AFT Endorses Hillary Clinton for President

by Kelly Regnier, 504 Word Editor

On Monday, July 18, delegates of the 2016 AFT Convention in Minneapolis stood in line as early as 1:30 pm in order to try and capture the best seats possible to hear and see the afternoon’s featured speaker, the Democratic Party Nominee for President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

There was a buzz throughout the hall as members were finally allowed through the screening process and found their seats. After speeches by both the senators from Minnesota and an introduction from AFT President Randi Weingarten, Hillary Clinton finally took the stage.

Ms. Clinton was very well received by the delegates of the convention. As expected, she outlined the plans she has for our nation should she be elected to the office of President. Her ideas ranged from free college education for all students to racial equity in our schools.

The following morning, a special order of business was presented to the delegates of the body, requesting the endorsement of Hillary Clinton for President of the United States. After explaining and following the appropriate procedures for special orders of business, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to endorse Hillary Clinton for President of the United States.

While there are many reasons for the endorsement that were outlined in the resolution, one of the most important parts of the endorsement was this: “Hillary Clinton has a proven record in leading the fight for high-quality healthcare, including proper staffing levels; for high-quality public education for all, starting with our youngest children; was an original co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act; defended public service workers who came to our nation’s defense on September 11; and has a deep and long record on economic and social justice issues—from voting rights to immigrant rights to women’s rights to worker rights—earning a 100 percent AFT voting record during her time in the U.S. Senate.”

For AFT delegates, the choice to endorse Hillary Clinton for President was an easy one to make. She is the candidate who will stand up for education, children, working people, and the middle class.
The “Benevolent Boss” Myth

We Americans pride ourselves on our national mythology: the cowboy riding the range and maintaining justice with his six shooter, the wonderful times portrayed in “The Andy Griffith Show,” the “good ole days” in general.

Another great American myth is the one of the “benevolent businessman,” kindly and generously altruistic to all. This belief has led to many erroneous conclusions: if I do what he (of course, bosses are disproportionately male) wants, I’ll get a raise or promotion; his success is a result of his brilliance, therefore any of his ideas must be good; when times are bad he’ll take care of me; and the ultimate political scam, “trickle down” (supply-side) economics. Indeed, this blind faith in the boss who will share his success with me has proven to be one of the time-proven motivators of the American worker.

In efforts to promote this belief, talking heads and politicians alike use the terms “job-creator” and “entrepreneur” in reverent tones. Many view business schools as the new American temple of wisdom. It seems as if “he who has the gold rules” has become the new “Golden Rule.”

The spectacle that has become this presidential election bears witness to this misguided application of awe and reverence.

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--LCFT President Michael T. McGue

If it were not for the dreaded government “regulations” many of these same bosses would, for example, build automobiles full of safety hazards, sell you items that do not perform as advertised and market foods that poison you. Our bosses try to play favorites, pay as little as they can and demand as much of us as possible (a large reason Unions exist!) To reiterate, not all business people are ogres, but shared prosperity is a direct by-product of regulated business and not what these folks would create if left to their own devices.

And so I come to Donald Trump’s candidacy for President. The opinions of Trump from those I respect vary from clown-like to insane. But there are those (discounting the xenophobes and racists that have migrated to his camp in alarming numbers) that by their acceptance of the myth of the benevolent boss, believe that Trump has genuine concern for the betterment of our society and our people, specifically, the working middle-class. They see him as a hard-nosed businessman who makes “great deals” and will take on our country’s economic interest (and by the way, foreign policy, domestic affairs, military and strategic interests.)

Of course this is all while ignoring reality. Anyone who researches Trump quickly learns his history: one of an egotist particularly gifted in ma-
Manipulating facts that often feed silent prejudices and irrational grudges. Trump is about profit and always has been whether it is earned in a fair or foul manner. He has succeeded in profiting through hype, bluster and a manipulation of a system rather than actual success in business as a result of his own hard work. As my father would say, “a guy who makes lawyers happy.” It should surprise no one that he doesn’t want to reveal his tax returns!

When we marvel at the number of Trump supporters, try being a little less amazed. It’s important to remember that along with the “Benevolent Boss” Myth his supporters have suffered through the same post-recession, NAFTA economy that we have and lived with a Congress that prides themselves on gridlock.

As a Union leader, you know that the “Benevolent Boss” is a myth and through your work, we keep the real boss in check. Even though one might be persuaded to vote for a “Benevolent Boss” if he existed, it is most certainly not Donald Trump.

In Unity,

Michael T. McGue, President
Lake County Federation of Teachers
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Retiree News
by Carolyn Scaccia,
Retirees Council President

Welcome back to a new school year with no bulletin boards, registration days, bus duty and all those things we no longer miss!

We’d like to welcome you with a luncheon on Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. We will have Dave Comerford of the IFT talk to us about the upcoming election. Please RSVP to 847-623-7725 by September 8 so that we can give the caterer an accurate count.

Also save the date of December 8, 2016 for our annual Taste of 504. Everyone brings a dish to share and a recipe for it. While we munch, a recipe book is being prepared for you to take home. You end up feeling full and with a lot of new ideas for your holiday entertaining. We also ask that you bring non-perishable food items to donate to the local food bank. If you cannot attend but would still like to donate food, drop it off at the Union Hall prior to December 8.

Even numbered years are election years for the Retired Teachers Council. The officers are President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and four LCFT Executive Board Delegates.

All members of the Council are eligible to run for office. Nominations must be made in writing between September 1 and October 1 of this year. Ballots will be mailed with the October 504 Word and must be returned no later than November 10th. Results of the election will be published in the December newsletter. The officers will serve for two years beginning January 1 in odd numbered years.

We are looking for additional activities for our council. In the spring we had a very successful book club led by Sue Greene. We took a bus to Potawatomi Casino and spent an afternoon having fun. If you have any ideas for future meetings, please share those with us.

Hope to see you on September 15th.

Have a colorful Fall!

Prairie Crossing Council Ratifies Salary Reopener for 2016-17
by Michelle Standridge,
IFT Field Service Director

At the close of last school year, Prairie Crossing Council ratified provisions for a salary reopener, securing increases and other benefits for the second year in their four-year contract. Members will receive a BRI (Base Rate Increase) of 2.25% and the Merit Award minimum allotment will be $35,000. Members will maintain their monthly health and dental insurance stipends, and the Council implemented a longevity bonus program through which members will receive additional stipends for every five years of continuous service to the school.

President, continued from p. 2

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During the third week of July, twenty-seven members of LCFT ventured north to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to represent Local 504 at the AFT Convention.

Members arrived at various times on Sunday, July 17 to register as delegates. LCFT members also enjoyed meeting delegates from across Illinois at a reception that evening, sponsored by the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

Monday morning began the first of the general sessions, with AFT President Randi Weingarten giving the State of the Union address, which recapped the events of the past two years, and projected a hope for AFT’s future. The room was cleared for lunch, and members were treated to speeches from the US Senators from Minnesota. Senor Al Franken was a particu-
lar crowd pleaser. Hillary Clinton also addressed the convention (see article, page 1). Former Vice-President Walter Mondale was also in attendance.

Tuesday brought with it more speakers, like the Governor of Minnesota, and international guests from Israel. In addition to this, delegates voted on changes to the by-laws and constitution of the AFT, and began to work their way through the resolutions before the body.

Throughout the week, AFT’s Every Day Heros were celebrated for the work they do.

Wednesday’s activities included more resolutions, a panel of AFT’s living legends, including the oldest living member of AFT, and voting for AFT officers.

Thursday dealt with more resolutions, and members felt as though they spent more time than in any recent convention working through the issues that face us as educators as each resolution was discussed and debated.

More convention photos can be found on AFT’s webpage.
AFT Offers Tools for Bullying Prevention

from aft.org

As education professionals across the Lake County return to school this fall, it has become more and more important to assist students in making good behavior choices when it comes to the treatment of their fellow students.

In an effort to assist members with the daunting task of helping both the bullied and the bullies, the AFT has developed a webpage filled with tips, suggestions and resources.

Bullying is a community issue, affecting not only those who are bullied but also their families, their friends and bystanders. If left unchecked, bullying can poison an entire school culture.

The American Federation of Teachers believes in standing up to bullying wherever it occurs, recognizing that our members have a particular responsibility to address the problem in public schools. To that end, the AFT is committed to giving educators and others who work in schools the tools they need to create healthy learning environments.

Studies generally show that 15 to 25 percent of American students are bullied with some frequency. This figure jumps to between 40 and 50 percent for cyberbullying. Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than their peers to be depressed, lonely and anxious; have low self-esteem; feel unwell; and think about suicide. In fact, the stress of being bullied can produce organic brain changes that limit productivity and threaten mental health.

Bullying often goes unrecognized—sometimes even by those who are victimized by bullying as well as those who are the aggressors—so identifying the behavior is essential. Intimidation, exclusion, manipulation, threats, rumors and physical aggression can all be part of the negative behavior that defines bullying. In addition to encouraging individuals to intervene when they are made aware of a bullying incident, the AFT calls for institutionalizing schoolwide and district-wide anti-bullying policies; creating safe and accessible methods to report and address bullying when it occurs; and using educational resources to shine a bright light on bullying to make it clear that it will not be tolerated, and to help those who have encountered this destructive behavior.

To prevent bullying, both at school and off campus, it is essential for schools to develop a positive culture and to guide social-emotional learning. This includes implementing policies and fostering attitudes that create warm, inviting environments where students and staff feel safe and supported. Teachers and school support staff play a crucial role in creating that environment; they interact closely with students and can intervene most effectively, setting an example and guiding students to be supportive and caring friends in their learning environment.

The AFT supports professional development training to prevent and combat bullying, so educators can recognize bullying and learn how best to prevent it and address the problem if and when it occurs.

- See more at: http://www.aft.org/bully#sthash.I7lAStZt.dpuf
Words Do Matter

by Corinne McGue, LCFT PAC Chair

I can only begin to speculate on what new, offensive trespasses will befall our country in the days ahead on what most of us commonly understood as civility in public discourse. I intentionally apply the past tense to “understood.” These ongoing months of Trump’s vile and tyrannical antics, ironically interpreted by both his campaign staff and his followers as a way to communicate their desire to “make America great again,” have worn thin, to say the least. By now, you may have consciously chosen to closely follow Trump and his endless breaches to common decency, exercised your right to apply the mute button, or decided that you just don’t care. Aside from demonstrating an unprecedented and alarming lack of respect for the office of President of the United States, and a blatant disregard for what is befitting demeanor for our most cherished political office-holder, what is perhaps of greater concern is that this reprehensible lack of respect and decency is permeating our entire society.

Placing even our core, personal political beliefs aside, we have much more at stake in this election than whether our own political party prevails. As educators, we should be appalled by the way in which we have allowed a person so full of vitriol to use his bully pulpit to so abuse the standards of respectable public speaking. Name-calling and bullying would never be acceptable in our classrooms. We would not tolerate these types of behaviors from our students yet somehow we are allowing these improprieties to carry on in this presidential race. Each time Trump crosses a line with his thoughtless remarks he succeeds in inflicting serious damage on the lessons of mutual respect we strive to teach our students. Words do matter and it’s not enough to consider what we say; we must also take into account what is being heard. We are being assaulted by a continued threat to our shared need for decency and respect and it doesn’t feel good.

We do not have the luxury of ignoring this radically dangerous force at work. At the very least, Trump’s campaign behaviors threaten any form of intellectualism, both within the classrooms and beyond. At the other end of the spectrum, the vulgar and violent threads of his discourse portend a future of insecurity and worse. As you may have heard, this upcoming election presents us with choices unlike any we have confronted in the past. We have so very much to lose. If you consider yourself a one-issue voter, I ask you to make this your issue.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION?

visit

WWW.IFT-AFT.ORG/VOTE
ER&D News
by Andrea Herbster,
ER&D Chair

To date, this summer has been our most successful. We offered seven classes which is more than any other summer and all but one have been conducted. To say this is quite an accomplishment is about all that can be said. Our local does quite a job helping our teachers get graduate credits and credits for recertification. I am very proud of us!

This fall and early winter, we will be offering two newer classes. Catch them on the schedule. I am very pleased to hear that participants are always looking for new classes to take.

Remember for those who have never taken a class, the cost is only $50 per class which reward two hours of graduate credit for those councils that award those credits as well as 30 credits for recertification. We do have shorter classes that reward half the amount of hours and credits. If your council does not reward credits, talk to me about it and perhaps we can get it included in your next contract. Otherwise you can get graduate credits from Governor’s State University for a substantial cost.

2016 Fall and Early Winter Course Descriptions
School, Family and Community: Supporting Student Learning
September 6 - October 6
This course has the primary function to help school staff understand how they can assist parents to better support their children as learners. Strategies include helping teachers develop learning partnerships with parents by assigning more productive and inclusive homework, explaining classroom work and grading systems, correcting student work and providing timely feedback to students and parents.

English Language Learners 101 (New 15 Hour Class)
October 11 - October 25
ELLs are among the fastest-growing student population. Schools are being asked to meet the challenges of a rapidly growing and diverse population. This course will enhance instructional practices by introducing new research-based strategies, language acquisition, explore cultural and linguistic diversity, and develop methods for increasing effective partnerships with bilingual families.

Thinking Mathematics K-2 (New Version includes Common Core)
November 1 - December 8 (No class Thanksgiving Week)
This course focuses on research about how children learn mathematics and how these findings can be applied in the classroom. Ten Principles capture practices that lead to a better understanding of math for all students and are applicable at all levels. They are exemplified through the research on counting, addition, and subtraction. The course also takes a broader look at the importance of patterns and relationships throughout math and addresses the kind of questioning that promotes thinking in math class. This new version also includes the use of common core standards.