

Training Opportunities

Sign language training - The USGS employs people with a variety of disabilities and it is easy to overlook folks who might be deaf/hard of hearing. Union members deal with this on a regular basis either as an employee or a coworker. In the ESIC and Library, the public regularly visits and our ability to serve patrons with this difficulty is severely limited. It would be a benefit to all of us to develop a pool of folks who are able to communicate by sign language with our coworkers and visitors – and it would be lots of fun to learn and use. The Union is looking into providing this training for interested persons. Watch for and take advantage of this opportunity if it becomes available. If you're interested, speak to Jeff Dallos – USGS disability program manager at (jdallos@usgs.gov or x4870 TTY).

From the Safety Committee By Suellen Skinner

As a result of contract bargaining, the Library established an active Safety committee. Eastern Region Geography (ERG) has also had a Safety committee for a while. In each newsletter, we will try to provide information about the work of these committees or subjects of interest regarding workplace or personal safety. If there are issues that you would like addressed or about which you need information, contact Suellen Skinner (sskinner@usgs.gov).

One issue receiving publicity recently has been air quality. We think of air quality as being associated with car exhaust or lab chemicals. However, more information is coming out about the effect of cleaning materials and personal hygiene products on indoor air quality. This subject is extremely difficult to address in a work environment. Choice of personal care products is a very personal decision. The range of issues raised includes individual rights, reasonable accommodation and employee relations.

If you are sensitive to fragrances, you can evaluate all your cleaning and personal care products to minimize personal exposure. In the workplace, you need to be aware of and avoid enclosed areas where others' fragrances may cause distress. If you need workplace accommodation, you need to gather formal medical documentation of the problem to allow action to be taken under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In a work environment where many people may share a space, sensitivity to others' problems is an important part of workplace safety.

Calendar of Events

August 15-16, 2003

The Virginia American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization (AFL-CIO) Convention will be held in Tyson Corners. President Libby Chandler will attend both days and Vice President Lee Hadden will attend the first day.

August 18-22, 2003

AFGE National Convention will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada. Lee Hadden is attending as our delegate. Doug Channel is attending as first alternate.

September 9, 2003

The Local's annual picnic is to be held at the volleyball court by the National Center from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm on Tuesday September 9, 2003. Contact Angela Hall (x5625), Suellen Skinner (x4476) or Jeff Sarver (x6296) about what you plan to bring from the list that was sent around.

Monthly Meetings - August 5th, September 2nd, October 7th, and November 4th. Members of Local 1309 meet the first Tuesday of each month in room 2D-201 at 11:30 am to discuss issues relevant to its members.

Other Scheduled Meetings

August 20th at 1:30 pm – Library LMRC meeting
August 26th at 10:00 am – Stewards meeting
August 28th at 10:00 am – ERG LMRC meeting



FAA Merger

The work on the merger of FAA and USGS printing is moving along. The Union is working hard to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible for its members.

Key Dates for the FAA Merger:

- Sept. 2003** – Memo transferring USGS personnel
- Dec. 2003** – Transfer of USGS personnel to FAA in D.C.
- Jan. 2004** – FAA Printing of USGS Maps
- July 2004** – Transfer of USGS printing equipment to new FAA facility
- Sept. 2004** – Merger Complete

Lunch and Learn

Come and hear a presentation on member benefits given by an AFGE official on September 16, 2003 in the Visitors Center. Contact Lee Hadden (x6088), if you have questions. Watch for final confirmation of date, time and location.



Written any good letters lately?

If you've written your newspaper editor or member of Congress regarding issues of interest to the Local, pass it on to us. Maybe we can all get some good ideas to pass on to our representative or community to make them better informed about these issues.

Our Elected Officers

Libby Chandler, President

The President oversees the affairs of Local 1309 and the other elected officers, keeps the membership aware of the goals and objectives of AFGE, and serves as the local's delegate to district caucuses, council meetings, and the National Convention.

Libby served as Vice President of Local 1309 in 1989, as President of Local 1309 from 1990 to 1999, and then again from June 2002 to the present. She served as National Vice President of NFFE in 1996 and 1997. Libby started her career with the USGS in 1979 as a GS-4 Clerk Typist in the old Conservation Division and is currently a cartographic technician/photogrammetrist in the Eastern Region Geography's DCP unit, which produces USGS digital orthophotoquads. She is a native of the Washington, D.C. area and her outside interests include art history, collecting slide rulers, and dabbling in various arts and crafts projects.

Lee Hadden, Vice President

The Vice President assists the President in performing the duties of that office, fills in when the President is absent and serves as chair of the Membership Committee with other duties as required.

R. Lee Hadden is our newly elected Vice President, having served as steward since the Library was organized. He was the moving force in the effort to organize the library, having worked on this for several years.

Lee has been a librarian for over 25 years. Before coming to the USGS, he has had some experience as a "gypsy librarian"

and library contractor in various parts of the world. He has done this type of work with pharmaceutical libraries, a natural history museum research collection, and with two hospital libraries in Saudi Arabia and another hospital in the Philippines. Lee also administered other small libraries, which had been operated for years, in isolated localities such as near the DMZ in Chunchon and Wonju, Korea. He has been a reference Librarian at the USGS Library for more than 12 years.

Lee has also worked with public libraries in Maryland, as well as with an Army library at the Ballistic Research Laboratory. He is currently a member of the Loudoun County Public Library Board of Trustees and former chairman of the Eastern Loudoun Library Advisory Board. His current hobbies include writing, photography, and chess. He is a community activist and also dabbles in local politics.

See more information on our elected officials in the next issue.



In Search Of...

Your Editor is looking for content to put in this Newsletter. All are welcome to submit ideas, write a blurb or anything you can think of. Got an interesting union related story? All submissions are due to Suellen Skinner (sskinner@usgs.gov) by October 14, 2003 for our next newsletter.



Website News

Your Webmaster is working to keep Local 1309's public web site current with useful and timely information. Take a look at: <http://www.afge1309.org> and let her know what you think. If you have any ideas on information to add or links to include, please feel free to contact Erin Donnelly (edonnell@usgs.gov). For questions about our intranet site, contact Nancy Sanders (nsanders@usgs.gov).

AFGE Local 1309

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ERG Intranet URL: <http://ergnet.er.usgs.gov/union/index.html>

Local 1309 Officers:

Libby Chandler, President (x4829)
 Lee Hadden, Vice President (x6088)
 Sharon Wine, Secretary (x5190)
 Doug Channell, Treasurer (x4547)
 Nan Sanders, Chief Steward (x4606 TTY)
 Jackie Peyton, Steward (x5058)

Erin Donnelly, Internet Webmaster (x6226)
 Nan Sanders, ERG Intranet Webmaster (x4606 TTY)
 Suellen Skinner, Newsletter Editor (x4476)