

August-September 2014

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ike Mills, Local President

Well, it is time for another article and the subject that I have chosen to discuss is Cross-Craft work. Throughout the years I have had to file several grievances concerning cross-craft violations or supervisors performing bargaining unit work.

There are several employees that have the correct perspective of protecting craft work and I appreciate that. They will come to the Union steward or officer and say, "Hey, I just saw this supervisor or craft employee doing our work. Will you file a grievance for me?"

Then, unfortunately, there is the majority that will never say a word about it, and, in fact, work right next to the supervisor or craft employee that is doing our work and won't say a word about it. This is our

work and we should do whatever we can to protect it.

The other thing I have observed a lot lately is that we have several clerks that cross craft lines and perform another craft's work without being instructed to do so by management. This is wrong and we should not be doing it. We should respect the craft lines of our other unions as we expect them to respect our work also. It is one thing to do it after our supervisor has instructed us to work across craft lines in violation of their CBA, but we must follow the instructions our supervisors give us or possibly face discipline for failing to follow instructions. However, in this case we should approach a member of the other craft and tell them we were instructed to perform their work and that is why we did it. It is all about respecting each craft's work.



Arkansas Delegates at National Convention – Parade of States.

Back Row, L to R: Ike Mills, Jeremiah Muckleroy, Vinny Dachille, Forrest Brimley (Little Rock), Elaine Green (Pine Bluff), Charles Baker (Little Rock), Jeremy Adams.

Front Row, L to R: Kerry Botteicher (Ft Smith), Dennis Botteicher (Ft Smith), Nichole Brown (Hot Springs), Kerry Hinton (State President, Pine Bluff), and Loren Adams.

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
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Tour One.....Jeremiah Muckleroy
Tour Two.....Cheryl Wing
Tour Three.....Vinny Dachille
Maintenance.....Tony Crowsey

Safety Representative.....Nancy Sramek
Webmaster.....Jake Lamkins

NEXT UNION MEETINGS:

Sunday, Sept 21, Oct 19, Nov 16
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

E-Mail:

President: roycedmills@att.net
Vice-President: draco929@gmail.com
Maintenance Steward:
APWUMaintSteward@gmail.com
Editor: LAdams727@aol.com

Associate Offices:

Elkins, Huntsville, Lowell, Prairie Grove & West Fork

'Happy Happy Happy... Really?'

By Tony Crowsey, Maintenance Steward

Folks, I've heard several on the workroom floor talk about how they don't like the union because of this, that or the other, or that's not the way we did it elsewhere.

I'm writing this the night before I head to Steward's College in Olympia, Washington.

I will admit, I've never been big on unions before this job, but there's good and bad in everything. The union is a check against the neglect and abuse of the management. It's not against each other, or the Postal Service. We are The Postal Service. If you don't like what is being done, you've got two choices; 1) either step up and be part of the answer or 2) shut up and stop causing drama like management does.

I've only been a steward for less than a year, and I saw an opportunity and I've stepped up. I will also tell you that I will continue to keep an open opinion and mind and listen. If there is something I can do I will put every effort into it. If I don't know, I will either find it or find someone that can help me. All I ask is we all work together, we will succeed.

Hello, fellow resources!

by Cheryl Wing, Tour 2 Steward

What a crazy couple of months. Both MPO and Craft Station have gone through some changes that have impacted both station operations and [as it always does] our work environment. Probably one of the biggest changes has been our new (permanent) postmaster, Charles Redburn. He has introduced himself to the employees at both stations and seems to be working hard to fill our vacant positions. Go Charles!

At the MPO we are still shorthanded. We still have two vacant positions. One management has said they are going to repost with a new start time, though they haven't spoken with our union prez about it. What's the deal, guys? One of our fellow employees is still on extended leave, so keep her and her family in your thoughts and prayer.

We have also lost PSE Michael Little to a PTF position at Lincoln office. Good luck, Mike! MPO has been given Craft Station's PSE Sam who is window trained where Mike was not. So, I'm sure she is staying busy trying to cover both ends of the building.

I have met with Lindi on some overtime violations that occurred at MPO and hope they do not continue. NO ONE should be working over 12 hours a day! And, yes, if you sign up for the Overtime Desired List, you can opt not to work over 10 hours in a day. But keep in mind that before management can use anyone

who is not on OTDL for overtime they must max out everyone on the List, whether you want to work over 10 or not. Also, those of you who are not on the OTDL, you are not to work over 10 hours. I have filed grievances at both offices over this as well.

At Craft Station the biggest thing we have dealt with is the changing of start times on all of our jobs – which we are all still trying to adjust to. As with all change, it is taking some adjusting and has led to high frustration levels, but that can be said for both offices.

At the MPO the shorthandedness has led to more overtime than some may want and management's expectations of more work accomplished in a shorter amount of time. At Craft Station the start time changes have upended our routine that got the work done right. We all need to keep in mind that we should be working together – not against one another. Whether we believe someone else can work better or faster is irrelevant. Once we start thinking that way, it just breeds resentment. Some clerks have gone so far as to dictate a list of jobs another clerk could be doing. We don't need that. We need to do the best we can do in the hours we are given – and then go home.

“If you don't like your situation, then change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.” – Maya Angelou

P.S. If you want to know what the greeting was about, email me at wingnaprayer@cox.net. :-)

The fallacy of the one-click lunch: shift rest periods and breaks – a new perspective by Sonya Kirsch, Recording Secretary

For years now management has encouraged us to take a one-click lunch, silently alluding to how it is somehow better for us. And we have bought into it believing that somehow it's more beneficial – how we will get to leave work sooner. However, this belief is a falsehood that many of us stubbornly still cling to. Management is the only party benefiting from this practice.

Break periods are necessary for workers' physical and mental well-being. Rest at regular intervals throughout our shifts keeps our bodies and minds from getting overly fatigued. By taking one-click lunches or skipping breaks until the last hour of our shifts we are robbing ourselves of the time our bodies need to reboot and function efficiently. Powering through a shift to the point of exhaustion when it's time to go home also adversely affects our home lives. Too often workers who skip lunch and break periods lack the energy to take care of their own personal business once they get home. Sleep becomes paramount as our bodies have been pushed to the limits.

Apart from not allowing ourselves time to recharge, the benefit of leaving sooner due to a one-click lunch is a fallacy in and of itself. Overtime us now the norm in our workplace. Often those of us on the overtime list work ten hour days, in some cases twelve hours. It's not uncommon for clerks not on the OTDL to be required to work mandatory overtime.

Considering that shifts are much longer than they once were, people aren't really doing themselves a favor by taking a one-click lunch. Workers may get to go home in ten rather than ten and a half hours, but that's ten hours with minimal rest. Add to this scenario the added fatigue of not having adequate rests during a shift and it's a recipe for disaster. The end result is that the physical and mental well-being of workers who don't take breaks at regular intervals is compromised.

Some may think that taking the breaks and lunches that we are entitled to may jeopardize or endanger service standards. We should not have to neglect our own physical needs for the sake of dispatch times. Skipped breaks and one-click lunches have made it possible for management to avoid and neglect to factor in breaks when scheduling or maneuvering. Please remember that while we have a responsibility to our work and employer, we also have a responsibility to our own health and well-being.

So take your breaks. Take your full lunches. Remember the mail will still be dispatched and the world will not end if we rest. Management may not like it, but they'll get used to it.



NOMINATIONS FOR LOCAL OFFICES

Sheets will be posted on bulletin boards for those who would like to nominate officers of the Local. For satellite offices, members may mail your nominations to the Local's P.O. Box. Nominations primarily, however, are made at the October meeting. Those nominated must also be present at the October meeting to decline or accept the nomination. If any positions are contested, an Election Committee will be selected, ballots mailed to each member, and then counted at the November meeting. Further discussion about the upcoming election will be at our September 21st meeting. Nominations for officers will be at the October 19th meeting; and the counting of the ballots will be at the November 16th meeting – followed by the swearing in of officers for 2-year terms. If no offices are contested, officers will be sworn in at the October meeting.



Arkansas Delegates at 2014 National Convention, Chicago