



OFFICERS ELECTED AT 35th CONVENTION

Harnage, Davis, Brooks

Over 1,400 delegates attending AFGE's 35th National Convention in Orlando, Florida, elected **Bobby L. Harnage** National President on August 23, 2000, on the first ballot with 68 percent of the vote. One runoff election took place before Convention delegates elected **Jim Davis** Secretary-Treasurer and **Andrea E. Brooks** Women's Director.

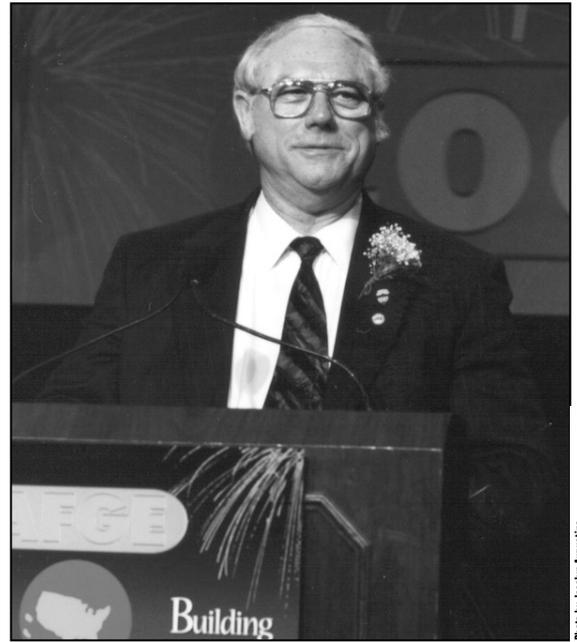
Under the banner *Today, Tomorrow, Together*, Harnage emphasized AFGE's unity and record growth since 1997—including some 17,000 new members who have joined since 1997's Convention.

"AFGE keeps growing in spite of continued threats of contracting out and privatization," stated Harnage. "Our union has become the undisputed leader in the fight against wasteful privatization. AFGE knows that nobody does the job better than government employees."

Harnage noted that his plans as National President include strengthening AFGE's grassroots network for rapid member mobilization around future challenges on Capitol Hill.

"AFGE members have sent a message to decision-makers in Washington, D.C. with this election," Harnage explained. "And, I am proud to speak for members of the nation's biggest, baddest and boldest union for government employees."

For more information on AFGE's 35th National Convention, including election results and speech transcripts, go to the *Members-Only* portion of AFGE's Web site at www.afge.org. The convention section will stay online through September 30, 2000.



President Bobby L. Harnage

Photo by Jocelyn Augustine



Secretary-Treasurer Jim Davis

Photo by Jocelyn Augustine



Women's Director Andrea E. Brooks

Photo by Jocelyn Augustine

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So You Think You've Heard It All Before?



A Message From President Bobby L. Harnage

It is election time again and come November 7th we are going to get a new set of bosses—whether we like it or not. This is democracy in action. I suppose I could spend this time telling you that it is your duty as Americans to vote and that millions of patriots (in and out of uniform) have put their life on the line protecting our right to choose our government.

And don't forget, for the federal work force, the President is our CEO and Congress is our Board of Directors. All good reasons to vote. Not to mention the fact that some elections are so close that they're decided by 10 or 20 votes. But you've heard this all before.

Let me see if I can come up with a few new reasons. The contractors who want to take our work and the investment bankers who want to get their hands on the social security trust fund vote. And, they vote in higher percentages than we do. This gives them collective power at the polls. That's right,

wealthy people vote in a much higher percentage than working people. Because of that they have greater influence on the outcome of elections than they deserve.

AFGE is about federal and D.C. workers acting collectively for economic justice, better wages, benefits and working conditions, job security and fair treatment on the job. Voting is one of the easiest ways we can act collectively. Between now and Election Day, study the candidates and issues. Read the materials from all sources about the campaigns and become informed.

On November 7th, join with thousands of your brother and sister AFGE members and send a message by voting for who you believe are the best candidates. The future of the country, our union and your family depend on it.

Contractors who want to take our work vote—and in higher percentages.

Union Insights... Union Insights... Union Insights

What issues concern you the most in this election?



Bill Thoms
Steward/Leg. Coord., Local 1164
Member for 20+ years
SSA
Salem, Mass.

The future of Social Security concerns me. I've been working at SSA for 25 years and can tell you that Social Security is the most significant social program ever put together. Bush supports privatization and the dismantling of Social Security while Gore supports the current system.



Marilyn W. Kelly
Exec. Vice Pres., Local 1976
Member for 23 years
VA
Lake City, Florida

The rising costs of health care and prescription drugs concern me in this election. We need controls on prescription drugs. Gore wants to help people be able to afford their medicine.



Richard Homer
Steward/SWAMP Coord., Local 1631
Member for 4 years
VA
Chillicothe, Ohio

Education concerns me in this election—especially here in Ohio. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled that education dollars are not being distributed equally throughout the state. We need to improve our education system the right way.

Officer Profiles

Jim Davis
Natl. Secretary-Treasurer
Former President C-214
Member since 1986
First government position was as a temporary sheet metal mechanic.

Andrea E. Brooks
Women's Director
Former 12th Dist. NVP
Member since 1963
First government position was with the United States Post Office.

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Bobby L. Harnage Sr., **National President**
Jim Davis, **National Secretary-Treasurer**
Andrea E. Brooks, **Dir., Women's/Fair Practices Depts.**

National Vice Presidents: District 2-Derrick F. Thomas; (732)828-9449; NY, NJ, CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT. District 3-Jeffery R. Williams; (610)660-0316; DE, PA. District 4-Joseph Flynn; (410)480-1820; MD, NC, VA, WV. District 5-Mary Lynn Walker; (770)907-2055; AL, FL, GA, SC, TN, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico. District 6-Arnold Scott; (317)542-0428; IN, KY, OH. District 7-Robert C. Nelson; (312)645-1803; IL, MI, WI. District 8-Terrence L. Rogers; (612)854-3216; IA, MN, NE, ND, SD. District 9-Michael Kelly; (405)670-2656; AR, KS, MO, OK. District 10-Roy Flores; (210)735-8900; LA, MS, TX, NM, Panama. District 11-Gerald D. Swanke; (360)253-2616; AK, CO, ID, MT, OR, UT, WA, WY, Guam, Okinawa. District 12-Eugene Hudson; (760)597-2100; AZ, CA, HI, NV. District 14-David J. Schlein; (202)639-6447; District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; Arlington and Fairfax Counties and the City of Alexandria in Virginia, Europe.

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Don't let someone else's opinion count more than yours. Vote.



www.afge.org



Online Learning Center

Distance Learning, E-Learning, Web-Based Training or Tele-Education. Whatever you chose to call this new form of education, it's now available to AFGE members.

AFGE, in conjunction with TelSim Inc., is offering the AFGE Online Learning Center to members and their families who are prepared to meet the challenges of the diverse and ever-evolving digital landscape. Members can take courses to upgrade skills without compromising time or money in the following areas:

Computers

- Basic and introductory computer and Internet skills.
- Intermediate level training for end-user applications: MS Office 2000 FrontPage 2000, Lotus Notes, etc.
- Advanced technical skills: Programming languages, database development, networking, and training certifications for A+, MCSE, Novell and Cisco.

Personal development

- Retirement planning, money management, communications and negotiating.

Student study

- SAT preparation for grammar and math.

A portion of the purchase price for each course will be placed into a Future Coursework Development Fund. The fund will be used to create courses unique to the needs of AFGE members.

AFGE's Online Learning Center is a groundbreaking and dynamic feature offered exclusively to AFGE members and their families. Visit the AFGE Online Learning Center through the *Members-Only* portion of AFGE's Web site www.afge.org.

Members Honored for Service

Local 1857's President **Jim Franco** was the first Local President in AFGE to request service pins and certificates from AFGE's 2000 Catalogue for Local members with longstanding memberships. Retiree and 3rd Vice President **Dave Hernandez** was recognized by Franco for maintaining his membership with the Local since 1954—46 years.



[l-r] Connie Calaway, Jim Franco and Dave Hernandez

Ex-Business Agent **Tony Roberts** has been a member for 25 years. Executive Secretary **Connie Calaway** has been a member for 23 years and Franco has been with the Local for 20 years.



James (Tony) Roberts

Local 1857, representing employees located on McClellan AFB, originally began as Lodge 1857 in 1954. Stewards collected dues from members at 50¢ per month and the Lodge's office was a garage operated from the home of Local President **Harry P. Smith**. As a result of a base closure decision, it is with great regret we note that McClellan AFB's official closure date is July 31, 2001.

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Court Reverses Itself Grants AFGE Request for Market-Rate Fees

In a precedent-setting decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has overturned its earlier ruling and decided that non-profit legal organizations such as AFGE may receive “market-rate attorney fees.”

The decision [*Larry Raney v. Federal Bureau of Prisons (BoP)*, 97-3469, 98-3043 (August 11, 2000)] ruled that AFGE is entitled to receive the prevailing market-rate attorney fees for work under the Back Pay Act, rather than under the less generous “cost-plus” formula that simply reimburses the union for its actual costs.

The *Raney* case was one of the successful battles fought by the Council of Prisons Locals against the attempted purge of union officers by past U.S. Penitentiary Leavenworth Warden **Page True**. True was not only found guilty of committing egregious unfair labor practices by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, every one of his proposed removals—Local President Raney, the Executive Vice President and the Treasurer—were overturned by independent arbitrators. As pointed out by the Prisons Council, fighting illegal actions by BoP wardens does pay—figuratively and now literally!

“This ruling clears the way for AFGE to more forcefully fight for its members in the courts using an expanded legal representation fund,” said AFGE National President **Bobby Harnage**. “This brings greater strength to all federal employees in the legal arena.”

In rejecting its prior judgment, the court relied on an earlier Supreme Court decision as well as rulings in three sister circuit courts.

The court found that when a legal fund is separated from other union funds and is controlled exclusively by attorneys for the sole benefit of employee litigation, such segregation eliminates ethical barriers to market-rate calculations for attorney fee awards. The court pointed out that it should align its precedent with every other court in the land that has considered this issue.

Harnage praised the hard work of AFGE’s legal staff in securing market-rate attorney fees comparable to the private sector which will enlarge AFGE’s scope of legal representation.

Go to the *Legal Rights Fund Report* in the *Members-Only* portion of www.afge.org for a complete listing of AFGE cases.

WORKING TOGETHER

A Member’s Commitment to Public Service

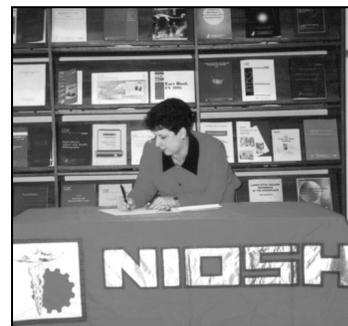
For **Cathy Tinney-Zara**, Vice President of **Local 3430** in West Virginia, government involvement at the national, state and local levels has been her life. When she’s not representing AFGE on the National Health and Human Services (HHS) Partnership Council or working daily as a Health Communications Specialist in the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), she is busy doing good in her state of W.Va.

Tinney-Zara got involved in community life as the President of the Young Democrats at West Virginia University (WVU) in the early ’80’s. Since her time at WVU, she has played an active role in the greater-Morgantown government on the Steering Committee for the Superintendent of Schools and on the Westover City Council. She has also been involved

with the West Virginia Children’s Hospital and serves as the current Chair of the Manongalia County Democratic Party. Tinney-Zara also served as an aide to Congressman **Harley O. Staggers, Jr.**, between 1983-93.

What is most impressive about Tinney-Zara’s past and present commitment to public service is that she is also a mom. Tinney-Zara has two children: **Kendra** and **Devon**, who is a cancer survivor.

“If you want to guide your future, you have to take part in it,” says Tinney-Zara, who is volunteering the free time she has left to serve as the County Coordinator for the **Al Gore-Joe Lieberman** Presidential campaign. “Your time is so important to your government. Get involved—your time makes a big difference in the lives of many people.”



Tinney-Zara signing one of the first Interest-Based-Bargaining (IBB) contracts in HHS in 1996.



Tinney-Zara with daughter Kendra and son Devon at the 1998 American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life.

Un-Hatched Retiree Gets Involved in Campaign

In 1993, Congress passed legislation that substantially amended the Hatch Act, allowing most federal and D.C. employees to engage in many types of political activity. With the 1993 amendments, most federal and D.C. government employees are now permitted to take an active part in political management or in political campaigns.

For AFGE Retiree **Constance R. Pond** of **Local 3448** in Newark, Ohio, becoming “un-hatched” has allowed her to work with campaigns at the local, state and national levels.

Pond, who retired from the Social Security Administration in 1977, finds great joy in the challenge of bringing a candidate’s message home to voters. In January of this year, she accepted the position of Treasurer for the **Marc Guthrie** for

Congress campaign. “When Marc asked me to work on his campaign, I was really excited,” said Pond. “I felt that my time commitment would truly bring a federal employee advocate to the House of Representatives.”

Playing an important part in the campaign meant that Pond had to help establish a campaign office, buy supplies and furniture, and get telephone lines installed. “All this was done by a person who hates to shop,” added Pond. Her duties include accounting for contributions, expenses and filing reports to the Federal Election Commission—duties which place her in front of a computer for about three hours a day.



Constance Pond at work with candidate Marc Guthrie.

For more information on the Hatch Act, go to www.osc.gov/hatchact.htm or visit the *Members-Only* portion of AFGE Web site’s at www.afge.org.



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Health & Safety Watch

Training Opportunities Available

by Milagro Rodriguez, AFGE's Health and Safety Specialist

Under 29 CFR Part 1960.59(b), federal agencies have an obligation to train union representatives in health and safety so they can help make sure the workplace is safe. This training is especially important if you are the Local health and safety committee representative. Many national bargaining agreements also include provisions for the training of health and safety representatives at the agency's expense. This specialized training is in addition to what the agency must provide on specific work hazards, as well as workers' basic rights and responsibilities.

There are numerous training opportunities for those who want to broaden their health and safety knowledge. The National Safety Council Conference, the Federal Safety and Health Conference and the OSHA Occupational Training Institute are among the best. These programs include a range of topics and different levels. Experienced health and safety representatives will find advanced sessions to challenge their technical skills. Novices will find basic courses that will help them participate more fully in health and safety committees.

The National Safety Council Annual Safety and Health Congress and Expo will be held October 16-18, 2000, in Orlando, Fla. It

features more than 150 comprehensive and targeted technical sessions. More than 800 manufacturers will display safety and health products and services. The registration fee is \$390 for government employees. You can view the agenda and register at www.congress.nsc.org.

The 55th Annual Federal Safety and Health Conference, sponsored by the OSHA Office of Federal Agency Programs, is scheduled for November 27-December 1, 2000, in Chicago. This year, the conference will include sessions on Ergonomics, Using Off-the-Shelf Training, Compliance Updates, Federal Safety and Health Councils, and Electrical Safety.

Following the conference, on December 4-8, OSHA's Occupational Training Institute (OTI) will present various courses, including the Collateral Duty Course, Introduction to Industrial Hygiene and Principles of Ergonomics Applied to Work-Related Musculoskeletal and Nerve Disorders. The fee for either the conference or the training week is \$250 before October 27, and \$450 if you attend both. Information is available at OSHA's Web site www.osha.gov.

Take advantage of this great opportunity for OSHA training—you'll be glad you did.



NEWS YOU CAN USE

Providing Assistance to Federal Employees



The Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA) is the only non-governmental, non-profit agency devoted solely to providing educational and emergency financial assistance to civilian federal employees. Look for FEEA in your Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) book under Human Service Charities of America (pledge #2808) and be a part of "Federal Employees Helping Federal Employees."

Check Your Detectors

Daylight savings time ends on Sunday, October 29, so most of the country will gain an hour when we turn our clocks back. Spend part of this extra time checking to ensure that your smoke detectors work properly.



(l-r) AFGE National President Bobby L. Harnage, Women's Director Andrea E. Brooks and National Secretary-Treasurer Jim Davis.

AFGE's five-day Convention brought 649 Locals and 1,442 delegates to Disney's Coronado Springs in Florida. Throughout Convention week, delegates worked on resolutions concerning issues such as union building and communications, service and representation, and political and legislative goals. Speakers at the Convention included: **Rudy de Leon**, Deputy Secretary of Defense, the first in his position to address a union

gathering; **Bill Fletcher**, Special Assistant to AFL-CIO President **John Sweeney**; Representative **Corrine Brown** (D-Fla.); and **Richard Trumka**, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer. AFGE members, Locals, Councils and Districts received organizing, newsletter and Web site awards, while over 300 delegates joined AFGE-PAC. In addition to the election of National Officers, several Councils conducted elections.



Rudy de Leon, Deputy Secretary of Defense, addressed the delegates on August 21st.



Photos by Jocelyn Augustino



Delegates from the VA (top) and from the 5th District (bottom) were some of the 1,442 delegates who attended the Convention.



Rich Trumka, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, spoke to the Convention on August 24th.

AFGE 35TH NATIONAL CONVENTION ORLANDO, FLORIDA—AUGUST 21-25, 2000

On The Hill

Pre-tax Health Insurance, Thanks to AFGE

Beginning October 1, the employee share of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) premiums can be paid from pre-tax income. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is calling this a premium conversion plan. The average savings to federal employees are expected to be \$300 annually.

AFGE pushed for this change which OPM was able to implement administratively without having to ask Congress to change the law. This benefit has been widely available to private sector workers since 1982. AFGE will continue to fight for changes in FEHBP that will actually lower the rate of increase in premiums so FEHBP can be affordable for federal employees. Visit www.opm.gov for more information.

AFGE Applauds House Action on Retirement Tax

National President **Bobby Harnage** released the following statement in response to the July 18, 2000, approval by the House Appropriations Committee of the FY 2001 Treasury-Postal spending bill which included language to roll back the retirement tax hike scheduled for next year:

"I want to take this opportunity to thank Congressmen **Steny Hoyer** (D-Md.) and **Frank Wolf** (R-Va.) as well as Representative **Tom Davis** (R-Va.)—strong advocates of federal employees—for their efforts to ensure that the retirement roll-back language remains in the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill.

"In this time of budget surplus, federal employees should not have to continue to shoulder this unfair financial burden.

"While Congress is debating tax relief for the rest of America, they continue to tax federal employees through their pensions, which neither gives federal employees a better pension or improves the terms of their pensions. No other segment of America was singled out to balance the budget the way federal employees have been.

"This never-fair-and-now-completely-unnecessary retirement tax on federal employees should be repealed and we urge the full House to do just that." (At press time, language had passed the House and was also approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee.)

Prison Locals Donate to AFGE Legislative Program

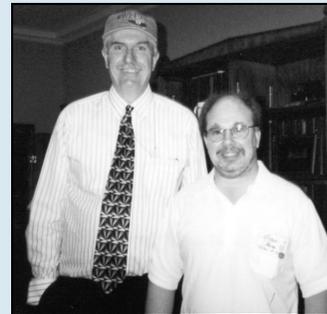


AFGE staffer **Mildred Hopson** recently accepted a \$2,100 donation from (l-r) **Paul Rissler**, **Charlie Bohannon** and **Jim Turner** from the Council of Prisons Locals following two Council Regional Training events. The donation was deposited into a legislative program to promote federal and D.C. government employee issues.

AFGE Members On The Hill

VA Local 31 Promotes H.R. 3766—TRAC Act

AFGE-backed House bill H.R. 3766 and Senate bill S. 2841 ensure that the business of the federal government is conducted in the public interest and in a manner that provides for public accountability, efficient delivery of services, reasonable cost savings and prevention of unwarranted government expenses. To date, H.R. 3766 has 193 co-sponsors and S. 2841 has 12 co-sponsors. For a complete co-sponsor listing, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.html> and type in H.R. 3766 or S. 2841 in the bill number window.



Local 31 Legislative Coordinator **Thomas A. Chuck** (r) met with **Larry McClemons** (l) of Congressman **Tom Sawyer's** (D-Ohio) office. Sawyer is a co-sponsor to H.R. 3766.

Local 1010 Meets With Congressman Lampson

Local 1010 recently met with Representative **Nick Lampson** (D-Texas) and discussed a variety of legislative issues affecting AFGE members. Some of the issues discussed included SWAMP, the privatization of federal prisons and medical units, the TRAC Act, locality pay for white collar employees, job training and partnership.



(l-r) **Yvonjohn Nobile**, **James Geslein**, Congressman **Lampson**, **George Estevan Solis** and **Derrick LeBlanc**.

According to **Local 1010's** Executive Vice President **George Estevan Solis**, **Lampson** is committed to having an open door policy with AFGE and the Local.

Local 2986 Lobbies Lawmakers

Members of **Local 2986** recently met with Representatives **Brian Baird** (D-Wash.), **Earl Blumenauer** (D-Ore.) and **David Wu** (D-Ore.) to discuss several issues affecting AFGE members in **District 11**. Great job!



Rep. **Brian Baird** (D-Wash.), center.



Rep. **David Wu** (D-Ore.), second from right.



Rep. **Earl Blumenauer** (D-Ore.), with bow tie.



2000 group shot

District 8 Celebrates 37 Years of Learning

The 8th District, which consists of North and South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota, held its 37th annual seminar for AFGE members in conjunction with the University of Iowa Labor Center in May. The Labor Center specializes in adult education on labor issues. "This is by far the longest running annual program of any District in the Federation," noted AFGE National President **Bobby Harnage**.



1973 group shot

Local 1145 Holds Steward Training

From June 26-29, **Local 1145** held basic Stewards training at the U.S. Penitentiary in Atlanta. Local President **Ben Jetter** and Treasurer **David Bray** conducted the training for the Atlanta Council of Prisons Locals. Among the topics discussed were employee rights, *Weingarten* meetings and investigatory interviews. "Remember, no matter what Local you belong to, your union steward is there for you in matters that concern the workplace. Feel free to contact them with your questions or concerns—they're here to assist you," said Jetter.

BoP Council Negotiates \$120 Million In Back Pay

On August 10, 2000, AFGE's Bureau of Prisons (BoP) Council negotiated a settlement agreement of a Fair Labor Standards Act grievance which will result in the payment of over \$120 million in back pay to BoP employees. Over 33,000 current and former BoP employees will receive money pursuant to the settlement. The settlement compensates employees for duties they were required to perform before and at the conclusion of their workday, such as standing in line to receive and hand in keys. Employees will receive compensation for the six-and-a-half year period from May 17, 1989, through January 1, 1996. BoP expects to issue checks to employees by November 30, 2000. Go to www.afge.org for more information.

Texas VA Workers Help Others



Roger and Rae Doppler

Local 2281 at the Kerrville Division of the South Texas Veterans Health Care System is proud of 1st Vice President and Chief Steward **Roger and Raetta Doppler**, respectively. A San Antonio sidewalk became a home away from home for the Doppler's as they spent 17-hour days helping some 576 disabled athletes on and off buses during the 20th National

Veteran's Wheelchair Games over the July 4th weekend. "These are two of the most giving individuals you would ever want to meet," said 2281's President **Dean Ward**. "They have literally given the shirts off their backs to help others in need."



Local 3652 Presents Awards



During **Local 3652's** annual picnic at Lake Etta in Gary, Ind., members, stewards and executive board members were presented with awards for their leadership roles and outstanding support throughout the year. Recipients pictured include: (front row l-r) **Roderick Walls, Patricia Allen and Michael Rule**; (middle row l-r) **Charles Altman, Charles Hurt, Aaron Joiner, Angela Stajkowski and Lenard Simon**; and (back row l-r) **Tony Hines and Jeff Jackson**.

AFGE Kid Goes To Hollywood

Gwendolyn Creacy, 18-year-old daughter of **Local 2142** member **Michael Creacy**, hit the big time when she attended the 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles as Texas' youngest delegate. According to Dad, "Hopefully she'll get interested enough to run for office someday."

Army Local Celebrates 45 Years

Hats off to **Local 1647**, Tobyhanna Army Depot in Penn., for 45 great years as an AFGE Local. Joining in the celebration were (l-r) Treasurer **John Lynady**, President **John Earles**, Recording Secretary **Jean Ache**, **3rd District NR Joan Welsh-Maher**, 2nd VP **Tony Ferreira** and 1st VP **Richard Joyce**.



A Free Service

Stay on top of the latest AFGE news. Sign up for the AFGE Action News. The AFGE Action News provides registered AFGE members with the most current AFGE information available. AFGE legislative, grassroots and organizing news will be delivered right to your computer screen. Go to the *Members-Only* section of AFGE's Web site, www.afge.org, to subscribe.