



March 2014

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Brothers and Sisters:

Well, it is time for another issue of the newsletter, and the subject I have picked to write about is overtime. There has been much discussion about this issue, and I think I need to get some facts out concerning this topic.

When we went through the consolidation process last year, management and I sat down and discussed the shortage of employees due to consolidation, and I made a decision to allow Management to violate the 12/60 hour rules of the CBA as long as the OTDL employees volunteered to work past the Article 8.5.G restrictions.

If an OTDL employee did not volunteer or the employee was not on the OTDL, then management had to follow the CBA for all overtime assignments or an appropriate grievance would be filed. This was to be a temporary situation until they could utilize the 21-day eReassign and eReassign systems to get employees to transfer into this installation.

As you are all more than aware, this plan did not work very well, and the excessive use of overtime turned into a very long situation. In October of 2013 I put management on notice that at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2013 this agreement would be rescinded.

I was wrong to ever agree to this in the first place, and I apologize to you all for allowing this to happen. Starting on January 1, 2014 the Union started to file grievances on any 12/60 hour violation. Article 8 is very clear that excluding the published exclusionary period in December of each year, it is a violation to work an employee more than 12 hours a day or 60 hours a pay period (Article 8.5.G.2).

If management works you past these limitations, then you need to notify the Union of this violation in case we miss it. The remedy for this violation is explained in detail in the 2012 JCIM pages 51 and 52. Most of the violations in Article 8.5.G apply to the FTR employees only.

For the PSE's the overtime rules are dictated in section 432.32 of the ELM. The ELM says that for PSE's they can only work 12 hours a day and that includes their lunch breaks also.

If you have any questions again read page 51 of the 2012 JCIM. Another document that the Union refers to is the *Memorandum of Understanding* on page 318-320 of the CBA. If you have never read this, please do. This just covers the tip

of the iceberg concerning overtime issues. There is so much more to read, but this is a good starting point.

Yours in Solidarity, Ike Mills

## FROM THE VP

By Vinny Dachille

Lately at the plant MDO Eric Holder and MMO James Sizemore have been working on a scheduler. A scheduler is, from my limited understanding of it, a computer program that they input the amount of work being done in the plant in the way of volumes and it will show them how many certain employees they need in particular areas of the building. Why is this important? Well with the Postmaster General putting the brakes on the consolidations across the country that means that people won't be forced to come here to work from other facilities. Now we all know we need people. Everyone is working, especially last year, a ton of hours and especially on Tour 1 being mandated for their days off even if they aren't on the list. This would allow management to prove to the powers that be that we **need** to convert some of these PSES to fill these positions that the scheduler comes up with. Once some of them are converted then they can hire more PSES to lighten the work load on all of us. It also means that more jobs would come be created for us to bid on and move if we so choose. I don't know how many will be converted nor do I think it will happen overnight, but it seems like the light at the end of the tunnel is coming for some of these PSE's and for that I am grateful.

Another issue that is being brought up in many conversations is safety. People are still pulling multiple pieces of equipment, loaded and unloaded. Many younger people around the plant have hurt shoulders and wrists from overdoing it. You all have a long road ahead of you; don't break yourself at such a young age and have to live with pain for the rest of forever.

Also people are overfilling containers with mail in an effort to do... I really don't know. Maybe they can't find extra equipment. Maybe they don't want to find extra equipment, who knows? But it's not safe to your fellow employees. Flat tubs can fall on people's heads, people can push a wire full of bundles and hurt their backs/legs/arms. Ultimately it's not fair to the person at the downflow of the mail. They have every right to work in a safe environment just as much as you do.

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.

#### OFFICERS

President Royce D. "Ike" Mills  
Vice-President Vinny Dachille  
Financial Secretary Jim Jacobs  
Recording Secretary Sonya Kirsch  
Editor-Publisher Loren Adams

#### STEWARDS – ALTERNATES

Chief Steward Ike Mills  
Tour One Jeremiah Muckleroy  
Tour One Alternate Drew Heyd  
Tour Two Cheryl Wing  
Tour Three Vinny Dachille  
Tour Three Alternate Ed McFarland  
Maintenance Tony Crowsey

Safety Representative Nancy Sramek  
Webmaster Jake Lamkins

#### NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, March 16, 2014  
Jim's Razorback Pizza – 1:00 pm

APWU Fayetteville Local – 2300 S City Lake Rd  
P.O. Box 654 – Fayetteville AR 72702  
Phone: (479) 571-1006 – fax: (479) 442-7131

#### Websites:

<http://FayettevilleAPWU.tripod.com/>

National APWU website:

[www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org)

#### E-Mail:

President [roycedmills@att.net](mailto:roycedmills@att.net)  
Vice-President [draco929@gmail.com](mailto:draco929@gmail.com)  
Editor [LAdams727@aol.com](mailto:LAdams727@aol.com)

#### Associate Offices:

Elkins, Huntsville, Lowell, Prairie Grove & West Fork

## SAFETY ISSUES

By Nancy Sramek, Safety Rep

This time I would like to address safety and motorized vehicles on the workroom floor and dock area. I also will reiterate areas I have discussed previously.

Even though it is the driver's responsibility to watch out for pedestrians, it is also our responsibility to look out for the driver. This means being aware of your surroundings. This brings into play what I mentioned before about wearing headphones and earbuds while moving from one work area to another. These compromise your ability to hear noises around you.

Also, talking on cell phones or texting while walking on the floor is distracting – taking your eyes away from your surroundings. Remember, it only takes a second for an accident or injury to happen.

As for the dock, the above items hold true too. Stay off the dock unless you have business out there – especially when the mail handlers are moving pallets and unloading trucks.

Please continue to pick up strapping, labels, etc. off the floor. Also, keep trays and other containers off the floor and away from "DO NOT BLOCK" areas. Last but not least, remove defective equipment from the floor by red tagging and placing it by the Maintenance area.

Please bring any safety issue to my attention so it can be addressed by the proper person. Until next time take care and BE SAFE.

## JUST A THOUGHT

By Andrew Heyd

I was asked recently to write an article for our newsletter. I was hesitant to do so because I was a little disillusioned with current and recent events. So, instead, I'll veer off the normal path of what I've written about in the past and submit this....

The other day I heard a song on the radio. Yes, the country station. It was one of those tear-jerker songs about losing someone too soon and drinking beer. It got me thinking about my past. I've had some good times – some great, actually, but like most, I've also had some rough times, really dark days. I can reflect on them and appreciate what I have now. I'm not going to talk about those times but will say, only by the grace of God am I here.

I guess what I'm trying to say is – if I had succumbed to those dark days, I would have missed what I believe is a perfect moment in time. For some, they can be a rare occurrence, and others – more frequent. But more or less, they do exist. A sunset that takes your breath away, new fallen snow, the birth of a child or simply the smile of a loved one. We've all had them, and in my experience, they're not a once-in-a-lifetime event. You're probably wondering what got me thinking about this, besides the song on the radio.

Recently, we had a visitor to our office who spoke about EAP. She was very nice and well informed. I wish I had someone like her in my past. Ultimately, my help came from the VA. However, that said, the USPS Employee Assistance Program is one of the best out there and it's free to employees and their family members, as well as anyone living in the household.

What I'm trying to say is – that 'perfect moment' is out there. Don't give into the darkness; there's help available. If you need someone to talk to, contact EAP at 1-800-327-4968 (1-800-EAP-4-YOU) or [www.EAP4YOU.com](http://www.EAP4YOU.com).