

APRIL 2006



AFGE
Proud to Make America Work

The **SENTINEL**

AFGE LOCAL 933 NEWS

American Federation of Government Employees

www.AFGE933.com

WORKING HARD TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

The First Newsletter – Contributors needed

Hello to all our members of AFGE Local 933. As you know, there has been a change in leadership at the top. It is obvious to expect a transition period whereby the new leadership must get their bearings and assess the state of affairs. Despite a rocky first couple of months in office, the intent of the new leadership is to improve both the service and representation of its members.

Tentatively we plan to issue The Sentinel monthly. Obviously we would prefer this frequency in order to keep the membership informed. We are seeking volunteers to contribute to this newsletter and welcome all members to participate in whatever capacity they would like. You don't have to put full-time effort into it, if we can get enough contributors, occasional contributions would work out great. For all those interested in helping with writing, preparing, producing, drawing cartoons, or distributing the newsletter; please stop by the union office and speak with Yvonne Jackson (Secretary) Editor or call 64763. Jimmy Taylor, of Laboratory Service, is the Publishing Editor; with whom Ms Jackson will be working with. All copies of the newsletter will also be available on-line in our website www.afge933.com.

Our website continues www.afge933.com

Please visit this local's official website routinely to obtain more timely updates on events, news, articles of interest, and information relative to this local and the national organization that we are affiliated with. Also you will find listings of benefits exclusive to being a member that many simply are not aware of. In addition to more current news or basic information such as our Master Agreement, By-Laws, and various forms; you can also find photos of events and functions, just who your stewards & executive board consists of, and members themselves. While www.afge933.com will be in a constant state of improvement and refinement, we hope to better provide information access to all those not easily able to continually stop the local's office. If you have ideas for things you would like to see in our website or contribute yourself, please feel free to contact the office. Again, please visit us at www.afge933.com

We would like to share your news.

If you have a major (or minor) event in your life (i.e. marriage, birth or child or grandchild, graduation, etc.) please let us know and we can post it here, space permitting. Call Yvonne at ext 34763.



John Gage - National President to visit this Local

John Gage, National President of AFGE in Washington DC, will be here on April 27, 2006. A reception will be held for him in the union office at 3:30pm – 4:45pm and the monthly membership meeting will follow at 4:45pm in the auditorium. Local 933 members mark your calendars and come out to meet and greet our National President.

You can read more about John Gage on our website at www.afge933.com

New Executive Board Undergo Changes

Below are the new board members of this local. Pictured are (from left to right): Fred Harris, Natasha Davis-Hill, Angela Bedia, Ursala Baker-Dunson, Johnnie Carter, James Davis, Thomas Lunger, Latrice Davis, Benjamin Mahan. Antonio Wallace resigned early Feb. and Angela Bedia has resigned late March. Thus, the position of First Vice has been filled by retired James Davis An official swearing in for the temporary positions was conducted by Dorothy James, the National Vice President during a special meeting held in February. Paula Baker has been voted in by the Executive Board (Per Local 933 By-Laws) to temporarily fill the Financial Secretary position. As you may not know, there is considerable expense and effort in preparing for and holding an election. Therefore it will take some time before this can be accomplished. Also please be aware that this administration came into office with literally only a couple dollars in its account, available to this locals needs.



Our jobs are very important to us regardless as to how big or small our contributions are to the mission or goal of the institution that we work within. At times one may truly not recognize his or her real contribution to the mission of the institution for reasons unrelated to whether or not one is committed or not committed to what he or she does to make a living. When one is unable to make the connection, deal with change and move from one system to another, this is often referred to as a paradigm shift, or shifting of the paradigm.

Think of a Paradigm Shift as a change from one way of thinking to another. During the past 20 plus years many of the jobs themselves at the VA have undergone changes that we may have paid very little attention to. Example, let's take EMS service for instance. Back then the people who did the cleaning were referred to as janitors, and the jobs appeared very simple. They are now referred to as sanitation engineers, or environmental managers and workers as a result of changes to a modern society and how we live. You now have the red bags for dangerous biohazard material, which was not really understood back then, and containers to protect all



employees from needle sticks, even the use of chemicals today requires a certain knowledge and skill. Another example is the file room, which appears rather obscure and often referred to as a low totem pole job;

has gone high tech as a result of efficiency through the use of computers, scanners, and other informational retrieval devices which have really contributed in a very big way. Even further, privacy laws such as the HIPPA act has also affected this change causing these often low wage earners to be guardians protecting the veteran and his or her most important asset, information. Every job has an important function, despite its grungy appearance on the totem pole.

You are doing an excellent job, despite that at times not being told or realizing that you are. Continue to keep up the good work, because change has affected you in one way or another through shifting of the paradigm. Give thought to how your job may or may not have gone through change, (painters no longer have to deal with lead, insulation has become asbestos free, office workers no longer has to use a typewriter, the dock worker must wear steel toed shoes etc.) - from one paradigm to another, stay focused and encourage change just as the model "T" changed transportation with the automobile.

Benjamin Mahan - President

Financial Records & Meeting Minutes to be Available on-line

Now you can view the meeting minutes and monthly financial reports, both will soon be available on line at www.afge933.com, under the minutes tab. A copy will also be available in the display cases in the Lower Level near the union break room.



The Chief Steward's Corner

Most grievances derive from miscommunication or a simple misunderstanding. I'd like to encourage employees to meet with their union representative and their immediate supervisor to discuss any problems or disputes. Most issues can be settled amicably at that level. If in the event a resolution can not be achieved please remember; time is of the essence. The union can act on any problem, at anytime, if the problem is an ongoing. If not, we have a 30 day window of opportunity. Local 933 is here to serve you. Please stop by. *Ursula Baker-Dunson Chief Steward*



New Steward Training Provided.

On Feb 22 & 23, this local invited all stewards and officers to a two-day training event held here to better prepare our stewards to represent the employees. The steward base has grown considerably. While this may only be a start, we felt the need to better prepare the newer stewards and tune up the incumbent ones that are essential to servicing its membership. Additional training will take place in May. This training contains vital information to help stewards in the areas of Title 38 and Collective Bargaining issues.

Membership is up and climbing

Alvin Dawson, Wendy Jenkins, Marion Friendly, Rhonda Hines, Trena McClure-El, Robert Molitoris, Monique Jackson, Anthony Davis, Gloria Stegall, Jennifer Bedell, William Penn III, Carlton Williams, Jay Legallee, Lonnie Harper, David Calton, Kenneth Adams, Linda Kelleghan, James Sanders, Marinus Wolthais, Harold Wolan, Susan Weir, Carmen Parker, Shafeeq Khan, Henry Hardwick, Tonya Scruse, Charlotte Grigsby, Byron Washington, Stephen Lent, Kelly Barkley, Maia Bragg, and Sylvia Riley. AFGE Local 933 would like to formally welcome you!

Food & Fair, a large turnout - more to come

On Friday March 10th the union held a lunch & vendor fair for employees. It included a hotdog, chips & drink for a dollar. Plus we had outside vendors available who offered their respective services as well as discount memberships. There was a great turnout and it was a rather good bargain by any standard. We offered 900 hotdogs, all of which sold out. AFGE Local 933 will be having fundraisers each month. You can view a slideshow on our website at www.afge933.com Also we will be having a rib tip sale the week of May 5, 2006. There will be more events to come so keep a look out.



Office Remodeling

The AFGE Office will get a little face-lift. Its former configuration wasn't as efficient in utilizing maximum efficiency. It is being cleaned, reconfigured and remodeled for more desk space. The AFGE break room and Steward Office will also be included in this remodeling project. There will be a computer, snack, and beverage machines added also to better serve members on all shifts.

Advertise your business here.

If you have a business, a skill, a trade, or provide a service and are a union member, let us know and space permitting, we can post it for you here. It's our way to better serve and help our members, both to those who are in need of it and those who provide it.



Condolences

AFGE would like to send condolences to the following members in the loss of their loved ones: Laverne Tucker (Husband); Elizabeth Jones (Daughter); Blanche Jenkins (Mother-in-Law); Wilborn Sargent (Father); James Shaw (Father).



Full-Time Receptionist

Please welcome Yvonne Jackson, the union local's new full time receptionist. In order to better service our membership. The office will be open all day during normal business hours as members expect, your phone calls should be answered, and access to the office will be improved. She also happens to be this paper's new News Editor.



Did You Know?

Great Lakes National Cemetery is now a part of the AFGE Local 933 family. In February 2006 the Great Lakes National Cemetery had eight of the nine employees become affiliated with our local. Two of the employees there Jay Le'Gallee and James Sanders are stewards on site to help fellow employees with union issues. Welcome!

NEED A LAPTOP COMPUTER? Dell - Gateway - Apple !

3 year warranty, no interest, home delivery, no credit check, S/H included, no down payment, easy payroll deductions, software bundle. AFGE members can purchase a computer through the Easy Computer Purchase Program (ECP2), making owning one easily possible at discount prices by harnessing the purchasing power of group volume discounts.



As for laptops, you can select from 8 models ranging from a Celeron 1.4GHz processor with 250 Mb Ram, 15 inch screen, 40 GB harddrive, CDRW/DVD for only \$37 each pay. Or up to a Dual-Core 2GHz, 512 Mb Ram, 17.1 inch screen, CDRW/DVD-RW for \$115 each pay. To find out more, visit AFGE's website at: www.afge.ecp2.com

Easter Baskets AFGE celebrates Easter & you

Local 933 Celebrated the Easter Holiday and its members by hosting a free Easter Basket raffle. Tickets were given out April 7 and April 10 - April 12.

The union office opened extra early and closed late those days to accommodate all shifts with tickets. The drawing took place on April 13th at noon. Everyone who entered into the drawing won an Easter basket. There were even some who won extra prizes. The baskets were donated by generous contributors and not taken out of membership dues. Now that's what we call dedication folks! See slideshow online.



AFGE Local 933 Word Search Puzzle

Can you find all the words related to this local?
(Words can be oriented in any direction & diagonally)

m	s	a	e	c	c	j	e	c	i	f	f	o	e	i	u	b	n	i	r
f	e	r	i	e	o	a	o	y	t	i	r	u	c	e	s	m	o	e	t
e	e	f	e	h	n	m	l	h	r	n	b	e	t	i	t	r	s	o	l
g	y	r	o	g	d	e	p	d	n	a	s	l	c	u	s	s	n	s	k
r	o	a	c	n	u	s	i	l	s	n	t	a	u	i	d	l	u	u	p
k	l	v	p	i	c	j	e	r	a	c	i	e	s	e	r	e	d	r	o
i	p	a	e	d	t	t	n	e	d	i	s	e	r	p	a	t	o	s	t
m	m	n	c	r	e	t	s	a	m	a	n	f	o	c	w	f	a	a	l
r	e	s	p	o	n	s	i	b	i	l	i	t	y	r	e	l	v	l	n
t	h	m	v	c	l	m	o	l	n	r	t	o	s	s	t	s	i	a	e
e	s	e	m	e	a	m	e	r	i	c	a	n	s	o	s	h	o	t	g
m	t	l	c	r	r	t	r	n	s	n	o	i	t	a	p	u	c	c	o
f	h	b	f	e	d	e	r	a	t	i	o	n	a	t	a	s	h	a	t
o	o	o	t	u	g	o	v	e	r	n	m	e	n	t	n	s	f	r	i
j	m	r	r	n	s	i	v	a	d	s	u	n	a	r	g	e	t	a	
e	a	p	u	o	i	u	e	l	t	s	a	g	r	e	e	m	e	n	t
c	s	l	i	r	v	r	e	o	i	t	u	s	k	n	e	a	l	o	e
i	d	n	r	i	r	l	a	s	o	p	o	r	p	e	r	h	a	c	c
v	u	a	g	r	e	e	m	e	n	t	o	b	e	n	j	a	m	i	n
e	h	r	e	t	s	a	m	c	r	w	s	f	m	r	c	n	t	r	t

Puzzle by Jimmy Taylor

- | | |
|--|---|
| benjamin
mahan
fred
harris
natasha
hill
davis
ursala
dunson
johnnie
carter
james
thomas
lunger
latrice
afge
local
union
master
agreement
government
american
federation
of
employees
administration
government | negotiate
problems
complaints
job
security
stewards
office
conduct
responsibility
occupation
professional
pay
proposal
contract
master
agreement
blue
book
president
vice
treasurer
financial
secretary
recording
trustee
serving
workers |
|--|---|

Give Up? Too Tough for you? The old mind too slow?
Find the answers at www.afge933.com (on the Newsletter Page)

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The Sentinel
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Paula Baker • Financial Secretary	Fred Harris • Trustee
Latrice Davis • Recording Secretary	Ursala Baker-Dunson • Trustee