

**AFGE**

## American Federation of Government Employees

Council of Prison Locals C-33

Local 1034

FCC Pollock, La.

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Tuesday, June 10, 2014**

## Web News Letter

We are happy to address our members in this way of a newsletter. These will stay posted on our website for you to review as you feel free. We have had a very busy and successful period of representing you. We are representing more of you now than we ever have in the past. We have become quite efficient at representing our members and the Bargaining Unit as a whole. The Union Executive board has never been as successful, dedicated and as trained as we are today. As we grow and our membership gets educated of their rights, our workload only gets bigger. I personally want to thank you for the support you have given us to be able to represent you and to take care of our staff as only the Union can and will do.

## Staff Safety

During the past year we have made tremendous breakthroughs to enhancing the safety of our staff that we have never been able to do in the past. What most of you don't know is that when officer Thomas Brister was assaulted we went to work in a way that we had never done before. We took every angle available to us and made officer Brister somewhat famous and showed the video of his assault across the nation, in every congressman and senator's office we walked into. From that, the OC Spray was introduced as a Pilot Program. Later after Cory Barron and Tim Raffray were assaulted we picked up our game even more. We conducted informational pickets and attended others across the region to let the public know about our staff safety issues. Brister and Raffray went to Washington DC with myself and our Legislative Coordinator Thomas Moore. We attended a national press conference where they were formally recognized along with the families of the fallen officer's families. They bravely told their stories to the Media, and to anyone that would listen. From these and many other efforts from your Local and National Union we got #2's in our housing units permanently. Our next goal is to have the #2's in the Units on the AM shift during the week as well.

## Union and Management Relations (Partnership)

Just because we fight with management on a lot if things doesn't mean we fight about everything. The differences that we have, come with the territory and we don't always have to be bitter and not recognize the good that they do at times. I want to thank the administration for their silent support of what we as a union have done and for their recognizing some of the changes that needed to be made and taking yours and our suggestions and making changes to procedures to help to make our staff safer. After Ofc. Brister was assaulted it was put into works to take all of the hard soled boots form the inmates except on their work sites. After Barron was assaulted the administration deemed that if an inmate had a lock on his person he was considered to have a weapon on him. After Raffray was assaulted Warden Carvajal and Regional Director Keller put into place the #2 rovers in the Housing Units without an increase in budget and before the agency as a whole decided to make permanent #2's in all of the Housing units across the BOP as we have it now. These and other important changes were all ideas from you or from the Union that we brought to them and they said yes.

I don't truly know if a Union and an Administration can completely have a partnership because then a Union would not be doing it's job effectively if they went along with everything the Administration said or Vice Versa, but I do believe that the current Administration does have the right attitude about staff safety just from what I mentioned above as well as a few other things not mentioned. So as the Director Mr. Samuels and our National President of CPL 33 Eric Young strive to push us to have a partnership locally we will continue to come together on as many issues as possible and continue to kept the lines of communication open on your behalf.

## CPOF Project 2000 XXV

I have the honor to represent our Union and FCC Pollock at the annual Correctional Peace Officer's Foundation's (CPOF) Project 2000 XXV this year in Seattle, Wa. It seems every year we have a staff member who is invited and honored at these events due to them being brutally assaulted by the inmates we are charged with to care for and protect every day. This year we happen to have two staff who are attending, Cory Barron and Tim Raffray. As you know these correctional Officers were assaulted and sustained life threatening injuries. I received a formal request from the CPOF to represent our local and these two staff at this event and to present them with honors at the honors ceremonies. When I presented this at the meeting I am pleased to say the body voted to send me. I am very honored and grateful to attend with my brothers and their families in this manner. They almost gave their lives for their job as correctional officers and we are so blessed to still have them with us today. Also at this event are the Eric Williams and Albarati families who will be honored as well. These two BOP staff lost their lives in the line of duty and will never be replaced. I am missing my daughter's birthday and all of the Correctional Worker's Week activities but I think this year it is very important for me to help honor the ones we still have with us. It should help remind me where we work every day as well as to help them through the trials they

now face in life that most of us can't imagine and have no idea of what they are going through now to cope with walking through the doors of the prison or even pull up into the parking lots. So hopefully my family and anyone else understands this time.

## **Arbitrations and Representing You**

Today as I am on this flight to CPOF Project 2000 XXV there is an arbitration hearing at the institution going on that has over 170 staff involved in it that were wrongly bypassed for overtime while they were at work and the supervisor said they could not contact them. It's part 2 of this particular arbitration. We won a threshold argument raised by the agency in an earlier hearing and now we are arguing the merits of the case which will probably be drug out over sever different sessions and most of the staff in the grievance will be called to testify on their own behalf.<sup>1</sup> Since the first part of this arbitration the agency has paid approximately 70 or more claims of bypassed overtime that we brought to their attention. The same lawyers who have won numerous cases and over 100,000 dollars for our employees are conducting this arbitration and are also handling our portal arbitration which will begin in about three weeks. We will update you as we move along and I encourage if you haven't signed up for the Portal to Portal you should do it now!! Currently we have over 70 arbitrations with only half of them scheduled. they vary from Untimely discipline cases to EEO violations and just about everything in between. Also we have settled around 40 grievances within the last year that adds up to 10's of thousands of dollars and others involved numerous cases of staff getting their disciplinary actions overturned and their records cleared of any disciplinary action.

<sup>1</sup> *(Just a quick update on this arbitration from the webmaster; the parties were able to agree that the staff were at work, and were bypassed for overtime that should have been offered, and that most witnesses testimonies would be similar, therefore there was no need to bring in all 176 individuals. The arbitration concluded on Thursday 6-5-14, and we will be waiting to receive the arbitrator's decision which should arrive around the end of the year.)*

## **Working With our Legislators**

Recently we have got a lot of support from our Congressional Leaders dealing with Staff Safety. It is attributed to our tireless work on Capital hill and locally to educate them and help make them understand what we do every day and the dangers of not properly funding our prisons. A couple of Days after we met with Senator Mary Landrieu to talk about pepper spray and funding she was in front of Attorney General, Eric Holder asking him about pepper spray and where he was putting the extra money the BOP was funded this year. And that week or the next the pepper spray pilot was expanded to the Unit Team Staff. That is just one instance of this. Also, we visited with our Congressman Vance McAlister and he also toured the USP about a month ago and after that visit he committed to backing all of the bills that are already in Congress and he said will be supporting the other bills going through congress that are attributed to the safety of our staff. So as we educate these congressional leaders and get their support we hope to get even more things done through them.

## **New Master Agreement**

After 13 years of waiting, Just last week our New Master Agreement was approved and signed and will be in effect soon. The agency is printing tens of thousands of copies and will be distributed very soon to all institutions. The National Executive Council is hosting a "New Master Agreement Training" in 2 weeks that our local E-Board will be attending. This training will be targeted towards how to handle all of the new and different things that can now be negotiated to include a Local Supplemental Agreement. All Locals from across the nation will be coming together to begin this process. Our plan is to negotiate a Local and separate agreement for each institution to include the Camp. These negotiations could include just about anything work related all the way down to the color of the walls in the institution so keep your eyes and ears open, I'm sure at some point we will be asking for ideas on different topics.