

Razorback Scheme

American Postal Workers Union • Northwest Arkansas Area Local

August 2016

From the President

Ike Mills

There are several elections coming in the near future and it is important for all of you to be registered to vote. We have 33 of our members that are not registered to vote in the upcoming national elections. It is important for all of us to be a part of these elections.

The other elections we need to be part of are for the national officers of APWU. Below is a list of the candidates that our local has endorsed for election to respective offices.

- President..... Mark Dimonstein
- Vice President..... Jeff Kehlert
- Sec/Treasurer..... Elizabeth Powell
- Industrial Relations..... Tony McKinnon
- Human Relations..... Sue Carney
- Research Education..... Charles Smith
- Organizing..... Anna Smith
- Legislative Political..... Judy Beard
- Health Plan..... John Marcotte
- Clerk Craft Officers..... Dir. Clint Burelson
- Asst. Dir. (A)..... Lamont Brooks
- Asst. Dir. (B)..... Lynn Pallas-Barber
- Maintenance Craft Officers..... Dir. Steve Raymer
- Asst. Dir. (A)..... Idowu Balogun
- Asst. Dir. (B)..... Terry Martinez
- Motor Vehicle Services..... Dir. Michael Foster
- Asst. Dir. Javier Pineres
- Support Services..... Dir. Stephen Brooks
- Southern Regional Coordinator..... Kim Guy
- Clerk Craft NBA's, St. Louis Region
- Position (A)..... Robert Kessler
- Position (B)..... Daniel Skemp
- Maintenance Craft NBA's Southern Region
- Position (A)..... John Gearhard
- Position (B)..... Carlos Paz

If you have any questions about these candidates, please feel free to get in touch with me to discuss these endorsements.

Well, of course, the biggest news is the new contract. We are just getting a handle on the specifics of the new agreement, but it looks like the new pay rates will be effective on the 6th of August and will show up in our checks August 26th. Our retroactive pay will be in our pay checks dated November 4th.

Also, the timeline for local negotiations has been set. Either party wishing to negotiate their LMOUs must give a written notice of intent by September 22 and the negotiating period is from September 8 – November 7, 2016. For full details you can get the full text of these subjects on the Union website at apwu.org. Anyone that has questions about LMOU negotiations, please contact your steward or one of the officers of the Local.

There is several things going on for our Local and we are all very busy, so if you think there is something you would like to get active in, let me know. I'm sure we can help you to become active in your Union.



APWU National President MOE BILLER Visits Fayetteville – Oct. 23, 1999. L to R: Friend of Elyse Warford (Springdale); President Moe Biller; Elyse Warford (Jim Warford's daughter); and Loren Adams (far right).

The *RAZORBACK SCHEME* is the official voice of the Northwest Arkansas Area Local of the APWU – AFL-CIO. 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 (2) 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.....Cris Martinez
 Financial Secretary....Tina Delay
 Recording Secretary.....Sonya Kirsch
 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.....Vacant
 Tour Three Alternate.....Vinny Dachille
 Rogers Steward.....vacant
 Springdale Steward.....Cris Martinez
 Siloam Springs Steward...Darrell Barnes
 Maintenance.....Phil Morgan
 Maintenance Alternate....Tony Crowsey
 Safety Representative.....Nancy Sramek
 Webmaster.....Jake Lamkins

NEXT UNION MEETINGS:

Sunday, Aug. 14, 2016 – 2:00 pm
 Denny's, 4861 W. Sunset, Springdale AR

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:

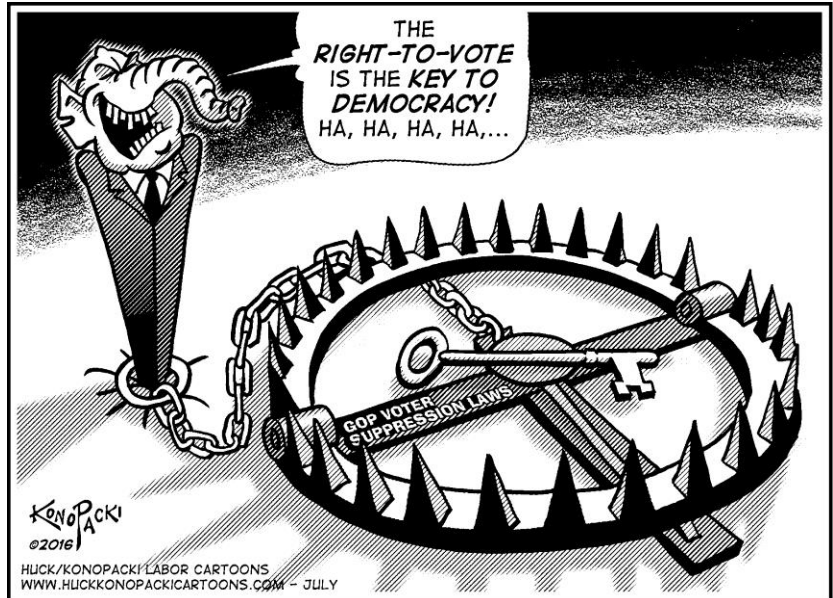
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Richard Leon Edmisten, 79, retired Postal Worker and member of our Local for 25-years, passed away July 15, 2016. Richard lived in Huntsville. He was born August 13, 1936 at Kansas City, Missouri, the son of Dee Elmer and Anna Mazon Edmisten. He had retired from the United States Postal Service several years ago after more than twenty-five years of service. He was a veteran of the United States Army Reserve and had retired as a Captain from the Huntsville Fire Department. He was preceded in by his wife, Edra E. McGowan Edmisten on August 20, 2008.



You're Invited!

TO YOUR UNION MEETING

Sunday, Aug. 14, 2016 – 2:00 p.m.
Denny's Restaurant, 4861 W. Sunset,
 Springdale
 Just off Exit 72 of I-49

You could win \$100 Door Prize!
Soft Drinks & Snacks on-the-house

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- ✓ **National Convention**
- ✓ **New Contract**
- ✓ **LMOU Negotiations**
- ✓ **LMOU Committee**



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW CONTRACT

- 2015 Agreement for 40-months, expiring September 20, 2018.
- General wage increases – 1.2% November 14, 2015; 1.3% November 26, 2016; and 1.3% November 26, 2017.
- COLA formulated in 2010 Agreement shall continue with a July 2014 Index base month. (PSEs excluded)
- Postal Service's share of employee health insurance premiums to be reduced by 1% per year.... For 2017 - 75% of weighted avg bi-weekly premiums; For 2018 – 74%; For 2019 – 73%.
- Clerk Craft PSE category of employees continues with “considerations” in PSE wages and working conditions, giving “weight to Postal Service’s interests in workforce flexibility and cost control”.
- Maintenance PSEs to be converted within 60 days of the Award to either FTRs or PTRs.
- Maintenance PSEs to cease being a category.
- All Clerk Craft PSEs in 200 Man-Year offices with 2.5 years from Award date to be converted to career no later than 60 days from Award date.
- Clerk Craft PSEs converted under this provision not required to serve probationary period.
- Another one-time conversion of Clerk Craft PSEs to be evaluated after one-year of Award to consider conversion.
- One-year from date of Award, parties may mutually agree to moratorium on contracting out retail services.
- NTFT duty assignments eliminated in processing plants (Function 1) and “capped” in retail (Function 4) facilities.
- PSE wage & benefit increases shall be 1% in addition to the general increases for career employees (2.2%, 2.3%, and 2.3%). In addition, PSEs shall receive wage increases to the general and annual increases above as follows: \$0.09 per hour retroactive to Nov. 14, 2015; \$0.20 per hour effective May 13, 2017; and \$0.21 per hour effective May 26, 2018. (These extra wage increases are due to PSEs not being entitled to COLAs which career employees receive.)
- PSEs shall receive holiday pay for six (6) major holidays: New Year’s, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. PSE holiday pay shall be determined by the facility category: 200 Man-Year Office – 8 hours; POStPlan Office – 4 hours; All other offices – 6 hours.
- PSEs who work their holiday may, at their option, elect to have their annual leave balance credited with 4, 6, or 8 hours (as applicable) in lieu of receiving holiday pay.
- PSE health insurance expansion still under negotiation and not part of Award but may be added as a later amendment.
- Lay-Off Protection continues. Employees in the regular work force as of July 8, 2016 are under this protection.
- Award reinforces the existing moratorium on further plant consolidations to April 2017, one-year from the expiration of the USPS’ self-imposed moratorium, 9 months from the issue of the Award.

To Our Non-Union Employees:

– by Andrew Heyd, Tour 2 Steward

I'm sure you've heard all the reasons for joining the union. So, there's no reason for me to repeat them to you. But, there is something I want you to consider before saying “No”.

Have you ever been represented in disciplinary action by the union? Management doesn't just pick an individual to issue discipline to. Often (but not always) the clerk is in some way culpable. But the union represents you to the best of their ability.

Have you ever received an award that the union has fought for you to get? I don't think management has ever admitted they were wrong and just handed out money. It takes the union to file a grievance on your behalf.

Yes, I know there are times one feels the union didn't properly represent you, and that may have given you cause to cancel your membership. I can say this, because it's happened to me. I was pissed on how a grievance was handled and did think about getting out. I chose not to because there is a bigger picture. The National Union fights for all the benefits we are lucky enough to have.

There are people who use the word 'scab'. I've never liked that term and generally don't use it. I think it's more of a moral / ethical choice.

You reap the rewards of a grievance; you go to the union for their help when you're facing disciplinary action; and yet, you don't contribute to the organization. You receive all the benefits that our union has fought to obtain over several years, and continue to fight to sustain those benefits / rights, but you feel you have no moral / ethical obligation to contribute. As there is no legal obligation for you to join the union to receive these benefits and representation in your time of need – I guess it goes to character.

The political arena is getting worse. Politicians are taking aim at the Postal Service to privatize. Not to benefit the American public – because if they were truly honorable in their intention they would sit down and have an honest / fair conversation instead of just spitting out the usual rhetoric. No, their loyalty lies with big business and hope to privatize the Post Office.

All I can do is ask you to join the fight, contribute and if possible, get involved.

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Why A Newsletter?

– by Andrew Heyd, Tour 2 Steward

Currently, our newsletter is published about every other month. A question “Do we really need the newsletter?” In my opinion, I would say most definitely. The local newsletter is a means of informing the membership as to what is going on that is pertinent to our local. Sure, the state puts out a newsletter and national has a website full of information, but none of this pertains to our local. I fear our newsletter is in danger of being discontinued due to lack of concern.

Often following a union meeting, people at work ask me “What happened at the union meeting?” I give them the best answer I can, what I remember and how I interpreted what was said. Ask someone else that was at the meeting and you'll probably get a different answer.

The best way to disseminate this information to the membership (to those who, for one reason or another were unable to attend the meeting) would be through the local newsletter.

Our membership has grown to include several cities. How will the members know what is going on? The only way this is going to happen is for you – the membership to voice your opinion.

In today's environment there is the desire to reduce the influence of Union's and Collective Bargaining. People need to be informed. Our local should want more from its newsletter, not less.

We have local negotiations coming up. How many of you know this? How many have offered suggestions to try to improve our LMOU? What do you want changed? What do you want to remain?

- ❖ It's your newsletter.
- ❖ It's your access to information.
- ❖ It's your choice.



DENNIS TAFF RETIRES

After nearly 40 years of service as an officer of the APWU, Brother Dennis Taff is retiring. You may remember him as one of our two National Business Agents (NBAs) who drove down from Kansas City countless times to represent Fayetteville and all other NWA offices.

Not only was he diligent, Dennis was one of our best fighters. He worked night & day, day-in and day-out, to represent us in hundreds, if not thousands, of cases. Always he thought of others as he strived for the best outcomes. His Christian mores are epic.

Dennis first served as a steward for 25 years in Fort Smith, as Local President of Western Arkansas Area Local, as Arkansas State APWU President for nearly 10 years, and as our NBA for another 12.

It's been an incredible journey, and we are grateful for his service. Dennis, thank you! And may you enjoy your well-deserved retirement.