



AFGE NEWS

for SSA Field Offices & TSCs - Region Six

For 7,000 TSC & Field Office Employees in Arkansas,
Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas

December, 1998
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Union Begins Contract Bargaining 1/99

On Friday, December 4, SSA and AFGE exchanged contract proposals. Both SSA and AFGE agreed not to touch important employee benefits and protections such as the VDT Eyeglass MOU in Article 9. Generally, however, SSA's proposals aim to contract and take back employee rights, benefits and protections, while giving local managers more flexibility and less accountability in order to make fewer employees do more work with less training, less flexible hours, less opportunity for upward mobility, etc.

Negotiating for AFGE from our Region is Field Office Council Executive Vice President Ralph de Juliis (Tulsa, OK). Negotiating for SSA from our Region is Area 1 Director, Shelton Walters. Between partnership meeting and bargaining, Ralph will be Baltimore, every week but two between January 4, 1999 and May 20, 1999. Our condolences to his wife, Dallas Regional Communications Officer Mary de Juliis (Muskogee, OK).

While SSA and AFGE have been preparing contract proposals, they have also been meeting in the Family Friendly Workgroup chartered by the National Partnership Council.

In that workgroup, SSA and AFGE have been grappling (without much success) with expanded flextime, 4/10, work-at-home, flexiplace, transit subsidies. According to unnamed sources, SSA has been very resistant to any expansion of employee flexibility for TSRs.

SSA Implements Immediate 800 Number Claims Taking

SSA will begin a pilot that allows 800 number callers seeking an appointment to file a claim the option of having their claims taken immediately by telephone.

Field Office negotiators, Debbie Fredericksen, and our own Josie Marrujo (Albuquerque TSC) had been holding out for several modifications to SSA's proposal. SSA did not want to promote any TSRs. SSA did want to separately track the quality of those teleclaims taken in the PSCs. SSA was making no provision for the impact on Field Office productivity as the easy claims were skimmed off by this new service. SSA wanted the Union's agreement to do 800 claims taking mostly in the PSCs.

When the time allotted for bargaining had expired, AFGE and SSA had no agreement and were at impasse. Both Fredericksen and Marrujo complained that the male, Union negotiators from the PSCs were openly disrespectful to them in front on SSA management. Those same negotiators told SSA management that they did not understand what Field and TSC interests Fredericksen and Marrujo were trying to have addressed at the interest-based bargaining sessions. Much to the surprise of Fredericksen and Marrujo, without consultation with them or addressing the Field and TSC interests, the Union's chief negotiator from the Birmingham, AL PSC, Local President Anthony Young, agreed to everything SSA management wanted because it brought work into the PSC, insuring PSC jobs, and potentially provided promotions and overtime for his PSC employees. Both Fredericksen and Marrujo relayed their dissatisfaction and sense of betrayal to SSA Field Office Council 220 President, Witold Skwierczynski, for discussion with the other Union component Presidents in SSA.

Regional Partnership Council Meets

Just before Thanksgiving, on November 23 and 24, the AFGE-SSA Dallas Regional Partnership Council met. Leading the six person Union partnership team were the newly elected officers of Council 220 in the Dallas Region: Regional Vice President Pablo Hernandez (McAllen, TX), Administrative Officer Lollie Lezcano (Houston, TX) and Communications Officer Mary de Juliis. Lezcano is the Union co-chair. Ray Brammer, DARC-MOS, is the SSA co-chair. Also on the SSA partnership team is Regional Commissioner Horace Dickerson, ARC-MOS Earl Melebeck. Awards were discussed. An agreement was reached to produce and distribute to all Dallas Regional employees an outline and video about workgroups. There is an agreement to start Employee Involvement Training again, once

there is a budget for training. There was also an agreement to update training and bring the trainers in for refresher training. There was discussion of re-implementing numerics and a clear understanding that numerics would NOT be applicable to individuals nor used in individual performance appraisals or as a basis for disciplinary actions against individuals.

The meeting went well enough that the SSA and AFGE went to dinner together at MOMO's an Italian restaurant in the Yuppie part of Dallas.

There are still problems and issues that the Partnership Council has yet to address and resolve. SSA team members flew into Dallas on Sunday so they could prepare. The Union team got no preparation time. Despite having two long days, the Union team members were not give credit hours or any compensation for travel outside of duty hours. There is no agreement on the next meeting date. These problems may never be resolved since, at the National level, SSA has proposed telephone briefings instead of meetings, no regular meetings of partnership councils and no payment of travel and per diem though SSA requires Union officials to travel if the Union actually wants to meet face-to-face with management.

YOUR UNION

Every AFGE Local representing SSA Field Office employees is part of a much bigger organization. Each Local is part of Council 220 for the Dallas Region, which, in turn, is the part of AFGE Council 220 which is BARGAINING COUNCIL for SSA TSCs and Field Offices throughout the country. Council 220 is part of the AFGE/SSA GENERAL COMMITTEE which is the bargaining agent for all SSA employees in the AFGE bargaining unit. AFGE is part of the AFL-CIO.

In addition to belonging to those Bargaining Councils, your local is also part of an AFGE District which is based, not on bargaining council and the Federal Agency we work for, but instead is based on GEOGRAPHY. While all of us are part of the same bargaining councils, we are in different AFGE DISTRICTS, depending on which state our Local is headquartered in.

After all that, if you have a problem, if you want information about UNION PRIVILEGE credit cards, mortgages, loan programs, buying services,

travel programs, life insurance, college financing programs, legal services, AFGE dental insurance, AFGE prescriptions plans, AFGE scholarships, discounts for hearing aides, car rentals, flowers, interstate moving, Universal Studio, Sea World, Disney and Six Flag, contact your Local Representative first.

Having said that, you should know who your AFGE Leaders and Officers are:

COUNCIL 220 DALLAS REGION:

Pablo Hernandez, Regional Vice President
c/o Social Security Administration
320 North Main Street
McAllen, Texas 78501

VOICE: 956-686-3002
FAX: 956-971-8421
ccMail: Pablo R Hernandez at ~DAL841

Lollie Lezcano, Administration Officer
P. O. Box 61005
Houston, Texas 77208

VOICE: 713-718-3004
FAX: 713-718-3028
ccMail: Lollie Lezcano at ~DALD64

Mary de Juliis, Communications Officer
c/o Social Security Administration
125 South Main Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401

VOICE: 918-687-2560 ext. 3315
FAX: 918-687-2246
On the Internet: afgemary@fullnet.net

LOCAL PRESIDENTS

AFGE LOCAL 2258
Steve Peterson, President
c/o Social Security Administration
4328 Woodcock Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78228

VOICE: 210-731-3438
FAX: 210-731-3441 (SSA's)
ccMail: Steve Peterson at ~DAL852

AFGE LOCAL 2505

James M. Johnson, President
P. O. Box 221
Glenpool, Oklahoma 74033

VOICE/FAX: 918-581-6380
ccMail: James-Taz Johnson at ~DAL784

AFGE LOCAL 2727

Dana McCracken, President
c/o Social Security Administration
10600 Steppington Drive
Dallas, Texas 75230

VOICE: 214-343-2333
FAX: 214-346-2333
ccMail: Dana McCracken at ~DAL814

AFGE LOCAL 3184

Lollie Lezcano, President
(See Above)

AFGE LOCAL 3291

Alan Seagrave, President
P. O. Box 2218
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72402

VOICE: 870-931-7433 ex. 206
FAX: 870-931-5943 (SSA's)

AFGE LOCAL 3785

Ray Cruz, President
4720 Delamar NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110

VOICE: 505-262-6010
FAX: 505-262-6114 (SSA's)

AFGE LOCAL 3388

Pablo Hernandez, President
(See Above)

AFGE LOCAL 4041

Josie Marrujo, President
6805 Coors Boulevard SW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87121

VOICE: 505-346-6646
FAX: 505-346-6627
ccMail: Jose Marrujo at ~DALE58B
On the Internet: afge4041@flashnet.net

AFGE COUNCIL 220

Witold Skwierczynski, President
P. O. Box 617576
Chicago, Illinois 60661-7576

VOICE: 312-575-5620
FAX: 312-575-5625
ccMail: ||AFGE Council 220 at ~Chicago
On the Internet: afge_council_220@ibm.net

AFGE/SSA GENERAL COMMITTEE

Witold Skwierczynski, Spokesperson
(See Above)

AFGE DISTRICT 9

(Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri)
Gary Miles, National Vice President
3000 Tower Drive, Suite 708
Del City, Oklahoma 73115

VOICE: 405-670-2656
FAX: 405-677-8481
On the Internet: milesg@inetmail.att.net

AFGE DISTRICT 10

(Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas, Mississippi, Panama)
Roy Flores, National Vice President
6800 Park Ten Blvd., Suite 291-W
San Antonio, Texas 78213

VOICE: 210-735-8900
FAX: 210-735-0909
On the Internet: florer@afge.org

AFGE DISASTER RELIEF FUND

In the aftermath of the Oklahoma City tragedy, AFGE set up a charitable foundation, Federal Employee Disaster Support, Inc. (FEDS), whose purpose is to provide financial relief and assistance to federal employees who are the victims of disasters.

Contributions to FEDS are tax deductible and contributions have been made in the past to victims of bombings, hurricanes, floods, etc.

With the current challenges facing federal employees in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana who live and work in the path of Hurricane Georges, AFGE is asking Locals and individual members to make contributions to:

FEDS, Inc.
American Federation of
Government Employees
80 F Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001



The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of its editors and the Dallas Region of AFGE Council 220. They are not necessarily those of AFGE National Office, District 9 and 10 Offices or those of AFGE Council 220.

Members are encouraged to express their concerns and opinions to the newsletter staff. Please contact Mary de Juliis, Regional Communications Officer. Articles and letters to the editor may be edited.