

May 2014

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Hello Brothers and Sisters:** Well, it has been very busy since the last newsletter, so I will try to keep it short. For those of you that attend Union meetings some of this will be old news, but to the rest it is new info.

Our State Meeting in March went well. The numbers were small, but we were able to put a resolution together which will be submitted to Headquarters for consideration at the National Convention in July. The resolution concerns establishing a trigger in the Contract as to when management must convert Clerk Craft PSEs to career employees. It is the first resolution Arkansas State has submitted to the National Convention in years. It is great to see progress in action. We had three delegates attend the State Convention, (Vinny, Drew and myself). Elections were held for State Officers, and Loren Adams is now the State Editor and I was elected to take his position as the District 6 VP.

In other actions by the body, Vinny was elected as a delegate to the National Convention. So, it is good to see our members active at the State Level.

I was also elected to represent the State at the special convention of the Arkansas State AFL-CIO in Little Rock at the end of March. It was a very informative meeting and good to see how we are all connected as Union Brothers and Sisters no matter the Union to which we belong. I was able to listen to several of the candidates that are running for office which helped me to better understand the political process of the Union.

I am writing this article as I sit outside the conference hall waiting for today's classes to start at the 8-State Convention in Iowa. I have been here since Wednesday and have been able to listen to several of the National Officers speak and have had some very informative classes.

Folks, I know you have heard this a lot lately, but we have some major battles ahead of us. The most pressing

ones are postal legislation pending on Capitol Hill and the Staples deal which the Postal Service has entered into. Don't let the PMG bluff and deceive you; it is nothing but a plan to outsource our work. We must educate ourselves and others about these issues and engage in the fight.

We have many issues locally going on, including the new MOU on filling residual vacancies. The agreement is a very positive accomplishment by our National Officers. I can't wait to see the final results of this agreement. Some of our members and coworkers have been waiting far too long for this justice.

There have been several changes locally because the Union has enforced several contractual issues that management has been allowed to get away with for far too long. I ask each of you to look at and research the issues that we are enforcing before you get upset and mad at the stewards or officers for applying these contractual provisions.

Remember, the issue is with management – not you. When management says, “Well, I hate to do this to you, but the Union won't let me do this anymore,” remember, we are here to enforce the Contract with management for the protection of all of the members equally.

So, please don't take it personally; it has nothing to do with you personally. We are just doing the job that has been entrusted to us.

Until next time, take care and get involved in the battle.

Yours in Solidarity, Ike Mills, Local President

**Ray Burdick, Fayetteville retired Clerk, went to be with the Lord April 16<sup>th</sup>. He was 82.**

**Our attorney, Charles Kester, passed March 3.**

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#### NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, May 18, 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)  
Maintenance Steward  
[APWUMaintSteward@gmail.com](mailto:APWUMaintSteward@gmail.com)  
Editor [LAdams727@aol.com](mailto:LAdams727@aol.com)

#### Associate Offices:

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## What's our best defense? INFORMATION!

### By Vinny Dachille, Local Vice-President

We've all heard the doom and gloom about the Post Office since we started for this place, but especially now it's a very real possibility. Not because we aren't doing our jobs. Not because the company isn't making a profit – its fiscal year 2014 first quarter report shows a profit of \$1.1 billion dollars. It's not even our management's fault [ at least at our level].

There are people out there who wish to destroy the Post Office and make it private. They want us to go broke even to the point of the government siphoning off our profits under a so-called prefunding of employees health care for 75 years into the future. I don't even see how it is a reasonable expectation for the government to suck all that money from us and not expect us to look like we are falling apart.

Our best defense is information – getting the information out there, learning new information from other people fighting this fight alongside us.

There are a few good websites out there: [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) and [www.21cpw.com](http://www.21cpw.com). There are also numerous Facebook groups that I belong to that are very informative.

Public opinion has shifted ever since it was announced that we are going broke, initially it was no bailouts, no more tax money to us overpaid government workers with Cadillac benefit packages. Now it is turning somewhat, the prefunding information is getting out there more and more people are learning that not a single tax dollar goes into our benefits and wages. They are learning that the only thing that does pay these things is postage and that mail volume is not dropping like they are being told. The war of information is on, and if we want to keep the jobs we have, this is a fight we need to win.

## We got it GOOD, but we need to PARTICIPATE!

### by Tony Crowsey, Maintenance Steward

Well, I've got two items that I'd like to mention this month.

First is how good we have it. We have a job with benefits. We get to work some over time. Our coworkers all seem to work as compared to my last P&DC. And the pay we received is higher than what most of us could make in the private sector, because I know personally of how little I was paid 15 years ago with a max of \$0.05 a year raise. So, instead of looking at how bad we have it, look at the good. Remember, the glass is not half full or empty. It's completely full of both water & air.

Second, we all have to participate. There is no way to please everyone because we all have different desires. I'm still new at this steward position and have heard different people state they are getting out of the union due to personal conflicts or not getting what they think is deserved. If you think you have a greivable item, bring it to a steward, any steward, and we will get it to the correct person. If you don't understand something, say so. But remember that we are on the same team. Therefore, we all have to work together. Also remember, it's not "Us against Them." Our customer is the one paying us, the USPS, and happens to be the one managing this process. Also, remember that the first step is to get everyone to follow the Contracts with no favoritism or nepotism. If your union steward is not doing his/her job, then say so and say it to their superiors in the Union.

Last thought – if you don't get what you want, hold both hands out, poop in one hand and want in the other hand and see which one fills up first.