

Greetings 3937! Is it spring? Is it winter? Who knows! We hope this week has treated you well and that you stay safe over the weekend if the forecast stays snowy. This week we have some reports about the Labor Notes Conference, the 2nd edition of a new Steward Corner, info on an AFSCME Gubernatorial screening livestream, some words from our VP, and more!

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## Stewards Corner

I remember sitting at the dining room table when I was much younger than I am now and listening to my brother bemoan the fact that he was going to miss his first child's first birthday because he couldn't get off work. My dad said she won't remember. Start saving your vacation time. Once you hit the max, the employer (USPS) has to bump you ahead of everyone to get the days off you need in order to not lose vacation hours.

Turns out we have similar language in our contract. This is the only time I can think of that seniority rights can possibly be denied. [Article 16 Vacation Section 2](#) contains the grid that shows how much vacation an employee accrues for each year of service per pay period and the table also shows the maximum vacation accumulation we are allowed to carry (2 years at your current rate of accumulation). Now we go down to [Article 16 Section 3](#) and look at the second paragraph, "Any employee who is about to lose vacation leave because he/she has been denied a vacation request made in accordance with a department's leave policy and will therefore reach the maximum accumulation, shall be entitled to take one week of vacation to prevent such loss upon advance notice of seven (7) calendar days to his/her supervisor, or shall be allowed to cash out one (1) week of vacation." From experience, most departments want to accommodate you as much as possible in allowing you the time off in this circumstance. But you must watch your pay stub to stay current with how much vacation you have available. You do not want to lose any vacation!

You may also accrue vacation hours according to [Article 17 Sick Leave Section 3 Sick Leave Conversion, paragraph 1](#): "When a sick leave accumulation of four hundred (400) hours has been reached, one-quarter (1/4) of any sick leave accumulated thereafter may be credited to the employee's vacation accumulation if the employee's sick leave accumulation is maintained

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at four hundred (400) or more hours; three-quarters (3/4) of sick leave accumulated thereafter may be credited to sick leave." So 1 hour of sick leave converts to your vacation accumulation and 3 hours stay as sick leave (assuming you are a full time employee).

You should actively monitor your sick leave balances since we do not get to take our sick leave with us when we leave. If you are young and have plans to raise a family or if you are healthy and young to middle-age, you may want to build your sick time ahead so you can see it convert to vacation. Although, young children can diminish your sick leave fairly quickly. If you are nearing retirement, you probably do not want to leave with 400+ hours stuck in sick leave for you to lose.

We are unable to change accumulation rates for either vacation or sick leave but it is possible to manipulate it a little bit if everything lines up for you.

*Mary Austin, President/Chief Steward*

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## VP Corner

Good Afternoon, Local 3937:

Last weekend, several local members and I joined thousands of other union members, officers, and labor activists for the Labor Notes Conference. Labor Notes is a monthly independent magazine that bills itself as the, "voice of union activists who want to put the movement back in the labor movement." As a part of that mission, this year's conference had over 200 workshops, meetings, and panel discussions on everything from creative organizing tactics, beating apathy, winning contract campaigns, to understanding the economy.

Over the three day conference, our group went to as many of these sessions as space and time permitted. Which was harder than it sounds as every single session I attended was completely full. Most were so crowded that people were sitting in the aisles, standing for hours, with many more spilling out into the halls. It was amazing to see so much passion and determination all in one place.

In an effort to share all of that, with all of you, watch this newsletter over the next few weeks for

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some of our favorite moments, conference highlights, and key takeaways.

In Solidarity,

*Robert Francis*

*Vice-President of Organizing*

*AFSCME Local 3937*

Don't forget! Every Friday is a new opportunity to show your support for the union with a little bit of fun. Wear something green this Friday! Take a selfie or have a friend take a picture and post it to our [Facebook event](#), the most interesting or creative selfie will win a prize! Show us your green socks, shirts, pants, ties, lanyards, lipstick, earrings, or scarves!

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## **AFSCME Gubernatorial Candidate Screening!**

Members have an exclusive opportunity to view the gubernatorial screening, live from our workplaces and homes. Council 5 will live stream the screening on **April 19 from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.** To give everyone equal access, in-person viewing is not being offered.

During the screening, the Executive Board will meet and interview DFL candidates Erin Murphy, Rebecca Otto and Tim Walz. Each candidate will answer questions and give a closing argument. Please help shape the questions the Executive Board asks them. RSVP and make suggestions on [Facebook](#).

On the day of the live screening, just log into your MemberLink account at on [our website](#). You'll find a private link to the broadcast there.

Don't have a MemberLink login yet? Signing up takes about a minute. Go to [www.afscmemn.org](http://www.afscmemn.org). Look for the MemberLink tab on the top right. Click on the box that says "sign up now" and follow the prompts.

Please sign up before **April 19** to avoid the rush. If you need help, call the Member Action Center at 651-450-4990.

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## Labor Notes 2018 report: Using Social Media in Campaigns

Milwaukee teachers, Joe Brusky and Melissa Zombor, who are surviving and thriving despite Scott Walkers Act 10 (which limits their collective bargaining) facilitated this excellent session. It was encouraging to discover we are already doing some of the recommended things: MailChimp, which is bringing you this newsletter, is one of the highest rated newsletter platforms among union folks. Canva is well liked for graphics, and I have an account that I have been using for some of our social media. I learned there are other fun things I can do with it to share on social media, too. The presenters stressed the importance of tags and hashtags, especially on Twitter, another thing that I already knew, but it's good to be reminded to use them.

We had a Facebook group associated with our 3937 page for a brief time, but ran into some issues and closed it. We may want to try again. Joe and Melissa think groups are very useful, and told us how to set them up to be most effective. I also heard outside of this workshop about how the West Virginia teachers made good use of Facebook groups in their recent successful strike.

We got good tips on framing language, networking with other unions and allies on social media, and other tools that can enhance the social media we already use, such as Google Alerts. I attended plenty of other sessions and events through the weekend that gave us good information and/or uplifted our spirits, but this one was the most relevant and educational for me.

*Submitted by: Nicole Masika, Secretary 3937*

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## Save The Date

### Steward meeting

- 2nd Wednesdays: May 9th

### Organizing meeting

- 3rd Wednesdays: April 18th

### Membership meeting

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- 4th Wednesdays: April 25th (E-board meeting at 5:15pm immediately followed by membership meeting) **Nominations and possibly elections will be held for the following seats: President, VP Chief Steward, VP Organizer, Treasurer, Secretary, 5 Executive Board seats. We would love to see you there even if you are not interested in running for office yourself.**

All at 5:30pm in Suite 356

[312 Central Avenue SE.](#)

[Minneapolis, MN 55414](#)

### Game Nights

April 26th location TBD

Know of a good location? Let us know!



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Our home page has more information and resources such as steward contact information. Find the most current version of our contract here.

Like us on Facebook and/or follow us on Twitter, we post a variety of labor related items daily as well as breaking news that affects us.

*submitted in solidarity by AFSCME Local 3937 leadership, edited by Diana Rico, Organizer*