

Presidents Corner

Well, here we are in SC trying to beat the heat. With temps soaring into the upper 90's with the heat index reaching well over 100 degrees, it tends to make people want to stay indoors. I can't blame anyone for feeling that way. It is downright miserable to be outside in the middle of the day and have the sweat start to pour from your forehead just by standing there. There is one way to beat the heat this summer. Visit your local union office and have a cool refreshing soft drink on us. That's right ladies and gents, we have nice cool crisp refreshing soft drinks for you to enjoy. The office is air conditioned as well.

We have computers in the office that directly connect to the internet via cable internet service. These are Union owned computers and internet service, as Union Members you may use these computers free of charge to conduct personal business over the internet. Stop by anytime between the hours of 0730 and 1630.

There is a lot going on in the communities in which we live. I encourage everyone to take a good look at your community to see if there is anyway you could help to make a positive difference. Sometimes all it takes is just a little concern from a few people to make a world of difference.

Another area of interest is the Presidential Candidates. If you watch the news or read the paper, it is everywhere. Listen to the issues and what the candidates have to say. Ask yourself, how do these issues and answers affect your ability to earn a living? How will they affect the quality of your life at work? How will they affect your home life?

Make sure that you are registered to vote and get out there and support the candidate that you feel would do this country a great service. (voter registration forms are available in your union office)

Your voice needs to be heard in the 2008 elections. Don't delay, act now!! If you need assistance with registering to vote, please stop by the union office and see me. I will help you fill out the registration form, and we will even mail it for you in a prepaid envelope. All you need to do is come by the office and give 3 minutes of your time. Simple!!! Easy!!!! Quick!!!! Very Important!!!!

The next Membership meeting will be on August 14th 2007 at 4:30 pm. I ask that our members support Betty Brisbon, Executive Vice-President, by attending the meeting. I will be in Washington DC at a summit meeting for BRAC (Joint basing). I will see everyone in September.

Editorial

Senator Jim DeMint was recently quoted as saying "We have to stop the unions from gaining new members because it would help Democrats be elected".

What does this say to me? It tells me that the Republicans are afraid of you the 'Union Members'. We would have them shaking in their shoes, if we as Union Activists would ban together and speak out on the issues that affect us.

If we, as Union Activists, would speak out for our brothers and sisters at TSA, they would have collective bargaining right, today.

If we, as Union Activists, had spoken out in the beginning of this nightmare called "NSP" we would not be threatened with losing many of our rights as civil service employees.

Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler Corporation, in his recently published book, "Where have all the Leaders gone?" has this to say about the present administration.

"Am I the only guy in this country who's fed up with what's happening? Where the hell is the outrage? We should be screaming bloody murder. We've got a gang of clueless bozos steering our ship of state right over a cliff, we've got corporate gangsters stealing us blind and we can't even clean up after a hurricane much less build a hybrid car.

"So here's where we stand," he says. "We're immersed in a bloody war with no plan for winning and no plan for leaving. We're running the biggest deficit in the history of our country. We're losing the manufacturing edge to Asia, while our once-great companies are getting slaughtered by health care costs. Gas prices are skyrocketing and nobody in power has a coherent energy policy. Our schools are in trouble. Our borders are like sieves. The middle class is being squeezed every which way. These are times that cry out for leadership."

People are dying for intelligent analysis, he says but mostly they're dying for words of hope, not fear.

If you're going to be outraged about the lack of leadership in this country, health care is a good place to start. The situation is getting worse every year and nobody is doing a damn thing about it. ...The burden of health care can single-handedly wipe out the middle class.

"American democracy is a great thing," he writes. "Because no matter what they tell you, the American people, vote by vote, can create whatever they want to create. It's all in our hands. But we have to stay alert and keep ourselves informed. Democracy isn't a spectator sport."

There you have it 'SPORTS FANS' it is up to us! All we have to do is get up off our bottoms and get active!

As Union members (Activists) we need to show leadership in our families and communities by helping inform our friends, neighbors and families. We need to communicate on a regular basis with our elected officials and let them know where we stand on the issues. They should remember our names because they hear from us so often.

Otherwise they will listen to the other guys!

"With a push from Teddy Roosevelt, Congress passed the Food and Drug Act of 1906. But like the law every effort to regulate the industry (pharmaceutical) since has faced stiff resistance. Granted the pharmaceutical industry has helped make the nation healthier, kept us out of hospitals and nursing homes and extended our lives. Still, the industry continues to mix a potent brew of financial largess and political influence that at times has stymied public officials and overwhelmed lawmakers.

The drug and health products industry has directed \$93 Million to congressional and presidential candidates since 2000, according to the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

An army of 1,100 lawyers and arm-twisters has spent over \$1 billion since 1998, more than any other industry, to influence public officials and shape drug legislation."

In 1992 Eddie Murphy starred in "The Distinguished Gentleman" a movie about a con-man who ran for congress because he saw that it was easy to get big money from lobbyists who wanted to influence his voting.

How close to the truth was this fictional comedy? Well over the last few years we have seen that fiction and truth are very close to the same thing.

Yet, congress is reluctant to regulate It's self and put a stop to this steady stream of free cash. They will remain reluctant until we the voters get "fed up" and show our "outrage".

Get active! Remind congress that they work for us , the citizens, not huge corporations and special interest groups that have deep pockets.

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

AFGE PAC (Political Action Committee) is one way that AFGE members can help make our voice heard.

If each member would only give \$ 5, 10 or 15 dollars each pay period we could support more candidates that will support us.

I challenge each Local 1869 member to step forward and join AFGE PAC. Those that can, please join me at the Emerald level of PAC membership.

Del

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 believe 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!

AFGE BLOCKS DOL OUTSOURCING:

The Department of Labor (DOL) has canceled plans to outsource 258 administrative support jobs after well-organized opposition by AFGE Local 12, which represents employees in the DOL, and a strong lobbying effort by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). "We always knew that these privatization schemes were unfair, discriminatory, and jeopardized the DOL's mission to protect the American worker," said Alex Bastani president of AFGE's Local 12. "Now, we can continue to fulfill our mission without having to constantly look over our shoulder for the next contracting out effort." The DOL privatization efforts were derailed by Congressional legislation developed by Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD). "Privatization at the Department of Labor undermined the morale of the employees and challenged the agency's mission of protecting American workers and ensuring fairness and safety in the workplace," said John

Gage, AFGE national president. "We applaud Senator Mikulski for recognizing the essential work of the employees in the DOL."

Senate Democrats recently compromised on Homeland Security Legislation removing language that would have given TSA employees the right to collective bargaining. Why did they do this?

President Bush threatened to veto any bill that gave these American Citizens the right to bargain collectively and have a say in what happens to them at work. Most Republican senators are still afraid to go against the President's anti-worker beliefs and the Democrats could not get enough votes to override the veto.

Write letters or send emails to the Democratic leadership and thank them for their efforts!

Write letters to the senators from South Carolina and let them know that you are disappointed in their actions.

Senator Jim Demint

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FDA (Food and Drug Administration) is supposed to be a protector of the public. Right? Who pays for the FDA to perform their regulatory mission?

The FDA expects \$400 million from the drug industry to finance the approval process of brand name drugs next year. That distorts the approval process by accelerating the

availability of high-cost drugs at the expense of a growing backlog of low-cost generics whose approval depends on scarce federal funds.

Why is it that groups such as Public Citizen can issue warnings about dangerous drugs that are on the market, years before the FDA takes action and removes them from the market?

	Warning issued	Drug withdrawn
Vioxx	April '01	Sept. '04
Baycol	March '98	Aug. '01
Propulsid	Aug. '98	March '00
Rezulin	Jan. '98	March '00
Raxar	April '98	Oct. '99
Duract	Dec. '97	June '98
Redux	July '96	Sept. '97

Source: Public Citizens Health Research Group

“When you are getting paid directly from an industry you’re supposed to be regulating, *it takes quite abit of edge out of the regulating*”.

Sidney Wolfe, M.D., director of health research, Public Citizen

Source: AARP Bulletin

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

The coalition of labor unions last Monday filed a petition for a full appeals court review of a ruling that upheld the Defense Department's new personnel and labor relations rules.

The unions are seeking a rehearing of a decision issued in May by a panel of judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia regarding the department's National Security Personnel System. The appeals judges found that the law creating the system grants the Defense Department temporary authority to curtail the collective bargaining rights of employees, reversing a lower court's ruling.

The petition asks the full appeals court to review what the unions see as discrepancies between the May NSPS decision and an earlier decision involving personnel rules at the Homeland Security Department. In that case, decided last June, a separate three-judge appeals panel upheld a lower court ruling that struck down large parts of DHS' new labor relations system.

Monthly Membership Drawing

Stephanie Hammond, missed out on \$300.00 in the June Drawing during the monthly meeting!

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, active and retired are welcome to attend the Monthly Meeting. This is your Local and you should take an active part in its operation.

The August drawing will be for \$400.00

Legislative Corner

Legislative report

It's only July and already the House has passed a 3.5 percent pay raise for civilian federal employees for 2008. The Senate appears to be on track to back a similar adjustment. But does that mean federal employees will receive their raises on time next year? Not necessarily.

The House [moved quickly to pass](#) the pay raise just before the July recess, as part of the 2008 financial services spending bill. And Tuesday, a [Senate Appropriations subcommittee backed](#) the 3.5 percent pay hike in its version of the financial services bill.

But for federal employees to see the result in their paychecks at the start of 2008, a number of steps still must be completed. Once the Senate finishes the financial services legislation, members of each chamber will have to work out the differences between the two versions. After the conference committee reaches agreement, each chamber must pass the final version and President Bush must sign it.

"The Senate has yet to pass any of their appropriations bills, so it's hard to say when we'll get to conference," said Stephanie Lundberg, a spokeswoman for House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

The target adjournment date for Congress is Oct. 26, and the last possible moment Congress and the president can finish their work on time is Dec. 31. Then the pay increase could go directly into effect for the 2008 calendar year.

If there is a delay in Congress, however, employees will receive part of their raise retroactively. This is what happened in 2003 and 2004, when workers received their raises at least three months late.

The failure of Congress to enact an appropriations bill including the pay raise last year before it adjourned resulted in President Bush putting his recommendation for a 2.2 percent 2007 raise into effect by way of executive order. Labor unions and some lawmakers have said it was the lowest in almost 20 years.

Lundberg said that one foreseeable obstacle to timely approval of the 2008 raise is President Bush's threat to veto the bill over unrelated provisions regarding sanctions against Cuba and changing policies on abortion.

In addition, the president has objected to the 3.5 percent adjustment itself, arguing that it exceeds the average increase in private sector pay measured by the Labor Department's Employment Cost Index. The change in the ECI from September 2005 to September 2006 was 3 percent, the figure the president proposed in his 2008 budget request.

Colleen Kelley, president of the National Treasury Employees Union, said that year after year, NTEU reminds employees that the pay raise is not a guarantee. "This is an annual fight," she said, "especially when the administration continues to say it doesn't agree on parity and tries to act on lesser raises for civilian employees."

Kelley added, however, that the 2008 raise appears to be on track. "The support is there in both the House and Senate," she said, "and now it's just a matter of ensuring that the financial services bill gets passed in time."

By: Brittany R. Balenstedt
Source: Govexec.com

Legislative issues

Two supreme court rulings need congressional fixes!

The court limited a worker's window for filing a wage discrimination claim to one case, and in another it ruled that home care workers are not entitled to overtime pay under federal law.

In a case where Lily Ledbetter learned late in her 19 year career at Goodyear Tire & Rubber in Gadsden AL., that she learned less than all 15 men at the same management level. Ledbetter's initial salary matched that of her male colleagues but grew in smaller increments over time. The court ruled that that she should have filed her lawsuit within 180 days of when the discrimination began, not within 180 days from when she discovered it.

Now that makes real sense, doesn't it?

In another case, the court ruled that home care workers are providers of 'companionship' services, and thus are exempt from minimum wage and overtime laws.

Source: AARP Bulletin

Representation

The battle drags on and on and on!

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) attorney has been interviewing SSA employees and meeting with President Grausso, Steward Vera Oliver, past Ex-VP Richard Wood and met with past President Davids on several occasions.

Past President Davids has had one conference call with the Judge, NLRB and the attorney for SSA. The company is saying that they are prepared to stipulate that they are bound by the MOA and wants to settle the case out of court.

Court is set for July 16th and the company had tried to get a third extension. However the NLRB filed a brief against the extension and the Judge agreed. Another conference call occurred the eleventh and again on the thirteenth to discuss the settlement.

Local 1869 has also filed a request with the company for copies of the time and attendance records to verify how much money each non-member is owed in back pension payments.

We have had several complaints from SSA employees about the project manager clocking them out while they are still working. We want to file charges on this issue but we need the help of the employees. We must be able to prove the charges that we file. We can only get that proof from you the employees.

Keep copies of your time sheet or a diary of the hours that you work. Then bring your pay stubs and records to the Union office for us to compare. If you know that your time sheet has been altered and is different from your actual hours worked, come to the Union office and request a representative go with you to ask the project manager to correct the error. Always make such requests with witnesses, preferably more than one.

When you tell the Union that there is a problem but do not bring proof, there is very little we can do.

Also, Please educate the non-members on the benefits of membership and all 1869 has done and invite them to join our Local.

Local 1869 is working diligently to represent all of these employees, both members and non-members.

Labor History.....

July 09

New England Telephone “girls” strike for seven-hour workday, \$27 weekly pay after four years’ service - 1923

Five thousand demonstrators rally at the state capitol in Columbia, S.C. in support of the “Charleston Five,” labor activists charged with felony rioting during a police attack on a 2000 longshoremen’s picket of a non-union crew unloading a ship - 2001

July 10

Mary McLeod Bethune, educator and civil rights activist, born - 1875

July 11

Coeur d’Alene, Idaho miners seize coal mines - 1892

A nine-year strike, the longest in the history of the United Auto Workers, began at the Ohio Crankshaft Division of Park-Ohio Industries Inc. in Cuyahoga Heights, Ohio. Despite scabs, arrests and firings, UAW Local 91 members hung tough and in 1992 won a fair contract— 1983

July 12

Bisbee, Ariz. deports Wobblies; 1,186 miners sent into desert - 1917

Congress passes first minimum wage law, 33 cents an hour - 1933

July 13

Southern Tenant Farmers’ Union organized in Tyronza, Ark. - 1934

Detroit newspaper workers begin 19-month strike against Gannett, Knight-Ridder - 1995

July 14

Great Uprising, nationwide railway strike begins. In the following days, strike riots spread across the U.S. The next week, federal troops were called out to force an end to the strike - 1877

Woody Guthrie, songwriter of “This Land is Your Land” and “Union Maid,” born in Okemah, Okla. - 1912

July 15

50,000 lumberjacks strike for eight-hour day, Pacific Northwest (7/15/1917); United Steel Workers begin what would become a lengthy strike, lasting until the following January. More than 85 percent of U.S. steel production was shut down for most of the strike (7/15/1959)

Source: Union Communications

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 to 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.

July Anniversaries

Mr. Vernon Miller	1974
Ms. Colette Pittman	1975
Ms. Peggy Hart	1975
Mr. John Straley	1995
Ms. Anne Marie Egal	1995
Ms. Debra Anne Broger	1997
Mr. Robert Thomas	1999
Mr. William Merrit	2000
Mr. Ernest Brisbon	2001
Mr. Douglas McGill	2003
Mr. Eric Wiggins	2004
Ms. Carolyn Wright	2006
Mr. Phillip Powell	2006
Ms. Dorothy Oconner	2006

Ms. Madeline Geddis	2006
Ms. Virginia Kincaid	2006
Mr. Lionel Calvert	2006
Ms. Marilyn Harveland	2006
Mr. Samuel Kirton	2006

Stay informed!

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<http://www.showusthejobs.com>
<http://www.charlestonlaborcouncil.org>
<http://www.unionblog.com>
<http://www.govexec.com>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>
<http://www.retiredamericans.org>
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<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>
<http://capwiiz.com/narfe/home/>

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:

Keep in touch with AFGE Local 1869

<http://www.AFGELOCAL1869.org>

- The union office is 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.

AFGE Local 1869

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