

Could you do it?

By Heber Taylor | Posted: Monday, September 3, 2012 12:00 am

On Labor Day we think about the social and economic conditions of workers.

If you are a person who hires rather than is hired ask yourself a question: Could you make it on a living wage?

In Galveston County a livable wage has been defined as \$9.24 an hour for one adult \$19.11 for one adult and one child and \$23.06 for two adults and two children.

Basically you're looking at the income you'd need to meet average expenses adjusted for average prices in this county.

The notion of a "living wage" is controversial. The phrase was made popular by people who have a political agenda and the Living Wage Calculator originally developed by the Economic Policy Institute produces numbers that are always debatable.

But forget the politics for a minute. Just ask yourself: Could you do it?

If you were a single worker could you live on \$19213 a year?

If you were a single worker with a child could you make it on \$39758?

If you had that typical family of four — two adults two children — could you make it on \$40386? For the family of four the big monthly expenses are:

Food: \$713

Medical: \$437

Child care: \$0

Housing: \$892

Transportation: \$764

Today we're celebrating great achievements of the American worker including the eight-hour workday and the 40-hour week.

On the same day we ought to remember that many people in Galveston County get to those numbers by working two or three jobs.