

# The Corner Stone

PUBLICATION OF WATERLOO LOCAL #451  
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO  
MEMBER OF APWU POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION



Retiree's Get-Together  
Mondays at 1:00pm  
University Ave HyVee

November 2003

## President's Report

By: Dwight Slaikeu

Although our Fall Conference will be history by the time you read this, it's still in the future as I write so I won't be reporting on it in this article. I will give you a rundown on what was discussed at the Clerk Craft Conference last month, though. The 3 days were spent on training and information relating to the application of Article 12, Principal Assignment Area as listed on Duty Assignments, performance of bargaining unit work (Art. 1.6.B), Casuals in lieu of (Art. 7.1.B), and the general session which covered many subjects. It included areas like the President's Commission, the VER lawsuit, limited duty reports, an RI-399 report, retail issues, maintaining and expanding of our work, and, at the end, a number of Clerk Craft resolutions to vote on to determine whether or not they should be included at the National Convention next year.

I would say probably the most important subject from your point of view, and those who make the regular meetings will recognize this, is the President's Commission Report. If ever you were to take a personal interest in what's happening relative to your career, this is the time. Check out the National website [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) for information if you need it, contact your legislators by mail, e-mail, phone, or better yet, in person, if you have access. They need to know that while the USPS is in need of some work, any necessary changes should not be to the detriment of universal service, uniform rates, and the American public. Notify your family and friends that this will probably be showing up in Congress soon and they should pay attention to it. Let those people in Washington know that you don't believe the closings of plants and small offices are in the best interests of the American people; especially when the public won't even get the chance for input on the subject. The Local has some postcards available if you want to use them. Let me know if you want some.

There were a couple of other items that came out of the conference that I believe you should take a look at:

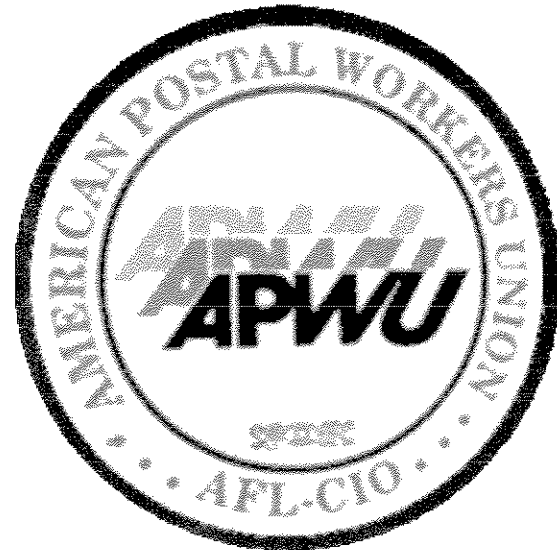
The Health Plan Open Season runs from November 10 – December 8 this year. When you are deciding whether to stay with your present plan or not, take a close look at the APWU plans, [www.apwuhp.com](http://www.apwuhp.com). I had BC/BS for many years, but last year got into the APWU Consumer-Driven Option and it has worked extremely well for me. It appears

to work best for those who are fortunate enough to be relatively healthy. While I don't expect you to switch just because I did, what I'm saying is take a close look at it before the deadline. APWU has 2 options available and they've made many positive changes from years past. I haven't seen a straight-up cost comparison with the other plans for next year yet, but I do know that my plan will be a few cents cheaper after the first of the year. I expect we'll know all the details after the conference we're holding here on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> as the Health Plan Director Bill Kaczor is scheduled to attend.

Also, LifeCare, [www.lifecare.com](http://www.lifecare.com) (new users enter company code: postal) should be looked at. It's a USPS/APWU combined service that may be of assistance in areas you can't even imagine.

Check it out...use it so we don't lose it.

That's it...see you at the meeting.



## Treasurer's Report

By: Meri Kay Chase

**REPORT NOT SUBMITTED**

Information can be obtained directly from the Treasurer or at the meetings.

# Secretary's Report

By: Mike Burke 

## APWU Local 451

**Date: October 18, 2003**

The October meeting of the APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:04 am. at Johnny Poppers with 17 members present.

A motion was made by Chuck Konig to dispense with the reading of the September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003 minutes. Second by Glenn Staudinger. Motion carried.

Treasurers report was passed out and read by Meri Kay Chase. The report was accepted as read.

### OFFICERS REPORTS :

Presidents Report: Dwight passed out APWU Mastercard pamphlets for those who were interested.

Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> is open season for APWU health Insurance. The head of the APWU Insurance will be at the fall seminar on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

The local 451 received an invitation to an open house/seminar from the Family Service League. Dwight has the invitation with the date information if you are interested in going. It is their Domestic Violence Awareness Seminar.

### OLD BUSINESS:

The next meeting will be November 22, 2003 at 11:00 am. at Johnny Poppers. The Fall Seminar is coming up on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Signup sheet is on the bulletin board if you are interested in going. Remember, all **Union Member's** registration fees will be paid for by the Local 451. There's a signup sheet on the bulletin board for those who want to help in the hospitality room and a sheet for those bringing food. Remember if you want to help out, even if only for a couple of hours to give someone a break, it would be great! A copy of the seminar agenda is posted on the board also.

Dwight brought up the fact that the Postal Service and the Dept. of Labor don't see eye-to-eye on FMLA.

Cindy Miller mentioned the fact that the Waterloo Chamber of Commerce is giving us some packets to hand out at the upcoming seminar. Contents will include things like pens, pencils, paper, and maps of Waterloo and her hot spots.

Adopt-a-Family has been paid.

Stan Drewelow told us that the 6 month audit was completed and everything was up-to-snuff.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Jerry Kemmer brought it to our attention that Craig Goetche wanted donations or manual help with a program to send packages to the veterans on Mon. Nov. 10 Please read the related information on the bulletin board.

Glenn Staudinger made a motion to send up to \$100.00 for this program. Second by Cindy Miller. Motion carried. Opposed was Meri Kay Chase and Chris Salinas.

**Editor's note:** *Meri and I felt we could have gave more money.*

A motion was made for the drawing by Jerry Kemmer and second by Chuck Konig. Mike Burke won the drawing.

A motion to adjourn by Glenn Staudinger, second with a tie by Linda Youngberg and Kim Karol at 11:48 am.

Members Present: Cindy Miller, Glenn Staudinger, Chris Salinas, Bob Berendes, Jim Anderson, Robert Bublitz, Meri Kay Chase, Dwight Slaikeu, Ed Berry, Mike Burke, Chuck Konig, Paulette Woods, Jerry Kemmer, Stan Drewelow, Randy Marks, Linda Youngberg, and Kim Karol.



## ATTENTION!!

**Attendance to this month's meeting  
is crucial for everyone!**

**We need everyones help!!**

**Our future, security and freedom is  
at stake!!!**

**If you think the President's  
Commission Report on Postal  
Reform was your only worry,**

## THINK AGAIN!



# Vice-President's Report

By: Kim Karol 

Open Season is upon us; everyone should be evaluating their current health insurance coverage, and your Flexible Spending Account. Most of these options change for people as the years go by. In order to maximize your benefits from these programs you should be make a cost/benefit analysis at the end of each year. Additionally you should evaluate whether or not your health insurance premiums are paid with pre-tax or post-tax dollars.

To make changes in your enrollments you are going to need access to PostalEase. Everyone should have his or her personalized PIN number, but if you do not please call 1-877-477-3273 as soon as possible to have a new number sent to you. At this time of year it is likely that many employees will need to get a new number to make changes in their accounts, so it is very important that you do not procrastinate or you may not have your number in time to make changes during the Open Season.

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:**  
**FEHB Open Season- Now-Dec. 9**  
**Flexible Spending- Now-Dec. 13**

Open Season is a really good time to review your personnel records. **You** should be very vigilant in assuring that you are aware of everything in your personnel file. Make sure to have incorrect information or documents removed from your file, and make corrections where necessary. **You** are responsible for making sure that accurate records are maintained regarding your employment. It has also been recommended that you obtain a complete copy of your file. The Waterloo Office is the only place that a complete record is kept. In the event of fire or some other catastrophic event your file may be lost. Don't be fooled, you are in the computer systems for the postal service, but the only data kept is your name, address and social security number, mainly for pay purposes. They will have no record of your FEHB, FSA, Life Insurance, etc. Having your own copies will assist you in making corrections or changes. For those of you lucky enough to be close to retiring, the information in your file will be helpful in estimating your annuity.

'Til next month.

Respectfully Submitted  
Kimberly Karol-VP



## Be afraid, be very afraid.....

I just got back from the IPWU Convention this past weekend here in Waterloo. Information flowed on everything from the APWU health plan to the President's Commission report. We even had a special visit from one of the Democratic

presidential candidates, Congressman Dennis Kucinich of Ohio.

But out of all of this information, the biggest buzz was something greater than the threat of what was recommended in the Postal Reform report. The recommendations in that report are just a stepping stone to what is to come in the future. It's not a pretty sight either. Not only does this threat effect us, but thousands of Federal, State and local employees as well. What is it you ask?

Globalization! It really should be called, "Big Business in Control of the World's Governments". It's a type of Fascism Mussolini used in Italy before WW II. In Mussolini's own words, "*Fascism should be more appropriately called "corporatism", because it is a merger of state and corporate power.*"

Does this scare you? You should be scared, because the final pieces are being played out right now. We all heard of the World Trade Organization, NAFTA, the IMF and the World Bank. But do you know what GATS is? How about the FTAA? If you don't, then you need to stop at this website [www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org) and learn about the other threats. I'll touch on these a little bit here, but you should visit the website to get more info, as I can't fit it all here.

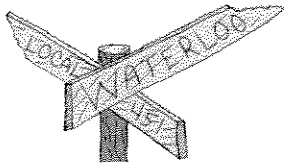
This week (Nov 17 - 21), trade ministers will convene in Miami, Florida to negotiate the terms of a Western hemisphere-wide free trade agreement called the **Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)**. The FTAA would bring new benefits for multinational corporations, while compromising workers rights, the environment, public health and social development.

So what is **GATS** you ask? At one time, trade rules dealt strictly with goods. But today, "trade" has been expanded to include services. This includes banking, telecommunications, postal services, tourism, transportation, waste disposal, oil and gas production, and electricity. It also covers services universally considered to be essential to human health and development (water treatment). The rules proposed by the **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)** seeks to phase out **all** governmental "barriers" (IE: Change our laws) to international trade in the service sector, turning public services into deregulated private markets all over the world.

So what does this mean to you? Your rights, that's what it's all about! Your rights to a safe work environment, to collectively bargain and many other things we take for granted. When this does happen, there is nothing a politician or the US Courts can do to change it.

We need to join together and fight these threats. Not only are we threatened nationally, but internationally as well. I urge everyone to attend this month's meeting. Our future is at stake! United, we can make a difference.

Chris Salinas - Editor



# The Corner Stone

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION  
WATERLOO LOCAL #451  
P.O. BOX 387  
WATERLOO, IA 50704

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Union Meeting

Nov. 22nd @ 11 am  
Johnny Poppers  
910 W 5th ST.

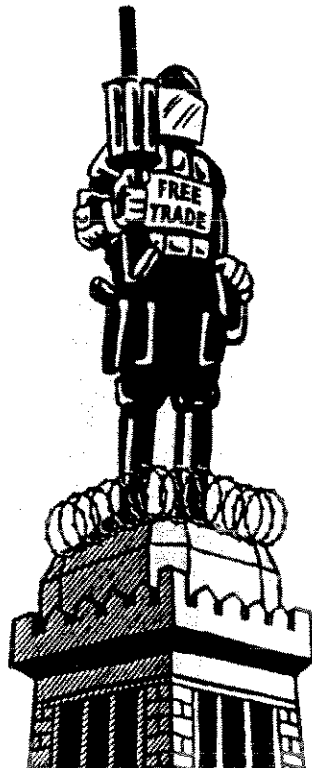
### Waterloo Local #451 Officers

President - Dwight Slaikeu	Trustees - Eddy Berry
Vice-President - Kim Karol	Stan Drewelow
Steward Director - Cindy Miller	Jenelle Brucher
Secretary - Mike Burke	Editor - Chris Salinas
Treasurer - Meri Kay Chase	

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
WATERLOO, IA  
PERMIT NO. 1837

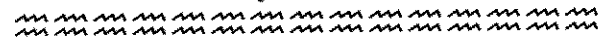
ALL OPINIONS ARE THOSE OF THE WRITER  
AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE  
OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE WATERLOO  
LOCAL #451

21ST CENTURY  
STATUE OF  
LIBERTY



KenoPeki  
©2001

### Postal Commission's Report Myth v. Fact



**MYTH:**

The American people view the Postal Service as broken and in need of a "drastic overhaul".

**FACT:**

A poll conducted at the request of the Postal Commission found **3 out of 4 Americans** believe that the Postal Service works "extremely well as it is" or requires "only minor changes."

**MYTH:**

Postal Worker are overpaid.

**FACT:**

Postal wages have barely kept pace with inflation. Postal workers deserve to make a decent living wage. Postal workers have labored to create the best and most efficient service in the world.

**MYTH:**

Postal employees' benefits under OWCP should be reduced.

**FACT:**

Postal employees do hazardous work, and are entitled to the protections afforded all federal workers under existing OWCP rules.