first union contract proves the union difference and shows the incredible power of solidarity and direct action while fighting for the dignity and respect that all workers deserve,” Bleyhl said.

AFSCME Local 3173: Minnesota Historical Society workers win gains in first contract

Union members and the Minnesota Historical Society reached a tentative agreement March 8 on a first contract that would raise wages across the board, provide six weeks of paid parental leave and compensate staff members for their longevity with the organization.

The Historical Society’s 250-plus workers voted overwhelmingly to form their union in November 2021, and the three-year contract — reached in the 40th week of bargaining — would deliver progress on several concerns behind the union drive, AFSCME Local 3173 president Molly Jesup said.

“Important for us to be very conscientious of what we were trying to do, keeping our membership’s best interests in mind, making decisions with a high level of integrity and getting the things we needed right,” said Jessup, who works at the Mill City Museum in Minneapolis.

The March 25 meeting will focus on attacks of workers’ rights and key current issues. For more information, contact 612-481-1214 or e-mail graeme@minneapolisunions.org.

If your union retiree group wishes to share your regular meeting information or special announcements, contact the editor at laboreview@minneapolisunions.org or tel 612-715-2667.
Education Minnesota:
Semi-finalists for ‘Teacher of the Year’ include 18 Minneapolis-area teachers

Education Minnesota has released a list of 44 semi-finalists for “Teacher of the Year,” including 18 educators from the seven-county jurisdiction of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation.

An independent selection panel of 21 community leaders chose the semi-finalists from an initial field of 132 candidates from across the state.

The final choice for “Teacher of the Year” will be announced May 7.

The Minneapolis-area semi-finalists come from eight school districts.

From Eden Prairie Schools: Sarah Omernik, PiM Arts High School charter school, English, 9th-12th grade.

From Edina Public Schools: Giovanna Margalli, Cornelia Elementary School Elementary, 4th grade.

From Hopkins Public Schools: Fatum Ali, Hopkins High School, English, 10th-12th grade; Lin Niu, Eisenhower Elementary School, XinXing Academy, 2nd grade; Allyson Wolff, Eisenhower Elementary School, Spanish immersion, 1st grade.

From Minneapolis Public Schools: Amber Amundson, Webster Elementary School, literacy, 5th grade; Chandra Meach, Hmong International Academy, language arts, math, science, 2nd-6th grade.

From Osseo Area Schools: Lance Fredrickson, Oak View Elementary School, elementary education, kindergarten; Jennifer Hairrell, Maple Grove Middle School, Spanish, 7th-8th grade.

From Robbinsdale Area Public Schools: Tatiana O’Donnell, Robbinsdale Spanish Immersion, Spanish, math and science, 5th grade.

From Spring Lake Park Public Schools: Luis Estrada, Park Terrace Elementary School, 4th grade.

From St. Michael-Albertville Public Schools: Josh Mann, St. Michael-Albertville High School, social studies, 9th-12th grade.

IBEW Local 160:
Local 160’s union hall moving to new location in Plymouth

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 160 has purchased a building in Plymouth and, after remodeling, the local will move its offices and union hall there later this spring or early summer.

The address for the new location is 13220 County Road 6, Plymouth, MN 55441 (near the intersection of Interstate 494 and County Road 6 and near the Plymouth water tower).

Kurt Zimmerman, Local 160 business manager/financial secretary, said the move will give Local 160 a more central location within its jurisdiction.

In addition, he said, the two-story building in Plymouth will offer 22,000 square feet, compared to 17,000 square feet at Local 160’s current one-story building in St. Anthony, its home for the past 15 years.

Zimmerman said the first floor of the new location currently is all offices, but remodeling “will open it up to have one big meeting hall.” After remodeling, “all the offices will be upstairs,” he said. Plans include installing an elevator.

“We will not move from our current location until everything is completed,” Zimmerman said.

The new open first floor space will be large enough to accommodate the crowd for Local 160’s annual fall pig roast. Zimmerman noted, “There’s enough space in there to do that.”

Sheet Metal Workers Local 10:
Former business manager Jim Bowman dies

Jim Bowman, a former business manager of Sheet Metal Workers Local 10, died December 9, 2022 at age 71.

Bowman served as Local 10 business manager from 2012-2018. He first won election as business manager in 2012 in a contested election, then won re-election in 2015. In 2018, facing health issues, he chose not to seek re-election.

Prior to serving as Local 10 business manager, Bowman served two-three year terms as a Local 10 business agent, first winning that position in a contested election in 2006.

Bowman grew up in Iowa City, Iowa, the son of a Teamsters union member. He began working as a Sheet Metal apprentice in 1969 with Sheet Metal Workers Local 263 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He moved to Minnesota in 1980 and joined Local 10.

His career as a member of the Sheet Metal Workers union spanned 53 years.

In a 2012 interview with the Labor Review, Bowman said he joined the trade because “I just liked working with my hands.”

Bowman is survived by his wife, two adult children, and five grandchildren.

Sources: Labor Review reporting, Saint Paul Union Advocate reporting, local unions. Next deadline: April 12.

Dee Ann Christensen, 83, retired teacher, MRLF campaign staffer, community activist

“1 love doorknocking,” Christensen told the Labor Review in 2018. “I know I can convince people by first listening… Find core values and then persuade them.”

Calling Christensen “a fierce champion of democracy,” the League of Women Voters of Anoka, Blaine and Coon Rapids in 2022 presented Christensen with its Zilla Way Award.

“She actively worked all of her life to make life better for others,” said her son, David Heslop.

Her family prefers memorials to Fresh Energy, a St. Paul non-profit.
Address Change?
Subscription Instructions?
Please let us know if your address will be changing, if your household is receiving more than one Labor Review, or if you would like to cancel your subscription.
Cut out or photo-copy your mailing label from the front page of the newspaper and mail it to us with your instructions:
Attn: mailing list
Minneapolis Labor Review
312 Central Ave. SE, Suite 542
Minneapolis, MN 55414
No phone calls, please, to report address changes, stop duplicates, or cancel your subscription. Thanks!

Are you on facebook?
‘Like’ the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation…
• News Updates • Action Alerts •
• Links • Photos of Union Events •
www.facebook.com/minneapolisunions

Minneapolis Labor Review
2023 Publication Schedule
The Labor Review will publish 10 issues in 2023. Note: NO issue published in January and NO issue published in June. The publication date normally will be the last Saturday or second to last Saturday of each month.

January
No issue published

May 27
Deadline: May 10
116th Anniversary Issue

September 23
Deadline: September 6

October 21
Deadline: October 4
General Election Issue

November 18
Deadline: November 1
Holiday Shopping Guide

December 16
Deadline: November 29
Holiday Issue

April 29
Deadline: April 12

Next Special Issue:
May 27, 2023 — 116th Anniversary Issue!
Discounted ad rates available
For more information, to suggest a story idea, or to advertise, contact the editor at 612-379-4725 or laborreview@minneapolisunions.org

SAINT PAUL — If you carry a song in your heart and solidarity, too, consider joining the Twin Cities Labor Chorus, which welcomes vocalists of all ages and abilities and voice parts. No audition is necessary to join.
The chorus performs on picket lines, at union rallies and in labor halls across the metro area.
Rehearsals take place the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the Minnesota AFL-CIO, 175 Aurora Ave., St. Paul.
Learn more about the Labor Chorus at twincitieslaborchorus.blogspot.com or e-mail tclaborchorus@gmail.com.
Close vote picks Women Building Success photo contest winners

BROOKLYN PARK — The Women Building Success Photo Contest, now in its fifth year, drew an enthusiastic crowd of about 100 people March 8 to vote on the contest winners at the IBEW Local 292 union hall.

The contest aims to put a spotlight on women who work in the region’s Building Trades unions and their skills.

The contest receives more and more entries each year, reported Jenny Winkelaar, who helps to coordinate Women Building Success and also is the director of workforce and community development for Operating Engineers Local 49.

"The quality of the photos continues to increase as well," she said. "These tradeswomen take great pride in showcasing and exemplifying their craft."

Winkelaar added, "because they know it's going to be an annual event, they will start taking photos throughout the year and submit their favorite ones."

For the first time in the contest, journey workers as well as apprentices were eligible to enter.

The Women Building Success board picked the top three photos in each contest category, with the audience in attendance voting to choose the first place, second place and third place winners.

"It was fun — the votes were tight," Winkelaar said. "We had to count twice and have a third count double-check!"

The contest awarded a total of $1,800 in cash prizes to the first, second and third place winners.

The winners included:

"Me at Work" category
- First place: Kamry Gary, Duluth Carpenters Local 361.
- Second place: Kimbery Lynn, Operating Engineers Local 49.
- Third place: Angela Beseke, Ironworkers Local 512.

"Jobsite" category
- First place: Ashlyn Curtis, Ironworkers Local 512.
- Second place: Emy DeWitt, Laborers Local 563.
- Third place: Hannah Stumpges, Laborers Local 563.

"Tools/Craftsmanship" category
- First place: Melissa Vandal, Operating Engineers Local 49.
- Second place: Amy Grahn, Millwrights Local 548.
- Third place: Rachael Malmer, IBEW Local 110.

The first place winners in this year’s contest, left to right: “Me at Work,” Kamry Gary, Duluth Carpenters Local 361; “Tools/Craftsmanship,” Melissa Vandal, Operating Engineers Local 49; “Jobsite,” Ashlyn Curtis, Ironworkers Local 512.

The first place photos, clockwise from upper left, with notes by the photographers:
- Jobsite, Ashlyn Curtis, Ironworkers Local 512: “The photo was taken in Reading, Minnesota at a Mortenson job site. It’s of a wind turbine and the rotor and blades are being flown down and not yet tripped to land it on the ground before sending up the new rotor and blades and the repower.”
- Me at Work, Kamry Gary, Duluth Carpenters Local 361
- Melissa Vandal, Operating Engineers Local 49: “This photo was taken inside an industrial building while we were grading out the gravel floor!”

For more information: womenbuildingsuccess.org