

Presidents Corner

Spring is fast approaching. Trees are budding, flowers are blooming and the birds are all migrating north for the summer. The sun is staying out later, and it is a renewing of life as it happens every year. We are all too familiar with this high energy that greets us every spring. We all want to spend more time outdoors cleaning, sprucing up the yard getting the BBQ ready, making sure the lawn mower is up to the task of the paces we are getting ready to put it through, opening the windows to allow the clean scent of fresh air permeate the house and rid it of the staleness of winter, and just trying to enjoy the fresh feeling of spring. Well here at your local, things are about the same. The feeling of newness arouses the senses and we get that new fresh feeling all over again. With that said, we cordially invite all members to join us on Tuesday April 10th at 4:30 pm in building 636 to help us achieve some new and fresh ideas for the year that is upon us. Make sure to mark your calendars. Each and every member out there has new and fascinating ideas, and we would like you to share them with us. So please come out and enjoy some good spring liveliness. Snacks and refreshments will be served. Remember, this is your local and we want you to be a part of it. Thank you

The Challenge has ended.....

AFGE Local 1869 would like to thank the Brothers and Sisters who worked hard to help meet the challenge!

We gained new members. While this was not the goal we set out to achieve we can take pride in the achievement of these hard working members.

We still are faced with the goal of reaching 400 members in Local 1869. If all of our Brothers and Sisters in Local 1869 step forward, we can achieve this goal.

Stay tuned to "Union Talk" for future Challenges!

Monthly Membership Drawing

President Grausso has requested that we publish the "Union Talk" early in the month instead of the end of the month. Due to this time change the name for the March Membership drawing will not be published until the April newsletter.

You have to be present to win. Just a reminder, the President is NOT eligible for this drawing. Retired members are always welcome to come to the monthly meetings. They are held every second Tuesday of each month at 4:30pm unless there are circumstances that will not permit the meeting to take place. Bad weather, natural disasters etc.....All members are welcome to attend the Monthly Meeting retired or not.

The March drawing will be for \$600.00

Legislative Corner

Legislative Report

01 March 2007..... The House of Representatives passed the "Employee Free Choice Act" taking a step to give American workers the right to choose Union Membership without harassment from employers.

However, South Carolina's Henry Brown chose to vote against giving workers the rights that they deserve! Please write or phone Henry and show him the error of his ways.

Legislative issues

Please write to Senators DeMint and Graham urging them to support the Mc Caskill amendment to S.4, the 9-11 Commission Recommendation bill.

Give TSA Officers the right to organize and afford them union representation. TSA has one of the highest attrition rates in government service.

NYG police and firefighters were union members when they responded, did their jobs and died on 9-11. Their union membership in no way prevented them from responding to terrorism.

Legislation granting Transportation Security Administration workers collective bargaining would be costly and would hinder managerial flexibility, the agency's chief told senators Monday.

Kip Hawley told members of a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs subcommittee focusing on workforce issues that costs associated with implementing collective bargaining rights would be about \$160 million. He did not provide details on what types of costs would be involved.

Again, all we get from the current administration is ambiguous statements without facts to support them!

Representation

Building 700

Management has presented a proposal to take away the break area.

This break area has been there for years. AFGE Local 1869 is involved and will fight for the employee's rights.

Management has the right to change the use of this space but (under past practice rules) must provide a comparable space with the same amenities as the old space.

Stay tuned for more information!

The battle drags on!

AFGE Local 1869 has filed two ULP charge on behalf of the employees of Support Services of America (SSA). SSA, the cleaning contractor for the base has decided to go to court to fight the ULP charges. One charge is for changing working conditions with out notifying the Local. The second is for reverse negotiations, offering certain terms during negotiations then later refusing to meet those terms.

A Federal Court hearing is scheduled for April 13th.

Because of the complexities and important issues involved in this case, we have requested assistance from the AFGE Fifth District legal office.

437 AMXS has withdrawn their proposal for moving the aircraft mechanics from bldg. 72 to 74.

Because of the issues raised by Local 1869's negotiating team they have reconsidered their proposal.

However, they are now working on a new proposal to reorganize the entire squadron. Rest assured that Local 1869 will be there representing the interests of the employees and keeping any changes fair and equitable to the employees. We are currently awaiting their written proposal.

More to follow!

The issue of Charleston County Sheriff's Department patrolling CAFB has yet to be settled

The Wing Commander has issued a letter to the Local sighting "Managements Right" to determine security measures for the Base. Local 1869 is not disputing "Managements Rights. However, we have the right to negotiate impact and implementation.

It is our position that traffic tickets are not part of "base security" and therefore a negotiable item. Whether the Sheriff's department issues a ticket for base driving privileges or for monetary fines collected by Charleston County has no effect on security of the base.

Again the problem is, the sheriff does not want to patrol the base unless there is monetary gain for the Sheriff's department.

President Grausso has delivered a letter to the Wing Commander challenging this decision and is awaiting a reply. A month later and we are still waiting for a reply.

If you see the Sheriff's Department issuing traffic tickets on base, please notify the Union office.

Keep up the pressure!!!!

Are We Under Attack? (the continuing saga)

Disclaimer:

All comments in this column are made to raise the awareness of our members. By no means am I trying to tell anyone what to think or do. I am only attempting to bring to the forefront issues that I feel should be of concern to us as union brothers and sisters. There is much for us to gain in solidarity and much to lose without it.

YES, On all fronts!

By Karen Rutzick
krutzick@govexec.com

Ron Ault formed the coalition powering organized labor's unexpected resurgence.

Ron Ault, a brash, outspoken Arkansas shipbuilder turned labor leader, changed the fortunes of federal unions with a phone call. President of the giant Metal Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, Ault had come to the Virginia suburbs of Washington in February 2004 for the first meeting between Pentagon managers and union reps about the new personnel system and work rules the department had won authority to write several months before in the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act.

As union leaders tell it, Pentagon officials were dictatorial. They made it clear that the meetings, which Congress required, would be run their way. There would be no real negotiation on the new rules. Ginger Groeber, at the time Defense deputy undersecretary for civilian personnel policy, said existing collective bargaining agreements would be annulled.

"You might as well throw gasoline on me and set me on fire when you do me that way," Ault says of that first session. "There's no way you're going to tell me the process I'm going to participate in without some kind of input from me."

Unions had lobbied hard against the new law, but in the wake of Sept. 11, the argument for managerial flexibility won out. Congress did, however, include a clause that required the Pentagon to preserve collective bargaining - largely undefined - for 750,000 Defense civilian employees. And they required managers to include unions in writing the regulations, a process called "meet-and-confer." So, though union leaders were skeptical going into the meeting, they were not prepared for the level of anti-union talk they heard.

As the meeting continued, Ault rose from his chair and rushed into the hallway, where he called the public relations director of the Metal Trades Department - a coalition of 5 million members of 20 unions - and dictated an angry letter. He had it faxed to the meeting and every union leader in attendance signed it. "This was at 5 o'clock in the afternoon," Ault says. "The next morning, every member of Congress had one personally in their lap."

The letter might have had marginal effect on the National Security Personnel System, but it was the beginning of a powerful new partnership between federal and private sector unions.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

While the UAW was losing 150,000 + members, AFGE gained about 25,000. Public sector unions are becoming increasingly important to the labor movement. Union membership in the private sector reached a low of 7.8 percent in 2005. At the same time, more than 36 percent of federal, state and local government workers were unionized, according to a September report from the anti-union Evergreen Freedom Foundation. "The realization that this is where unions are going is just starting to dawn on people in the last couple of years," said Michael Reitz, one of the report's authors. "It won't be very long before a

majority of union members nationwide are in government."

What's a Contractor Worth?

The 100,000 government contractors working in Iraq are earning an average of \$98,387 a year, according to [a survey](#) of about 2,000 contractors done by ClearanceJobs.com.

Contractors in Iraq have seen a 6.4 percent salary increase over the last six months, however, ClearanceJobs.com points out that the \$98,387 figure does not include signing bonuses, tax-exempt status, and additional danger pay.

Do you the civil service employee get a signing bonus? Additional danger pay?

No, you get your regular pay plus \$3.58 per diem for incidentals.

Pentagon Officials REDUCE the size of the Pay Pool funding for senior executives.

Last year performance based pay awards were capped at 15%. This year they will be capped at 10% with a possible 12% on a limited basis.

It should come as no surprise that these senior executives are not happy.

Yes, it is beginning; just as we have predicted! One of the major goals of NSPS and Pay for Performance was and is to reduce the federal payroll.

Stay tuned, this will not be the end of this type of action.

Big Business sucking up your tax dollars, again!!

The property and casualty insurers have their hand out seeking are looking for tax payers to pay their insured losses in the event of a terror attack.

This is after the industry realized a record profit of almost \$60 Billion in 2006. How have they managed such a feat? They have systematically overcharging consumers, cutting back on coverage, underpaying claims and getting the tax payer to pick up some of the tab on high risk losses.

This is quite evident here in the coastal Charleston area as we all pay higher premiums for our dwellings to help cover the insurer's losses in the event a hurricane wipes out any of the millionaire mansions on the beaches of our coast.

As you read this some insurers are not renewing home owner insurance on Charleston area homes.

NSPS NEWS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We continue to work diligently on NSPS issues. Please do not get complacent about NSPS just because we persevered in Federal Court. That was only the first battle; the war is far from over. We still need to be in constant contact with our representatives to assure a fair system over all.

FIFTHTEEN Months and counting!

DoD still refuses to answer AFGE's formal Request for Information!!!!

AFGE filed a formal request regarding the implementation costs for NSPS. DoD refused our request under 5 USC 7114. AFGE still has a Freedom of information request in the works.

We now have Congress asking questions about the costs. Keep writing and calling your congress persons and let them know that you also want to know how your tax dollars are being spent. You are a tax payer, besides being a government employee. You have a right to know!

They have replied to our request but want us to pay over \$34,000.00 for the information.

Labor History.....

Thousands of New York needle trades workers demonstrate for higher wages, shorter workday, and end to child labor. The demonstration became the basis for International Women's Day (3/8/1908)

3,000 unemployed auto workers braved the cold in Dearborn, Mich. to demand jobs and relief from Henry Ford. The marchers got too close to the gate and were gassed. After re-grouping, they were sprayed with water and shot at. Four men died immediately (2/7/1932)
Metro Washington Counsel

MEMBER'S Library

2006 CSRS Retirement Guide
2006 FERS Retirement Guide
2006 Turbo Tax Deluxe
How to write a federal resume
2005 Federal Employees Handbook (on CD)
2006 Federal Employees Almanac (on CD)
Federal Manager's Handbook
Estate Planning Guide for Federal Employees
Retired Military Personnel Handbook
Health Insurance Guide for Federal Employees
Military to Federal Career Guide (1)
2006 Federal Personnel Guide
Federal Employees Legal Survival Guide
Real Estate Guide for Federal Employees (on computer)
Understanding the Federal Government's Survivor Benefits *

* = New

Turbo tax 2006 state and federal is available in the office for your use!!!!

All of these publications are available for you our Members to use. You may sign them out anytime. If there is something you would like for us make available, please let us know.

(1) Let the military troops that you work with know about this new book. They are welcome to sign the book out to help prepare for a civil service career. They are potential members!

Regular Business Meetings

Regular monthly business meetings are held the **second Tuesday of each month at 4:30PM**, in the union office located in Building 636, 205 W. Stewart Avenue, Charleston Air Force Base, SC.

For more information, please contact the union office at (843) 963-5765 or 552-8249.

March Anniversaries

Mr. Robert Garlock	1992
Mr. Charles Jones Jr.	1996
Mr. Walter Lee	1996
Ms. Beddie Bonner	2001
Mr. Alphonso Jones	2004
Ms. Orima Matzelle	2004
Ms. Sandra Jones	2004
Ms. Marcia Wildhorn	2004
Mr. Daryl Sweatman	2004
Ms. Marilyn Green	2004
Ms. Marie Griebisch	2004
Mr. Phillip Guess	2004
Mr. Darrell Guidry	2004
Ms. Catherine Hallett	2004
Ms. Shearan Haselden	2004
Mr. Jeffery Herman	2004
Mr. Christopher Cunningham	2004
Mr. Kevin Davis	2004
Mr. Ricky Buggs	2004
Ms. Kim Alston	2004
Ms. Annie Brisbon	2004
Ms. Yolanda Price	2004
Mr. Anthony Mozee	2004
Mr. Richard Mraz	2004
Ms. Georgia Newkirk	2004
Ms. Wanda Rodriguez	2004
Ms. Jeanette Salyer	2004
Mr. Willie Singleton	2004
Ms. Angela Bevins	2004
Mr. Terrence Rhone	2005
Mr. Jeffrey Smith	2006
Ms. Jacqueline Dixon	2006

Stay informed!

<http://afge.org> www.aflcio.org
<http://www.unionvoice.org>
<http://www.showusthejobs.com>
<http://www.charlestonlaborcouncil.org>
<http://www.unionblog.com>
<http://www.govexec.com>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>
<http://www.retiredamericans.org>
<http://www.thenation.com>
<http://www.democrats.org>
<http://www.laboreducator.org>
<http://narfe.org>
<http://www.FedSpending.org>
<http://spewingforth.blogspot.com>
<http://www.publiccitizen.org>
<http://www.workers.org>
<http://www.labornet.org>

South Carolina Fair Share 803-252-9813

Stay on top of the issues at the state house and how they affect you!

Know what your state representatives are doing, saying and how they are voting!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Remember:

Together we have a strong collective voice as individuals we are but a tiny weak squeak!!!!

Keep in touch with AFGE Local 1869

<http://www.AFGElocal1869.org>

- The union office is now on the Charleston AFB LAN. Our E-mail address is :
- CHARLESTON.AFGE@CHARLESTON.AF.MIL
- If we are out of the office, send an email with your concerns or problem. We will have a written record of your inquiry and will get right back with you.

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