

August – September 2015

From the President

Ike Mills

The year is flying by so fast, it's hard to keep up with it.

I will start this newsletter with a greeting to our newest members of the Local and say **“Welcome aboard”** to the Springdale members who were just approved by National APWU to merge with the Fayetteville Local. I would also like to welcome all of the other members who have recently filled out new member applications and are now part of our Local. We encourage all of you to get involved and active in the Local at whatever level you choose.

For all of the PSEs that have been converted and had to pay out-of-pocket to have your fingerprints done for a new background check – please contact Vinny, our Vice-President. He is doing the grievance to get you paid for any travel, time spent off-the-clock, or cost of fingerprinting. This was a result of a National level arbitration decision. You can view this on the website at APWU.org.

After the completion of mediation and/or arbitration, we will be conducting LMOU negotiations. So, if you have any concerns or recommendations in regards to our LMOU, now is the time to submit your concerns. You can put it on paper and either give it to your Steward or one of our Officers. Or if you'd rather remain anonymous you can slide it under the door of the Union office at the plant. We would appreciate your input and participation in this process. It is the only way for it to be successful.

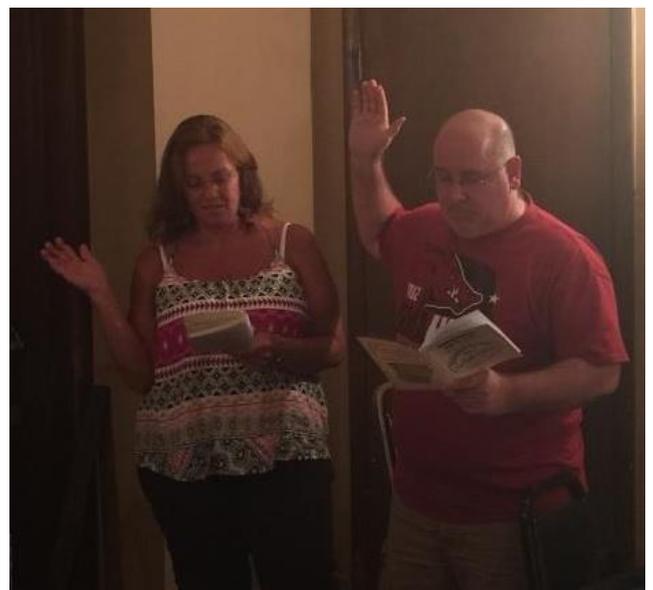
During the last local negotiations we had very little input; let's make it different this time.

With all of the changes in stewards, please be patient and understanding as they learn the process and how to defend the contract and represent each of you.

I would like to also congratulate Tina Delay, our new Financial Secretary, on her election to this position. For those of you that do not know her – she is a very experienced Officer and Steward from her years of service in the Rogers Local. We are privileged to have her as a member of our Executive Board and Local.

I would like to end my article with a quote from one of our previous Presidents, Theodore Roosevelt.

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, who's face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”



Our new Financial Secretary, Tina Delay

Being sworn in by Local President Ike Mills

The *RAZORBACK SCHEME* is the official voice of the Fayetteville APWU Local. However, opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the APWU, Local, officials or Editor. Articles, artwork, cartoons and/or other material are solicited from member readers who wish to share their views. Although freedom of the press is recognized, contributors are exhorted not to submit derogatory material about any fellow union member or to submit any false or unsubstantiated allegation concerning management or any other individual inside or outside this organization. All letters must be signed (if hard-copied) or emailed via an identifiable, recognized screen name and are requested to have been received by the Editor ten (10) days prior to the announced publication date. Names will be withheld upon request. Send submissions to *RAZORBACK SCHEME*, P.O. Box 654, Fayetteville AR 72702; or email to Editor's screen name listed below or on website. Submissions may be returned upon request.

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President.....Royce D. "Ike" Mills
Vice-President.....Vinny Dachille
Financial Secretary.....Tina Delay
Recording Secretary.....Rebecca Marks
Editor-Publisher.....Loren Adams

STEWARDS – ALTERNATES

Chief Steward.....Ike Mills
Tour One.....Ike Mills
Tour Two Customer Service.....Cheryl Wing
Tour Two P&DC..... Andrew Heyd
Tour Two Alternate.....Vinny Dachille
Tour Three.....Matt Alston
Tour Three Alternate.....Vinny Dachille
Rogers Steward.....vacant
Maintenance.....Tony Crowsey
Maintenance Alternate.....Phil Morgan
Safety Representative.....Nancy Sramek
Webmaster.....Jake Lamkins

NEXT UNION MEETINGS:

Sunday, Aug. 16, 2015 & Sept. 20, 2015
Jim's Razorback Pizza – 1:00 pm

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POSTMASTER GENERAL MEGAN BRENNAN VISITS NW ARKANSAS & PLANT By Nancy Sramek, Safety Representative

I was very impressed with our new Postmaster General, Megan Brennan. She is very personable and seems to know what the USPS needs to accomplish in the next few years in order to stay viable and competitive.

One area she talked about was the need for increasing package mailings. Her main reason for coming to NWA was to meet with Wal-Mart and try to convince them to mail more through the Postal Service. Right now, we deliver about 25% of their packages. We want 100% (those were her words). With the decline of first class letter mail and a further decline anticipated in coming years, packages will be a priority (no pun intended).

She also discussed the retiree health care prefunding problem. She stated that as of now the CSRS is funded at 90% and the FERS at 99%. She said that Congress needs to change the terms so that the USPS can more easily meet the prefunding requirements.

She also stated that the USPS was not for changing the mailing standards back to the way they were in 2012, mainly because it would cost mailers and USPS too much money to do so. She feels we should strive to deliver the mail as expediently as possible despite the standard changes.

In closing, I feel she is very appreciative of all postal workers. She did thank us for our continued hard work. She seems enthusiastic about the projects they are working on to increase revenue and optimistic about the future of this great institution.

She had Q&A session for about 30 minutes and then shook hands with us as we were leaving the break room. She was very down to earth. I liked her a lot and felt honored that she took the time to visit with us.

EAP IS AN IMPORTANT BENEFIT By Vinny Dachille, Vice-President

As we are well into the dog days of summer, everybody is busy with vacations and things outside of work. What we all need to realize is that it is necessary that we keep things outside of work outside. Everybody goes through things all the time; one really doesn't know what is going on in somebody else's life. People could have sick relatives, experiencing a bitter divorce, etc., things like that. If you are going through hard times that you think you can't handle or a situation that is becoming overwhelming, there is a benefit that the Postal Service provides. It is EAP.

EAP offers a trained counselor who is independent of the Post Office. They will not give out any of the information you submit to them - not to your supervisors or the Postal Service. Everything is held in strictest confidence in keeping with professional / client privilege.

If you have an issue with one of your coworkers that you feel needs to be addressed, talk to either one of us or a supervisor. Don't let it build. And definitely, don't get into an altercation on the floor or on the clock. Avoid the situation.

EAP
Employee Assistance Program
1-800-EAP-4-YOU
1-800-327-4968

THE UNION FIGHTS FOR YOU!

By Rebecca Marks, Recording Secretary

For more than 40 years the APWU has fought for the workers they represent – to gain dignity and respect in the workplace as well as decent pay and benefits and safe working conditions. The APWU represents more than 220,000 USPS employees and retirees.

By no surprise, we were unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the Postal Service over contract negotiations. So, mediations are to follow.

The Postal Service proposals include:

- eliminate cost-of-living adjustments
- increase employee's contributions for health care coverage
- create a new permanent lower pay scale for future career employees with reduced benefits
- increase the percentage of non-career employees
- and weaken protection against layoffs.

The APWU's proposals:

- fair and reasonable wage increases
- limits on subcontracting
- more career jobs
- improvements for postal support employees (PSE's)
- limits on accessing
- and better service for our customers.

So in the meantime, the 2010 collective bargaining agreement will continue in effect until a new contract is reached.

The union is calling on all APWU members to show management that our union is strong and in solidarity wear our union T-shirts, caps, buttons and other union gear every Thursday.

I urge everyone to visit www.apwu.org/postcard-I-stand-postal-workers and fill out the electronic postcard.

I would like to welcome the folks from Springdale and Rogers and look forward to seeing you at our next union meeting August 16 at 1 o'clock at Jim's Razorback pizza on MLK here in Fayetteville. All are welcome!

FIGHT BACK ON LABOR DAY

"Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, ...

The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."

- Frederick Douglass

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“INACTION IS A DECISION TO ACCEPT THE SITUATION YOU ARE IN”

By Tony Crowsey, Maintenance Steward

If you expect your union stewards and officers to know all that is going on, you are mistaken. We could find out 2nd or 3rd hand, but without a statement of the facts, we are not able to support a grievance.

If you complain about managers and supervisors doing our bargaining unit work and expect to get \$ for it without getting involved, then you are mistaken.

We have to get involved. All of us by giving a statement of the facts; **WHO** you saw; **WHAT** were they doing; **WHEN** did this happen; **HOW LONG** did they do this? This needs to be as detailed as much as possible from the person who saw it.

We (the Union) can do this and win; it was done as shown in the 'Global Settlement' adjacent article.

Will management get active in pushing back? Yes. All we have to do is our job to the best of our ability; and when management starts pushing, just remember that you have to follow their directives and make mental notes, and put them on paper at your first break so they will be clear weeks or months later.

The only time you can respectfully refuse a manager's directive is if it is UNSAFE, ILLEGAL or IMMORAL. And if you think one of us is not doing our union job to your satisfaction, ASK the one that is doing your grievance. Don't go to anyone else and complain; there may be a misunderstanding, or something else that was overlooked that will change the outcome.

If you are still not satisfied, come to a union meeting and bring it up there so we can all work to understand the situation and resolve it. If there is no involvement, then don't complain, because **inaction** is a decision to accept the situation you are in.

**“WHO you saw;
WHAT were they
doing; WHEN did this
happen; HOW LONG
did they do this?”**

Update on Article 1.6.B 'Global Settlement' Remedy

03/24/2015 - APWU Clerk Craft Director Clint Burelson has updated union members on progress toward disbursing a \$56 million settlement that was signed Dec. 5, 2014, to resolve disputes over postmasters and supervisors in small offices performing bargaining unit work.

As part of the settlement, the Postal Service was required to provide reports showing the amount of bargaining unit work performed by postmasters and supervisors in Level 15, 16 and 18 offices.

05/01/2015 - (This article first appeared in the May-June 2015 issue of *The American Postal Worker* magazine.)

Organizing is not just about signing up new members – it's joining with current members to ensure common success. Our camaraderie and solidarity will also motivate non-members to join the union.

Management will try to take advantage of any dissension among union members. Postal bosses take note of whether the membership is engaged and active or passive and disengaged. Managers look for every weakness they can find. Let's show them our strength.

Union meetings are the place to air our differences, not on the workroom floor and definitely not in front of management. We might disagree, as any family does, but when one of us is wronged, we must defend each other. That's the union way.

05/01/2015 - (This article first appeared in the May-June 2015 issue of *The American Postal Worker* magazine.)

Many employees accept unwarranted discipline, simply because they are unaware of their rights. Sometimes out of fear of losing their job, or being harassed by their supervisor, employees let things go and hope for the best. But things often get worse – and before they realize what's happening, they're in trouble.

Therefore, it's imperative that you know your rights.