

Local Presidents 8th District Conference Call
December 17, 2014

Election 2014: A huge thanks to all of our activists and volunteers, but especially to Local 2547 President Patrick Kearns who ran the Iowa City office, Local 836 President Jeremy Maske and VP Matt Perlinger, Local 3129 retiree Deb Fredrickson and finally Local 3129 officer Jim Rand who won an award from the Minnesota AFL-CIO for knocking on 2,300 doors during Election 2014! We received a very nice letter from the the Iowa AFL-CIO President stating the important role AFGE played in Election 2014.

Although the results were not what we expected, we plan to continue to prevail in our efforts to keep our Union strong and protect those we represent.

AFGE has put out a list of republican members of Congress that we need to try to build relationships with. Congressman Fortenberry from Nebraska voted right on Official Time and dues deduction, so we need to thank him for that and continue to keep him on our side regarding those issues. We need to build a relationship with David Young from Iowa, newly elected Congressman. In the Senate we need to educate and work with Grassley (Iowa) and Senator Hoeven (North Dakota). Senator Hoeven and Grassley have supported us on a few issues, but we need to build on that momentum.

We elected Brad Ashford (D) Nebraska and hope to form a relationship with him. But, overall the goal is to have an AFGE member in every District across the nation who has a relationship that is strong enough to be able to meet and confer with all members of Congress, regardless of their party. If you do not have a Legislative Political Coordinator in your Local please consider soliciting from your membership someone who is interested in politics and our issues. We will have another training as soon as we get our numbers up.

I forwarded a copy of the 2015 Congressional calendar please keep it and schedule your appointments!

The Future of Federal Work Force: There seems to be some concern arising about why and what is happening to the Federal work force. With the freeze on wages, the

government shutdown, furloughs, attacks on our benefits and the total disregard for Federal employees it seems that the younglings are not so interested in getting into this drama. There was an article in NARFE (National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees) that addresses the issues. If you are not a member of NARFE you might want to join. This group lobbies with us on Federal employee issues.

Fox news also just recently addressed the concerns with the loss of the baby boomers and the difficulty hiring the younger generation to join the Federal workforce. Seems that people are starting to wake up!

PAC and LAF: The 8th District received an award for the highest percentage of Locals that paid their LAF. 70.59% of our Locals paid their LAF. Thanks to those who participated and made us number #1!

We continue to be in the top two for PAC contributors, but unfortunately we lost our #1 spot to District 6. Let me know if there is anything that I can do to assist you in increasing your PAC by having a party or having our LPO come out to your Local. The District will assist in any way.

QUARTERLY REPORT: Anyone who would like a copy of the quarterly report of expenditures to Locals please let me know and we will mail you a copy.

ORGANIZING: We understand the confusion that has been with all of the Organizing Drives going on: VA 100/100, DEFCON 100/100, TSA 100/100, BOP 100/100 and Bonus Bucks 50/50). There have been complaints regarding the impact this has on the Local treasurer and the Local's finances and that we should not have to pay people to join our Locals, that AFGE must have a lot of money if they can continue these drives and concerns that Locals are not being totally reimbursed or are getting reimbursed very slowly. If a Local does not want to participate in these campaigns they do not have to. Putting out money from the Local is the membership's choice.

We will be scheduling another Organizing Institute (OIT) this year. Please give us some dates that would work best for you.

There was discussion regarding what works. Many felt that NEO is a great way to sign up people, but some are better at it than others. Patrick Kearns, President of Local 2547, has agreed to have two of his Organizing Committee/officers assist other Locals. The District will fund for this. He also stated that he gives out T-shirts and cups to his new members, not always cash. Every Wednesday they have free pop for their members. Jennifer Luther Olson, President Local 3884, shared that their Buffalo Wings challenge was a hit last year, as people joined so they could participate. They intend to have another one in 2015. Anyone who has other suggestions as to what they think would work to increase membership or what works for them please share with the District.

We continue to be short of 10,000 active by just 25-30 every month. We would love to get over that hump!

Please forward dates that will work for you for organizing this year. We currently have a week in June for Sioux Falls area.

Recently, we requested that the Locals give us ideas regarding what kind of gifts we could or should set up for organizing drives. The response was very poor. It was suggested on the call that maybe we should have the organizing drives based on agencies, so that each group from various agencies would be competing against each other, such as VA, SSA, USDA, DOD, etc.

CLC's: If you are not a member of your CLC please consider joining. There seems to be some confusion as to the important role that the CLCs play. They not only work on legislative issues for the state, but also work with the AFL and Locals to assist in organizing, picketing and basic willingness to drive Union agendas forward.

FEDERAL Nurses Week: AFGE had their first Federal Nurses week, September 22nd to the 28th. The majority of District Locals gave out pens, root beer floats, Lunch and Learns and other events to recognize the work nurses do for the public.