

Lockout: After six days, Security workers and their employer came to an agreement on new contract

Continued from page 1
and G4S. Local 2 President, Josh Haider said G4S was looking to switch to an inferior insurance plan while changing its contributions to that plan. Local 2 leadership learned that G4S sought to cut its contributions to the employee insurance program nearly in half, Haider said.

According to Haider the agreement with G4S not only keeps the insurance plan in place, but included a 2.5 percent cost of living increase. G4S also agreed to increase contributions to the supervisors' 401K plan and agreed to compensate the worker \$1,000 for the days they were locked out.

"What we got wasn't the moon," Haider said. "Where we ended up is in the middle, which is where we should be."

And with that, Local 2 members were ready to return to

their security posts.

"We are ready to roll up our sleeves and get back to work," Haider said at the Friday, Sept. 6 press conference.

September 6 was not only a big day for the small union of security supervisors, but it was a big day for organized labor as a whole," Haider said. According to Haider, about 100 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the largest union at the Monticello nuclear power plant, refused to cross the Local 2 picket line during the lockout.

"That was very important to our effort," Haider said. "We had the support of unions that had no dog in our fight."

He also gave a shout-out to his union's members.

"They had the courage to stand up for what was theirs- fair wages and health insurance," he

said. "We're coming out of this with a good deal."

Security worker Randy Sand, a 40-year-veteran at the nuclear power plant, said he had never experienced a work stoppage during his four decades of working at the plant.

"It was daunting," Sand said. "It was stressful for us, but what do you do? We pressed on," Sand said.

"We found strength in our fellow members and the community. Like anything traumatic, we found a way to get through," he said.

Four area lawmakers were scheduled to attend the press conference prior to the contract agreement being announced in order to offer their support to the locked-out workers.

On Sept. 6, Sen. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo), Rep. Marion O'Neill (R-Maple Lake). Sen.

Andrew Mathews (R-Milaca) and Rep. Shane Mekeland (R-Clear Lake) were on hand to support union members in reaching a contract agreement.

Mathews said he wondered in Local 2's contract struggles were due, in part, to a growing trend among businesses to push more of the costs related to healthcare onto consumers and their families.

"I was glad (the workers) were able to push back and get a deal that works for them," Mathews said.

O'Neill said she was "Very grateful" that Local 2 and G4S settled their contract dispute so the Xcel Energy plant could continue on with its operations.

She also took the opportunity to discuss the fact that Minnesota is the only state in the nation to assess a fee, or tax, on the storage of spent fuel rods

generated by nuclear power plants and noted that the plants at Monticello and at Prairie Island near Red Wing were assessed fees of \$32.5 million. She said it's imperative that the State takes a look at its policies regarding those fees in order to keep nuclear power affordable.

Anderson said he was very proud of Josh Haider and his team for what they accomplished for their union members.

"We're very proud and very hopeful that this will continue," Anderson said, noting that the agreement was not only for the benefit of the security supervisors, but for Wright County, the State, and the Nation.

Reach Jeff Hage at jeff.hage@ecm-inc.com

Emergency: ED features more space, privacy

Continued from page 1

the new on-stage, off-stage design now employed by the department, said Steve Schrupp, manager of CentraCare Monticello's emergency department.

Simply put, on-stage areas are the spaces primarily for patients or family members. These spaces include waiting rooms, exam rooms, labs, and other patient care areas. Off-stage spaces are the "behind the scenes" staff-only spaces. These include care team work stations, internal corridors of the emergency department, and storage.

The nine new patient exam rooms are entered by patients and family from a public hospital corridor. The rooms are entered by medical staff from a second door leading to the secure staff-only area, Schrupp explained.

When combined with additional rooms earmarked for triage situations, there are 14 rooms that can be used by patients visiting the emer-

gency department.

But CentraCare didn't set out to increase capacity of its emergency department. The goal of the renovation was to increase space.

A thousand people per month now visit the CentraCare-Monticello emergency department, Schrupp said.

Those patients can now have access to two new state-of-the-art trauma rooms that are located where an ambulance bay was once found.

The redesigned emergency department also features four suites for patients experiencing mental health issues.

Made possible by a grant from the Ellison Trust, this bank of four rooms provides temporary quarters for mental health patients in need of an extended stay at the hospital while they work through their mental health issues. These rooms are also among the rooms that can be used as exam rooms if

the need arises, Schrupp said.

A new, larger ambulance bay with direct access to the new trauma rooms in the emergency department was also built.

There is also access to state-of-the-art tele-medicine in the trauma rooms that can bring elite members of a medical team to the Monticello hospital through the wonders of computers. The computer age also brings to the Monticello hospital bilingual capabilities that allow on-the-spot translations allowing doctors and hospital staff to communicate with patients who speak almost every language in the world.

Decontamination rooms are also a feature of the new emergency department, that allow patients with exposure to dangerous chemicals to be "washed down" before receiving medical care, Schrupp said.

Reach Jeff Hage at jeff.hage@ecm-inc.com



Wright County Sheriff's Office

Pictured above is one of the examples of graffiti painted by Mitchell Gott of Monticello at the northeast corner of Highway 25 and Seventh Street.

Graffiti: Monticello man arrested, facing charges

Continued from page 1

ty, a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine.

At about 6:30 a.m. on Sept. 2, witnesses reported vandalism in progress to the wall near Hillside Cemetery that welcomes people to Monticello on northbound Highway 25 at Seventh Street.

Deputies responded to the scene and observed large letters on the wall in black spray paint. The suspects had already left the scene, but using surveillance video from the nearby Holiday gas station, came up with a physical description of a suspect in the vandalism, as well as a description of an accomplice.

Not long after, deputies received a report of a one-vehicle crash on Meadow Oak Avenue and Fenning Avenue.

Deputies responded to the scene and located two males sitting on a curb. The vehicle crashed into the curb after the vehicle's axle broke, driver Mitchell

Gott told the deputies.

According to a criminal complaint filed in Wright County District Court, a deputy observed two cans of black spray paint while looking into the vehicle.

Gott also appeared intoxicated, the complaint states. According to deputies, he exhibited bloodshot and watery eyes, had slurred speech and demonstrated poor balance, the complaint states.

Gott admitted to drinking four whiskey drinks. His agreed to take a breath test at about 9:30 a.m., which registered an alcohol concentration of .17, the complaint states.

In addition to felony property damage charges, Gott faces one count each of DWI: operating a motor vehicle under the influence and DWI: operating a motor vehicle, alcohol concentration of .08 within two hours of driving a vehicle.

According to the Wright County's Sheriff Office, several other areas in

Monticello have recently been spray-painted in very similar fashion to that of the Hillside Cemetery wall, including the walls and landscaping underneath the I-94 overpass on Broadway Avenue East.

The investigating deputy located evidence and obtained statements implicating Gott to several of the other graffiti painting under I-94.

The second suspect was identified but has not been charged with any crimes at this time.

During a court hearing on Sept. 4, Gott applied for a public defender but was denied representation because he was not financially eligible, court records state. He was released on \$12,000 bond.

Gott is scheduled to make his initial appearance in court at 8:30 a.m. on October 8.

Reach Jeff Hage at jeff.hage@ecm-inc.com

Highway 25: The City to establish a committee

Continued from page 1

ness school, his mother said. He wanted to be a camp counselor and had just returned from camp the day before he died.

"Ian was a wonderful boy and I don't feel his life should have been lost...but it was," Christina Rogers said.

"I just don't want any more lives to be lost on that same stretch of highway," she said.

In addressing the Monticello City Council, Christina Rogers said she prays for the courage of the council members to stand forward and make a proclamation to MnDOT that they, as city representatives, support creating a safer environment on Highway 25 at the Kjellberg trailer park.

"I pray for the wisdom

in you making such a decision," she said. "I ask for your support."

That support came soon after Christina Roger's plea to the City Council when authorization was given to City staff to form a committee to address the Highway 25 issue.

City Administrator Jeff O'Neill noted that the City was in a position to be an advocate for change when it comes to the Highway 25 location and can be an advocate for a design change that works for the City and its residents.

The City will work towards establishing a small committee made up of city council members, city staff, and community members with a goal of providing input to MnDOT on the issue.

Mayor Brian Stumpf called the committee a great idea that would help keep momentum for changes moving.

He said the committee could come up with a strategic plan that it could bring forward to MnDOT. It could also sit down with MnDOT to keep the "ball rolling," Stumpf said.

"We don't want this to sit idle," he said.


Cheistina Rogers added that she is prepared to work with any City Council members, MnDOT, and state legislators to help Highway 25 changes come to fruition.

Reach Jeff Hage at jeff.hage@ecm-inc.com

Free

Parade of Stables

Meet the Saddlebred up close and personal!





Saturday, September 14th
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Visit www.MSHA.org for more information

- Riding and Driving Demonstrations
- Learn About the American Saddlebred
- Learn about Horseback Riding



Presented by the
 Minnesota Saddlebred Horse Association

The Stables at Maple Hill
 8888 Baker Ave NW, Buffalo, MN 55313
TheStable@yahoo.com
 612-419-4157



Be Our Guest

FREE Advance Planning Seminar



Tuesday, September 17, 2019
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Williams Dingmann Funeral Home
611 Rose Dr
Big Lake, MN 55309
RSVP: 763.452.2500

Join your neighbors and friends to gain information ~ Enjoy coffee and refreshments in a relaxing and friendly atmosphere ~ Enter a door prize drawing. The seminar date is quickly approaching, so please call us at 763.452.2500 to make your reservations TODAY!