



Willis Parker learned how much Milwaukeeans, including Mayor Tom Barrett at right, admired his son, Eric, at an emotional remembrance Oct. 1 at the Center of Excellence. **See Page 6.**

Mounted police kept an unneeded eye on dozens of informational pickets urging SABMiller to action at the bargaining table. **See Page 4.**



Anthony Rainey managed a grin, not a glare, at the camera at the moment he discovered he had been voted labor's top community service honoree for the year. His discomfort amused Phil Neuenfeldt, who had been in on the surprise. **See Page 5.**

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(USPS 350-360)

New board, new hope, less money for jobs

By Dominique Paul Noth
Editor, Labor Press

On Sept. 25, in a formal meeting at its new headquarters at 2342 N. 27th St., PIC became WIB. That the new acronym is as short as the old one will spread gratitude among Milwaukee headline writers. But the change is significant more than alphabetical.

Control has shifted from an ineffectual bureaucracy attached to County Executive Scott Walker to a sincerely worried Mayor Tom Barrett, who (unopposed for reelection as we went to press) sees the need and has the power to attack chronic unemployment. Barrett also has the ear of the governor, the clout of federal as well as local experience and an experienced bureaucrat to strategize the fight, CEO Donald Sykes.

So there's finally a new engine under the hood of job development. There is also a new direction that has less to do with press releases than with cooperation, growth and success.



LEFT: Even before the meeting began, the new board was hard at work. Identifiable front to back are Sheila Cochran, John Jorgensen and Ald. Willie Wade.

There is also, sadly, less money immediately at hand, but that's partly what the change is about.

The new 26 member board reflects Barrett's ability to com-

mandeer and to speak with his pleasant bluntness (a technique the Sykes also seems to share) about the need to get moving.

Its members have been told that the new Milwaukee Area

Workforce Investment Board (hence WIB) will not serve as a vanity outlet but has to aggressively cooperate and find new sources of money among business, labor, academia and government.

Sykes quietly insists in all his interviews that the WIB will not simply go hat in hand begging from existing government programs — which explains the choice as new board president of Dan Bader, also president of the Helen Bader Foundation, which has pledged half a million to new jobs in small business and \$75,000 to fund Sykes' salary.

But, as Sykes noted with a sly sidelong glance at the mayor at the initial meeting, "We're going to seek funds from everywhere, including City Hall."

Not just foundations and grants are in his sightlines — so are business, labor and new public money coordinated for best ideas and best results.

Nor should Milwaukee expect WIB to operate as the old Private Industry Council did, creating and managing its own projects rather than opening up to the best ideas in the entire community and allowing a freedom of decision for proven innovation and experience.

The new WIB will not be about branding its own executives and programs, Sykes indicated in an interview, but about pushing policy and direction, mentoring and monitoring the most efficient use of money and the most immediate needs for the workforce. In other words, ideas and action welcome.

The board accepted new rules or new emphases to reflect that determination.

The 50 observers at its first meeting suggest that WIB, unlike PIC, should have no trouble gathering a quorum, but recognizing how busy all these leaders can be, Sykes doesn't want to delay action. So now one-third of the board, rather than half, constitutes a quorum.

The board created more officers, special committees and funding policies, barriers to nepotism or board influence on vendors — and streamlined check-writing and auditing.

PIC is in effect defunct, unless it re-creates itself as a vendor to the new board or makes mischief with its county connections.

(One such moment seemed to occur when a county board committee belatedly recognized

Board continued Page 10

The sewers of privatization

By Dominique Paul Noth
Editor, Labor Press

Famously over-downloaded on the Internet, comedian Jim Gaffigan has long pondered: "How did we get to the point where we're paying for bottled water?"

"That must have been some weird marketing meeting over in France. Some French guy's sitting there, like 'How dumb do I zink ze Americans are? I bet you we could sell zose idiots water.'"

As funny as the routine is,

the French have long had the last laugh.

It turns out that they own America's municipal water — in dozens of states and major cities like Milwaukee.

In fact, the only privateers bidding for new wastewater contract rights with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) are French companies — and one is seeking a renewal of its 10-year contract. United Water Services is actually a division of Suez, partly owned by the

French government and larded with foreign investors who profit from Milwaukee residents.

This 1998 privatization agreement with a foreign-based corporation is another example of the quiet selling of America.

Most Milwaukeeans don't know about the French connection and it would certainly horrify the procession of Milwaukee "sewer Socialists" who represented clean local government for a half century and influenced a

MMSD continued Page 7

Story on artist Agnew wins top honor for Labor Press

During an unusual three-day gathering in New Orleans Oct. 18-20, the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) expects to make technological news on the Internet in advancing the plight of the city. But it also made some Milwaukee news as we were going to press.

At the major awards ceremony that closed the event, ILCA presented its top honor, the Max Steinbock Award for journalism excellence, to the AFL-CIO Milwaukee Labor Press and Editor Dominique Paul Noth. It was the

first time a story about an art work won this top prize for advancing the labor cause. The story was last December's article on Milwaukee artist Terese Agnew.

The front page article with photos — archived at www.milwaukeeelabor.org under the Labor Press link — was titled "Artist Agnew Sews Up New York."

It chronicled her labor-oriented career and the tapestry work that union members contributed clothing labels for, that international worker groups acclaimed for the attention it brought to sweatshops, and that a New York museum will make part of its permanent collection starting next fall.

At the convention, members of ILCA — which is the largest group of labor journalists in North America — took to the streets with keyboards, audio and video equipment and IT experts to create news stories updating the situation in New Orleans post Hurricane Katrina.

Guided by journalist and technology veterans, they created a demonstration project of how a labor media center can operate. To access the results, unfolding as deadlines passed, visit <http://neworleanslabormedia.org/>. Noth was eager to be part of

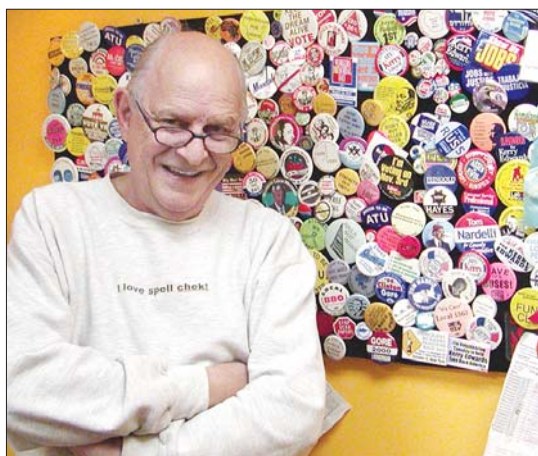
the labor media center and to accept the prize in person. The Steinbock award is the only one — out of hundreds given — in which the winner is expected make an acceptance speech.

But while he is fully on the mend from a summer medical incident, his physicians vetoed several days of slogging around New Orleans.

A collegial solution emerged. The secretary-treasurer of ILCA, Michael Kuchta, was Noth's longtime colleague at The Milwaukee Journal and also a voluntary departee when the Journal and the Sentinel merged in 1995. He not only informed Noth about the award but was happy to read Noth's remarks to the delegates.

In his speech, Noth pointed out that the prize had touched him unusually deeply, even though in his five decades of journalism he is no stranger to honors. But he was particularly glad for Agnew and for recognition by the judges how the power of art can, without haranguing or invective, touch people so deeply and advance the causes of humanity and labor.

The Labor Press also received two other major awards in ILCA's annual media contest.



Milwaukee Labor Press Editor Dominique Paul Noth

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Calendar

Wednesday, October 31
MCLC Executive Board
2 p.m., 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, November 7
Delegate Meeting
Milwaukee County Labor Council AFL-CIO
Nominations for board vacancies
6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Thursday, November 8, 2007
Panel on Economic Justice and Capital Returns
7 p.m. Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St.

Saturday, November 10, 2007
Safety and Health: WisCOSH fall conference.
Focus on Worker Compensation and Family Leave Act.
8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.
\$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.
Includes breakfast and dinner.

Wednesday, November 28
MCLC Executive Board
2 p.m., 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, December 5
Delegate Meeting
Milwaukee County Labor Council AFL-CIO
Election of two board members.
6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

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All Union Built employees are technology experts and union members!

Union ties remain

For worried unions, it turned out to be simply new clothes for an old friend. But on Sept. 28, several people attending union events or about to be were startled when the Sheraton Four Points hotel across Howell Ave. from Gen. Mitchell Field became very visibly the Wyndham Hotel.



The switch in signage was remarkably fast and made heads snap as longtime Milwaukeeans drove by on Howell Ave. -- particularly if they remembered some unhappy downtown history that made the Wyndham name uncomfortable for Milwaukee labor.

Not this time, though. The owners of the hotel remain the same and the UNITE HERE Local 122 workers there -- in fact, all the workers there -- are secure, reported Sam Gallo, business agent for Local 122.

Replacing the Four Points by Sheraton logo, the new name is formally Wyndham Milwaukee Airport Hotel & Convention Center. Right now the hotel has 508 guest rooms, and more than 55,000 square feet of meeting, banquet, and convention hall space (more square footage of banquet and meeting space than any other Wisconsin hotel, the owners boast).

It also has four noted dining spots and drinking holes (America's House of Steaks, America's Lounge, Scooter's Sports Bar, and Courtyard Restaurant) and an executive chef who will continue with his union staff, Axel Dietrich. Under the Wyndham label the hotel also announced major renovations and refurbishings over the next two years.

The memory twitch dates back to when the now Intercontinental Hotel on Kilbourn Ave. -- the north attachment of the Pabst Theater and the Milwaukee Rep -- was known as the Wyndham. For years, it made the widely distributed national AFL-CIO's "don't patronize" list because of its opposition to unionization.

Then the hotel was bought by the Marcus Corp., which has a long relationship at the Hilton and the Pfister with Local 122. Alas, to date, the one Marcus hotel Downtown that remains non-union is the Intercontinental, though efforts continue by Local 122.

Going with the Wyndham brand near the airport deals with such elements as marketing for the former Four Points, which depends on a lot of union friendly conventions and gatherings (photos at right).

Among the events centered recently at the Four Points was the first-ever Wisconsin conference by LERA (Labor Employee Relations Association). Held in September, it assembled notable names (Mayor Barrett and 9to5 founder Ellen Bravo) plus a panel of experts (right) digging hard into the future need for skilled construction workers.



Turnout was not a large as expected despite the presence of Robert Battista (below), the Republican chairman (departing in December) of the National Labor Relations Board. The smaller attendance allowed him to adroitly duck answering any criticisms of substance or questions of conscience.

Events of union interest are likely to continue unchanged at the newly named Wyndham.



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Miller deals with Coors while its workers wait

Seeking to light a fire under contract negotiations at Miller Brewery, the Milwaukee County Labor Council sent out an e-mail call Oct. 1 for members to join informational picketing by Brewery Workers Local 9 on Oct. 4.

Members of a dozen unions responded to the midday event, clogging the sidewalks outside Miller's tourist center. Miller executives called in the mounted police to watch, but there were amiable exchanges among all. The police, after all, are union members who certainly understand contractual concerns.

Local 9's three-year contract expired in early August but they have continued under those outdated terms while facing little response in months of negotiations. In a walking interview during the informational picketing, Local 9 President Harry Shayhorn pointed out that the company

seemed to have nothing to gain, except consumer skepticism, by moving so slowly.

Oct. 9 brought other reasons to actually speed things up and keep the Miller name positive among customers. The brewer is becoming part of a massive new merger.

South African Breweries announced an operational merger of Miller with Coors — each retaining brands for now but combining the nation's second and third largest breweries and directly threatening the dominance of No. 1, Anheuser-Busch.

SABMiller and MolsonCoors will each own half of the new venture and expect in few years to save half a billion dollars in operational costs.

All six Miller breweries in North America are unionized. But that's not true for Coors, headquartered in growingly Democratic but still union-resistant



Local 9 President Harry Shayhorn finds sympathy from OPEIU's Jan Wilson, who has walked the same walk at Miller.

Colorado. That raises some troublesome future issues for UAW Local 9 as well as OPEIU Local 35, whose members serve at the corporate headquarters, and other Miller unions.

The joint venture must clear anti-trust regulators and won't be completed until next year — and it is still evaluating where to put its corporate control — here or in Golden, Col.

Previous issues and mergers in the beer industry have not been kind to Milwaukee. Miller has lost headquarters jobs before — in the mid-1990s because of a swoon in sales and three years ago after SAB purchased the operations. It is unavoidable that the new merg-

er will chop at least administrative jobs. The "where" is undecided. And there will be a learning curve for both the unions and for executives used to non-union attitudes.

Miller here has 500 workers in Local 9 and about 100 in Local 35 as part of a rough total of 1,700 employees. About 800 are in the corporate offices.

Peter Coors will be chairman of MillerCoors and SAB CEO

Graham Mackay will be vice chairman. More of concern to Milwaukee workers, the new president, Leo Kiely, comes from MolsonCoors but intends to retire in a few years, and the successor being touted is Miller President Tom Long.

Local 9 is part of United Auto Workers and has been an active supportive affiliate of the MCLC, whose members were glad to return the favor Oct. 4 as part of the tourist center event.

"They were here for us, now we're here for them!" shouted Jan Wilson during the informational picketing, laughing that this time the weather was much nicer than the bitter cold her union experienced.

She was among the "Miller women" in OPEIU Local 35 who battled hard to retain a good pension, and she recalled how Local 9 had marched by their side during the troubles.

Among those spotted marching were members of the state AFL-CIO, USW, UFCW, AFSCME, IBEW and UAW at Master Lock and Delphi.

Fun and food will help APRI

It's great when a fund-raiser for a good cause also provides fun and food. Such are the plans for 5:30 p.m. to midnight Nov. 30, a Friday, at Laborers Union Hall, 6310 W. Appleton Ave., benefiting the Milwaukee Chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI)

Along with dancing, music, card games and raffles, APRI has pledged meals — both coming and going. Dinner inside, included with the \$15 admission, offers catfish or perch, spaghetti, bread, coleslaw, dessert and two tickets for wine or beer. Carryout dinners are available from 6 to 8 p.m. for \$10.

For more information, contact Chris Harris at (414) 397-9464 or Rosemarie McDowell, (414) 444-5114.

MTEA gets a contract focused on old slogan: Attract and Retain

As you read this, Milwaukee Public School teachers are ratifying a new two-year contract negotiated by their bargaining team and approved by their executive board. After ratification, which is likely, the contract has to be approved on Oct. 30 by the MPS board.

The big news, noted Tom Morgan, the new executive director of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association (MTEA), was the successful push to improve teacher recruitment and retention.

The contract for 2007-2009 offers new rules and standards to provide flexibility in these areas, including an earlier interview process that makes Milwaukee schools competitive with suburban districts that traditionally picked teachers earlier. It also opens up low-achieving schools to a broader range of candidates and allows all manner of mentoring.

These are all areas the union wanted to improve. "Every teacher wants someone good teaching next door," noted Morgan.

There were few changes in the benefit packages and a basic 2.5% a year pay raise. Improvements in school safety and keeping teachers in touch before and after suspensions were also a big part of the package.



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United Way must-do, and unions are can-do

Jon Hammes, CEO of Hammes Co., and Tim Sullivan, CEO of Bucyrus International, the co-chairs of the United Way Community Campaign, both spoke at the Sept. 20 Labor Kick-off Rally at the Center of Excellence.

If that is not enough to signal the importance of labor to community giving, consider that by Sept. 20 virtually every union in the community had endorsed the campaign and 24 had already met or surpassed last year's treasury gifts.

No wonder the notables were out in force praising the labor commitment. Among them were the chairman of the United Way board, Vince Martin, and the organization's president, Sue Dragic.

Also laying out the facts and stressing the needs were the co-chairs of the Labor Participation Board for United Way of Greater Milwaukee, who offered up the amusing but revealing "Phil and Sheila Show" (See Page 9).

But one participant up on the stage was about to be thrown for a loop, a surprise carefully orchestrated by chief organizer Annie Wacker, vice president of the Milwaukee County Labor



Everyone except Anthony Rainey (left) was in on the secret on the patio outside the Center of Excellence. From left, BIG STEP and WRTP director Earl Buford, and the secretary-treasurers of the state and Milwaukee AFL-CIO federations, Phil Neuenfeldt and Sheila Cochran. For Rainey's later reaction, see Page 1.

Something unexpected is happening to the Center of Excellence. See Page 11.

Council and AFL-CIO field mobilizer.

While her colleague Jay Reinke secretly filled in the details for the assembled dignitaries, Wacker helped gull and sucker the recipient of the annual

Werner J. Schaefer Community Service Award.

Her job was particularly difficult because she serves closely with Anthony Rainey, chair of the Community Service Committee that arranges the event.

The flabbergasted Rainey was completely fooled and had barely recovered by the time the president of his UAW Local 469 at Master Lock, Bradley Schwanda, presented the glass trophy.

Rainey is indeed quite a story -- even beyond his service to his own local, first as steward and today as recording secretary and chief coordinator and mentor of its skilled production training and apprenticeship programs. The

young people he's helped invoke his name as they complete education courses or move a step up the union ladder.

He has also served UAW's women's and civil rights committees and its community action program.

His stunning and sad photos of inner city homes and businesses have graced labor events such as the African American Summit. He's on the executive board of the

Faith Community for Worker Justice, past parish council president at Emmaus Lutheran Church, and committed to charity work at Clark Street School. And he is a delegate to the Milwaukee County Labor Council.

So astonished and then humbled was Rainey by the award that his carefully prepared closing remarks flew out the window as he endured hugs and shoulder punches from the many union and business people he works with.

Campaign has to succeed

The Community Campaign that kicked off in late August and ends Dec. 4 seeks to raise more than \$42 million for United Way. It has taken on a sense of crisis as governments fail to pass budgets, safety nets shrink and the hard-hearted dominate the airwaves.


United Way and its member agencies have had to develop more services and special giving categories to help young and old and seek innovations to break the cycle of poverty.

The speakers at the Labor Kick-off Rally cited just some of the statistics for greater Milwaukee that add such urgency to the situation.

- Milwaukee ranks as the 12th most impoverished city in the nation - one in four are living in poverty and of those, one in three is unemployed.
- Milwaukee ranks fourth in the US for children living in poverty.
- Milwaukee children lag far behind state averages in their ability to read and write at an age-appropriate level by third grade.
- 50% of Milwaukee's inner-city males are unemployed.
- Milwaukee has the seventh highest rate of births to teens in the country. 85% of teen births in Wisconsin are paid for through tax money (the national average for cost per mother is \$79,320); 70% of teen mothers never finish high school and 71% of babies born to teen mothers are fathered by men over the age of 20.
- There are more than 27,000 incidents of domestic violence reported to Wisconsin law enforcement agencies every year and nearly all abusers are repeat offenders.
- For the first time in five years violent crime committed by juveniles went up.
- Nearly one-third of adults 65 years and older in Milwaukee County live alone and 39% are living with a disability.



Among the packed house at the Labor Kick-off was (far right) Brad Schwanda, president of UAW Local 469 who was about to present Rainey his award.




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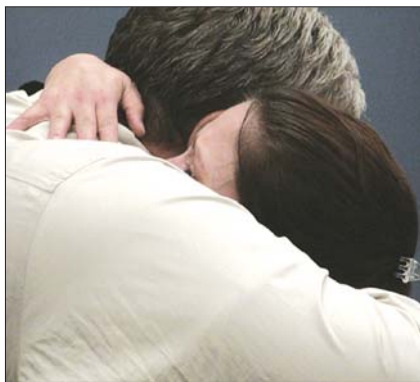



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Labor Press photos: Dominique Paul Noth



Elegies for Eric

Mayor Tom Barrett was the first of many to note that two words drove Eric Parker's concepts for workforce development: Hope and Dignity.

ABOVE LEFT: Master of ceremonies Phil Neuenfeldt, whose couch had often served as Eric's home in Milwaukee, had to comfort his daughter, Jennifer, who had just spoken of the loss of a dear friend.

ABOVE MIDDLE: Anna, one of the nieces whom Eric believed it was an uncle's duty to spoil, sang along with the music at the Oct. 1 remembrance at the Center of Excellence.

And what a crowd it was (**above right**) of kin, friends and partners crowding the center to capacity.

Among them (**front right**) was Roberta Gassman, secretary of the state Department of Workforce Development, whose sadness was palpable as she spoke.

Several speakers marveled

how Wisconsin leaders - and 4,000 residents now employed in good jobs -- could cite Eric's tireless efforts as the executive director of Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) -- yet throughout the Midwest, along with New Jersey and Pennsylvania, many other states also claimed him as a leading force.

AT RIGHT: "He was the Johnny Appleseed of ideas," said Bob Giloth, who handles some \$50 million in economic workforce funding for the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

NEXT RIGHT: Tony Baez, another close friend, almost channeled the former president of the MATC describing how infuriated that prez was with Eric's proposals and unshakable demeanor -- before accepting Eric's ideas exactly as presented.

FARTHEST RIGHT: Former assistants such as Catrina Crane described how Eric never held them back from bigger opportunities -- and how many



only later found out he had arranged such opportunities.

The event, at a training center Parker stubbornly helped create, was supposed to be a celebration, as the crowd was frequently reminded by Neuenfeldt, the secretary-treasurer of the state AFL-CIO.

Mostly it was, as laughter rang out at the anecdotes, poems were read, music and video of



his life played and unexpected testimonies arrived at the microphone or mingled in the crowd afterward.

But also understandably, jaws clenched and tears flowed at the tragedy of his collapse and death just before Labor Day -- and at age 45.

His family -- led in the remembrance by parents Willis and Linda (**left**) was the bravest at absorbing the blow. But several in the room noted that what had been cut off in its prime was a dynamic architect for America's workforce growth.



Official notice

Nominations for all local offices will take place at the 10 a.m. membership meeting Sunday, Nov. 11, at 12034 W. Adler Lane, West Allis, for USW Local 2-209 (Harley-Davidson).

Open for the next three years are all executive board offices (president, vice-president, financial secretary, recording secretary, trustees #1 to #3, sergeant-at-arms, guide/guard) and six persons to fill the bargaining committee.

Members in continuous good standing for two years are eligible but must be at the meeting (or have a letter on file) to accept.

If necessary -- more than two nominations for any executive board office and more than 12 for bargaining committee -- a primary election will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 12.

After a primary (if needed) reduces the numbers as indicated above, final election will be held Wednesday, January 16, 2008.

Locations and times for both primary and general elections have been arranged at Harley worksites. Dec. 12 and Jan. 16:

Distribution Center cafeteria, 10000 S. Franklin Dr., 5 a.m.-noon, 2-5 p.m.

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Pilgrim Rd. Employee Information Center, W156 N9000 Pilgrim Rd., 5-9 a.m., 1-5 p.m.

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Andy Voelzke,
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MMSD

From Page 1

nationwide trend that public utilities were too important to turn over to privateers.

From public transit to public education and from water to sewer, such basic services needed either direct government control or strong supervisory public commissions, to save the average citizen from indiscriminate gouging.

The principle still exists but contracting games have weakened the concept. It's hard to believe that citizens don't recognize that private companies live on profits and somewhere they're going to find an edge when they handle public money. Today, the profit margin has not only climbed, it's fled our shores.

Meanwhile, from Hoboken to Boise, seven million US customers in dozens of states rely on Suez for research and United Water for service. Through water and/or wastewater facilities it owns and operates — or through private-public partnerships as in Milwaukee — United Water outsources management, runs treatment centers, handles customer service and billing, oversees leases acquisitions, financing and construction, and ships workers around the country to shore up workforces in other states.

We the taxpayer and the recipients of sewer and water charges are paying for it, and daily news about failures or setbacks in operations scream out there should be a better way.

Opposing the current setup is not xenophobia (fear of foreigners). The city's workers may sound mad at the French, but the French were right about Iraq and are right about the benefits of red wine and garlic. (They are also pretty supportive of unions in their home country.)

It just feels wrong that American tax dollars and Milwaukee

sewer charges should be lining pockets along the Champs-Élysées.

Moreover, foreign owners are under less local pressure to protect American services and workers — and probably under more pressure to obfuscate on profit margins.

Public employees fight for good wages and benefits, which elevate the local economy, but they can only prove their worth in



quality and efficiency. And they speak out about the safety of their own workers and the health of the entire citizenry, because they not only live here but also owe the US their allegiance.

Privateers seek to reward distant shareholders, so they can be pretty silent and evasive about problems.

Frankly, their quickest road to profit from these once public services is by cutting corners on wages and benefits, by delaying maintenance, by shirking on health concerns and safety. If commissioners only look at the promise of initial savings and not the long-term costs and consequences, the privateers usually win. Milwaukee's living standards and tax base erode even as it becomes more difficult to improve infrastructure.

These are among the reasons why public policy advocates — not all union-friendly — routinely point out that privatizing such things as municipal water and wastewater frankly smells. And recent news stories support that conclusion.

Before 1998, MMSD itself and not its contractor could be held responsible for this essential public service. But look what happens today when things go wrong. Editorials may pontificate, but MMSD and United



Union protests against re-privatizing MMSD were already out in force for Laborfest.

Water can dodge accountability by blaming each other.

Before 1998, all who worked for MMSD were accountable only to the public, not private investors, for this vital operation.

Unions, public and private, are urging a reversal of the current situation and demanding a truly public policy

They want to return the MMSD to public workers and public accountability — and not to re-contract with foreign-owned privateers when United Water's 10-year contract expires next February.

Delegates of the MCLC have passed a resolution to that effect and AFSCME District Council 48, representing municipal workers, is leading the charge to make

this private-public partnership simply public.

AFSCME leaders recently met with Mayor Tom Barrett and are calling for citizens to pressure the MMSD commissioners. This is hardly a city issues. These commissioners cover suburbs from Oak Creek to River Hills

and include elected officials such as state Reps. Pedro Colon and David Cullen.

Directly affected is AFSCME's Local 366, whose members work for MMSD and (for now) United Water Services and can provide examples of harm to taxpayers and danger and disrespect for workers under the current situation. In fact, the local has been waiting for a new contract for over a year.

Local President Rick Stencel spoke out at the October delegates meeting of the MCLC.


He warned everyone not to underestimate or get befuddled by the complexities of the issues and invited the concerned and angry citizens to learn more by writing local366@gmail.com and by contacting the MMSD commission.

The chance to speak out at the public hearing on the operations and maintenance budget arrives at 6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5, at MMSD's main office, 260 W. Seeboth St.

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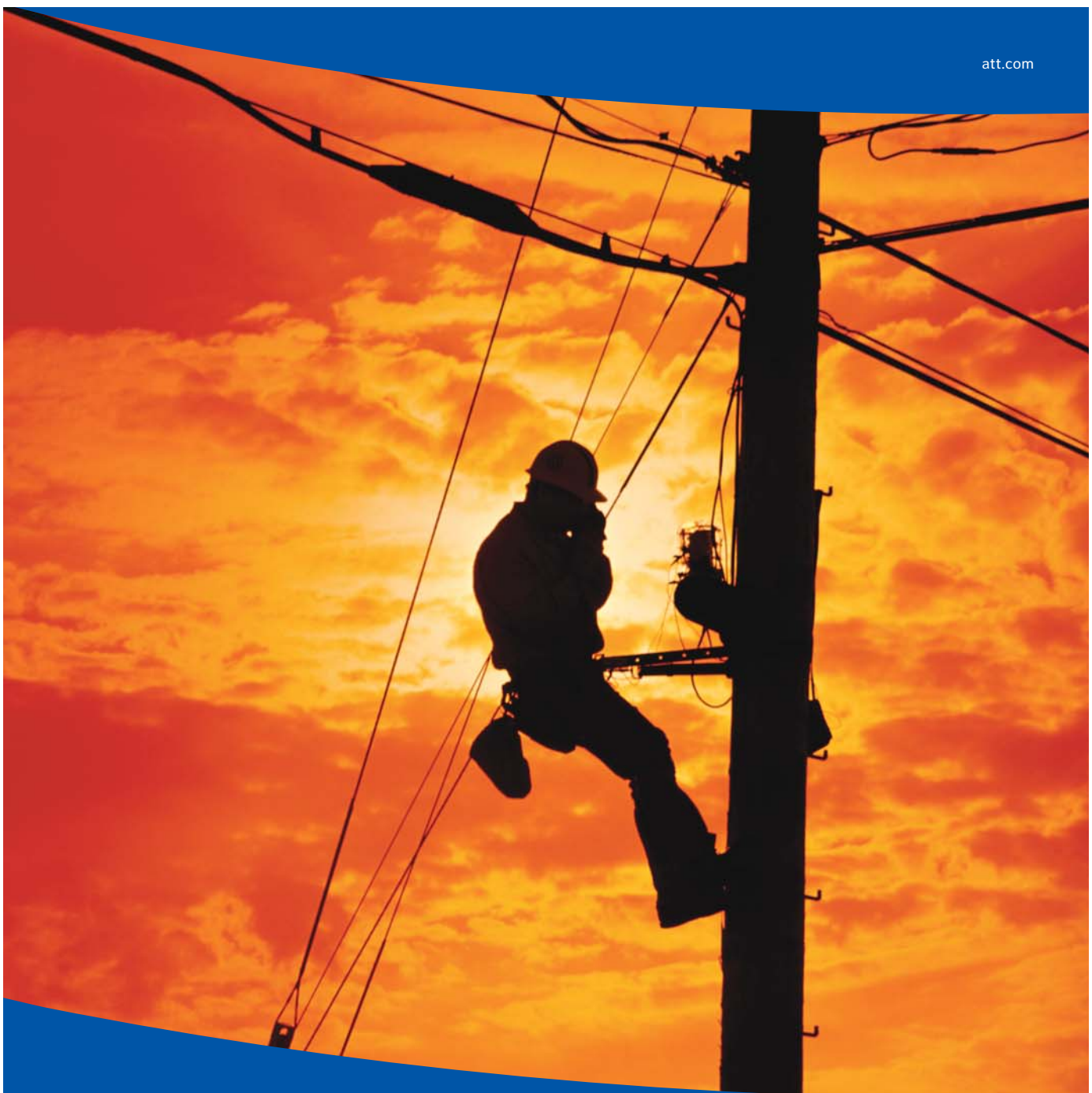
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Delegates get hints of change

Among the coming attractions promised to delegates at the Milwaukee County Labor Council in October were:

- A larger community presence, even as the council welcomed new affiliates.

- Instead of a defense crouch, the MCLC plans to grow unions -- not lament the shrinking numbers of the recent past.

So there will be serious discussions and plans with the MCLC's already larger number of affiliates (now about 140) about ways of expanding the council's influence, numbers and motivational power.

- A nomination and election process to fill two sudden vacancies on the executive board.

- A pledge to let the delegates share in the performance that amused and instructed attendees at the United Way Labor Kick-off Rally (Page 5).

With the last, though, the jesters at the MCLC and state AFL-CIO have not yet settled on the appropriate billing order.

Should this be the Phil and Sheila Show?

Or the Sheila and Phil Show?

It depends, said one joker, "on whether you believe in women first or children first."

In either case, the secretaries-treasurers of the state AFL-CIO and the MCLC, Phil Neuenfeldt and Sheila Cochran, have pledged to repeat their PowerPoint repartee in the near future, which spells out for the audience in tag-team fashion how deeply unions are involved in workforce development projects and social services -- often in ways hidden or ignored by the mass media.

The meeting also extended a welcome to MCLC's newest member -- the 280 machinists at Ladish and (through a lodge merger) Milwaukee Cylinder.

IAMAW Lodge 1892, whose offices are in the same community as the plants they work at, Cudahy, has heard the call of strength through numbers.

Just in the previous month the MCLC added AFGE Local 3, 360 federal government employees at the VA hospitals and clinics, several of whom marched in the Laborfest parade.

With these two locals and some improvements by existing affiliates, per-capita membership in the MCLC has jumped in the past two months by nearly 1,200.

But Cochran warned delegates to report numbers accurately -- and to make sure they were getting full value for their per-caps.

The freebie many are missing is home-delivery of the AFL-CIO Milwaukee Labor Press -- a nationally recognized prize winner, see Page 2 -- which is "an automatic part of your per-cap," noted Cochran. Independent subscribers, a growing number of the readership, pay \$12 a year for the newspaper with home-delivery, more than an individual per-cap to the MCLC.

Yet it is likely that because of outdated rolls or carelessness in updating rosters, thousands of members of the MCLC are not receiving the newspaper.

Deceased members, or those who have left their union, clog the delivery route even while hundreds of addresses fail to get to the MCLC.

She urged delegates to push their officers and locals to refresh and update their membership rolls and send the corrections to Lynnda Guyton at the MCLC offices, 633 S. Hawley Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53214, 414-771-7070.

"If you are facing a conflict at work, or stalled bargaining, or members who are not getting the newspaper, we can't help if we don't know," she said.

"Sometimes we don't move as fast as folks like with limited staff, but trust me, if we know we will act."

Cochran also revealed that the MCLC board is actively discussing and will share with members concepts about doubling the number of delegates active in monthly

meetings. This will also increase the people getting the word out about campaigns to support fellow unions or elect public officials.

Aside from the obvious -- spring and fall elections in 2008 -- the need for family supporting jobs will result in many actions by the MCLC over the next year, and here, too, the cause of justice needs the strength of numbers.

The resignations on the executive council came as something of a surprise.

One was a move from a union job (Carolyn P. Castore, Office & Professional Employees International Union Local 9), the other a retirement (Sam Purdy, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 494).

Nominations to fill those seats will be made at the November 7 delegate meeting and election will take place December 5.

Only members in good standing of their unions can be nominated, and the nominees must accept within five days of the Nov. 7 meeting.

Only affiliates that have paid their per-cap can vote. The rules are being sent out to all locals.



Faith representatives, union members and workers from Capital Returns met Oct. 8 at the East Side People's Book Collective to organize the Nov. 8 panel on economic justice.

Special panel gathered in fight for economic justice in Milwaukee

A notable panel will explore the plight of low-wage workers in Milwaukee. It is an issue that extends beyond insufficient wages to basic health, family survival and human respect.

It requires what the sponsoring Faith Community for Worker Justice calls "Creating a Common Vision for Economic Justice in Milwaukee" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 8, at the Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St.

Father Mike McLernon of the Milwaukee archdiocese has already committed to the panel, as has MCLC Chief Operating Officer Sheila Cochran. Aldermen or their representatives will also participate, as will Capital Returns worker Kimberly Peterson. Her company is clearly in the harsh spotlight given the complaints of workers there and the OSHA interest in the company's methods.

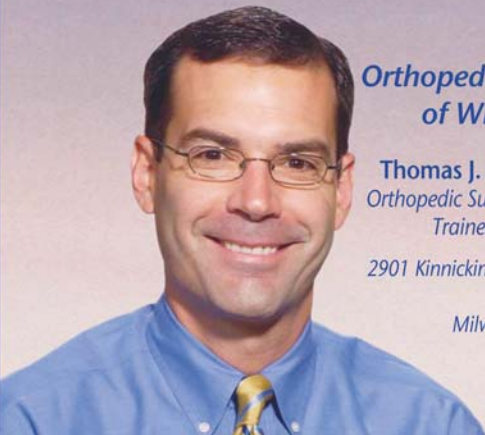
A rabbi, an academic and a worker from Voces de La Frontera have also accepted invitations. Co-sponsors include Voces, the UW-M College Democrats and the Milwaukee Network for Social Change.

The event is free, but since only 250 tickets will be given out, reserve yours now with Jon Royal of Worker Justice at (414) 771-7541.

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Board

From Page 1

the importance of getting minorities into construction apprentices and in October made PIC, not WIB, part of a taskforce to study the problem.

(The supervisors seemed unaware of the many union efforts and achievements in this area, the other studies going on and that the UWM-NAACP report cited to them was old and questioned data.)

There are still pundits in the community scoffing at what good the WIB can be.

Its announced annual funding to mid-2008 is a puny \$10.8 million, most of this caused by the devastating shrinkage from the Department of Labor of the traditional Workforce Investment Act.

How devastating?

The money is half of what Milwaukee had four years ago from WIA and the lowest annual amount in a decade. The Bush budget has failed to recognize the needs of workers old and new and abandoned funding initiatives for adults, youth and dislocated workers.

It was not always so. In the

2000s, the PIC had \$130 million to invest in Milwaukee projects. That was a hunky chunk of change, and something the pundits seldom point out because the next inevitable question is, Where did it all go?

Labor Press stories have pointed out that the only major success from all that PIC money was the HIRE Center, the long-established (and union-staffed) dislocated workers program, which trained displaced workers to new careers.

Sykes and a newly assembled team and policy advisers (including board members John Jorgensen of IUPAT District Council 7, AFL-CIO, and Sheila Cochran, chief operating office of the MCLC, AFL-CIO) are now wading through a thicket of federal and state rules and adjusting past practices to get real bang from insufficient bucks.

But even as they work, the WIA erodes. Roberta Gassman, secretary of the state's Department of Workforce Development, just wrote an internal memo in sorrow and anger that 33 members of her department were being cut because of the loss of WIA and related federal funds.

In Milwaukee, HIRE Center is losing a fifth of its staff. Bar-

ring any freshly written special grants (many of which HIRE has written), the center is stuck with that for the year.

WIB will work hard for a better future, both Sykes and Cochran conceded in interviews

They cited the restrictions of how the WIA money can be used (it also doesn't apply to many of the minority jobless in the city).

If there's a plus side for HIRE it is that at least now they will not have as heavy a thumb on their decisions and operations and can maneuver more nimbly. Their success has also given them an increasingly supportive group of businesses to meet with.

Yet here again is a reason why Sykes is pushing so hard for new revenue sources — greater freedom of action, more nimbleness to apply funds to where jobs are available and more reaching out to the community for people trained to do them.

There are some difficult issues here. How do you keep people in the education pipeline for the right jobs? How do you make sure that every business knows that Milwaukee has more than a pool of people needing work but a pool of people ready to do the work and ready to learn



Mayor Barrett welcomes the WIB and some 50 onlookers at the first meeting. Lined up with him are new board chairman Dan Bader (hidden), CEO Donald Sykes and Vice-Chair Shirley Lanier.

the skills?

How do you develop programs that meet immediate job needs, prove to an often derisive media that capable people reside in the lowest-income areas — and still plan ahead at what should be in the training pipeline five or 10 years from now?

The early efforts of WIB will focus on identifying and recruiting for today — to better match applicants to jobs available and skills required.

This is a regional workforce issue as well that affects transit

decisions and the policies of the Milwaukee 7 (a multi-county economic development effort).

The WIB leaders will also have to stoke a fire under all these connected programs that greater Milwaukee has been slow to contend with. But without board leadership and ideas, the other alliances are unlikely to budge.

"Yes, our funds may not seem like that much to some and we have to grow them," Sykes said, "but they are the glue that hold all workforce development together."



Sykes (left) chats with the head of the Tramont Corp. Sean McGowan, after the meeting.

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A surprising new role has emerged for the Center of Excellence this summer and fall. In the day-time it bustles with apprenticeship classes or other events setting up good jobs for Milwaukee residents, accompanied by the sounds of construction as new classrooms and training labs are added to the former factory at 3841 W. Wisconsin Ave. **But at night**, as the stories on Pages 5 and 6 expose, out come some great caterers and wine pourers, fancy linens and flowers from cooperative

sponsors, appetizers to inspire second trips and crowds of invited guests to create an instant by-invitation nightspot. **Guests mingle** in the large entrance hall or step outside to a makeshift patio and then adjourn to the back room for slideshows and presentations. **So smoothly have these events run**, and so attractive has been the ambience, that you'd swear you stumbled into Milwaukee's newest nightclub. Call it Chez Excellence.

Labor mourns Dan Fuller

Daniel Fuller was so well known as a labor activist and a champion of workplace and peace issues that his death notice included leaders in the labor movement as special friends and mourners.



Fuller, 1949-2007

Fuller, 58, died of a brain tumor Sept. 27. An active member of IAM Local 1061, he had just retired in June after 34 years at Eaton Corp, noted good friend Dale Dulberger

He had always been drawn to people struggles including the anti-war rallies in Madison, Father Groppi's Milwaukee marches, the famous strike at Patrick Cudahy, multiple peace efforts and just helping his neighbors.

Noted Bruce Colburn, now an SEIU national officer, called Fuller a "truly a special kind of person in my life and for those of us who stood together like a band of brothers and sisters over the last 40 years."

Michael Rosen, president of AFT Local 212, remembers that Fuller "took the ideals of the Declaration of Independence more seriously than its authors or those who claim to defend it."

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