



The Corner Stone

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

JULY 2008



Retiree's Get-Together
Mondays at 1:00pm
University Ave. McDonald's
Across from HY-Vee

From the President's chair...



Dwight Slaikeu



Chris asked me at the June meeting if I would be writing a new article for July or if I would use the one I wrote for June since there were glitches causing the paper to not be published. My first response was I'd probably write a new one since the old one would be out-dated, but I'd take a look at it. Well, guess what, that article is still very relevant. If you add the words "HUGE FLOODS" in the appropriate places, change the affected employee numbers, add a few more impacted cities and presto-change-o, it fits like a glove. So, I'm going to leave it alone and hope Chris can figure out how to make this paragraph match up with the June article. The only change I made is the date of the upcoming meeting was changed from June 21st to July 19th. The rest of the changes I leave up to you.

Does Management Get It?

Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM, Version 18) Chapter 519 **Administrative Leave** reads as follows:

519.21 Acts of God

519.211 General: *Acts of God* involve community disasters such as fire, flood, or storms. The disaster situation must be general rather than personal in scope and impact. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work.

519.213 Determining the Cause of Absence:

Postmasters and other appropriate postal officials determine whether absences from duty allegedly due to "acts of God" were, in fact, due to such cause or whether the employee or employees in question could, with reasonable diligence, have reported for duty.

I quote the above because of the tornado of May 25th and the USPS' initial reaction of denying Administrative Leave requested by employees who were directly, and traumatically, affected by the storm. I've been told the E.L.M. doesn't allow them to approve the requests.

Question #1: Was this a community disaster such as fire, flood, or storm? An EF5 tornado that destroys over 200 homes and over 15 businesses, damages another 400+ homes and businesses would qualify, I think. (And these numbers are from Parkersburg alone; they don't include New Hartford, Dunkerton, Cedar Falls, etc.)

Question #2: Was it general rather than personal in scope? I believe the answer to #1 says it wasn't personal. The storm didn't pick out particular homes; it totally

wiped out about 1/3 of Parkersburg before continuing on to other areas and communities. **Question #3:** Did it prevent groups of employees from reporting to work? The answer is yes, if you include all employees, whether USPS employees or not. The only number I've heard as far as our Waterloo USPS employees is 6 (2 Clerks and 4 Carriers) and this is the only part of the E.L.M. USPS could possibly stretch to say they can't pay Administrative Leave. I wonder how many of us would have had to live, and subsequently be destroyed, in Parkersburg in order for them to call it "groups". 10? 15? Or would it take over a hundred of us? My opinion, which obviously disagrees with the USPS opinion, is that 6 is a very large group when you're talking total demolition of living conditions. **Question #4:** Could postal officials determine whether the absences were due to the storm or could the employees, with reasonable diligence, have made it to work? Well, let's see...my house, or those of my family members and neighbors, are gone, clothes are gone, the car is gone, as is my bicycle (work is only about 30 miles away, riding it to work would have been the diligent thing to do), electricity, gas, etc., etc., etc. Now, I have the job of combing the landscape to see if I can find anything, set up temporary quarters, which will actually be a long temporary, deal with insurance agents, beg, borrow or buy some sort of transportation and handle a hundred other things that pop up every few minutes. All of this is done while there is a

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Secretary's Meeting Minutes.....



Bonnie Salinas



APWU LOCAL 451

June 21st, 2008

The meeting of the APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:20 a.m. at the OP with 11 members.

Bonnie Salinas read the minutes of the last meeting and made a **motion** to accept the minutes as read, seconded by Jerry Kemmer. **Motion carried.**

Glenn Staudinger was unavailable for treasurer's report, will be reviewed at next meeting.

Officers reports:

Presidents Report:

- 1) COPA – Right now we are at \$4600.00. Just a reminder that the raffle drawing will be held at July meeting.
- 2) There is another new website out, it is www.kcnba.org, and this is our National Business Agents website. There is a member's only section, and you do have to register with them. Chris Salinas added that he has been to the site and said that there is a lot of good information on it.
- 3) There was discussion on casuals, Cindy Miller added that when the casuals go into overtime that they are filing grievances.
- 4) We recently had a arbitration on our register cage, we were successful in upgrading the register cage to a level 7 and will be retroactive back to 14 March, 2007, this does involve about 4 or 5 people and I am working on that now. If you just help in the cage you will stay at level 6, if you fill in as register clerk you will be at level 7, and remember to fill out a 1723 Form for upgrade.
- 5) Turned back annual leave – look at chart on bidding board, if slots were/are full please make sure that I get a copy of the 3971 form. It will not get posted for someone else unless we push it.
- 6) I put information on the board about emergency relief funds, there is one through the National APWU, will post it when I get the information. (Secretary's note: it is posted now).
- 7) You should not transport mail in your personnel vehicle. You are taking a risk when you do this, carriers are bonded as far as I know, and you are not.

- 8) Do Not Take your Time Card home with you (you could mistakenly take someone else's card with you).
- 9) The building we worked out of on Thorson Ave, if you worked out there or you know of someone who has and are feeling some weird symptoms, get to the doctor and find out if it is chemically related. I don't expect it to come up but I am not a doctor.

Editor's Report: The newsletter was corrupted when sent to publisher, the flood issue effected our publisher as well. Problem will be fixed as of this month. Sorry for no newsletter. At the Black Hawk Labor Council meeting, which was held before our floods, they were talking manly about where monies should go. Many members were affected by it.

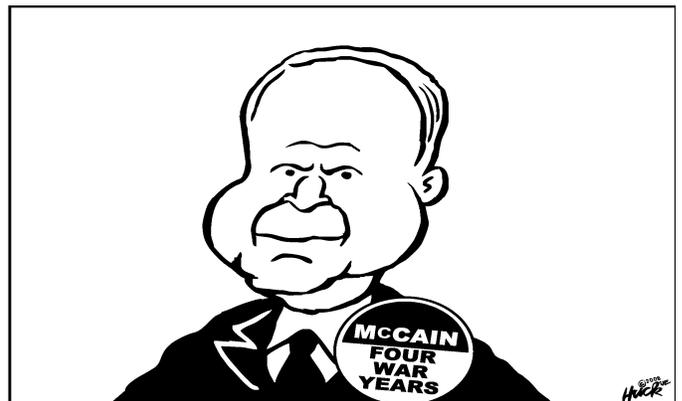
Old Business: The next meeting will be Saturday July 19th, 2008 at 11:00 am at the OP.

New Business: Dwight made a request to get reimbursed for calls made on his personal cell phone during the flood situation (tues, wed and thurs), to Kim Karol and Lee Moser (Post Office) he was out of the area. Chris Salinas made a **motion** to reimburse Dwight S. for calls made during flood situation, seconded by Gary Acuff., **Motion carried.**

Drawing: Chris Salinas made a **motion** to hold the drawing, seconded by Jerry Kemmer. **Motion carried.** Dave Carpenter won the door prize.

Adjourn: A **motion** was made by Chris Salinas to adjourn, seconded by Paulette Woods. **Motion carried.**

Members Present: Chris Salinas, Terry McEntee, Jerry Kemmer, Dave Knebel, Lora Thompson, Cindy Miller, Paulette Woods, Bonnie Salinas, Gary Acuff, Dwight Slaikeu and Dave Carpenter





Toyota May Be a Shade Greener Environmentally But has badly stumbled with regard to human rights abuses

- **Toyota linked to human trafficking and sweatshop abuse;**
- **Ties to Burmese dictators;**
- **10,000 low-wage temps;**
- **Unpaid overtime and overworked to death;**
- **Cited by the ILO for repression of freedom of association;**
- **Lowering wages and benefits across the U.S. auto industry.**

Today the National Labor Committee (NLC) is releasing a 65-page report, *"The Toyota You Don't Know,"* documenting serious human rights violations by the Toyota Motor Company, which will surprise and disturb most Americans.

"Celebrities like Julia Roberts, Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Bill Maher and others have led the way in turning Toyota's Prius into a symbol of concern for our environment," said Charles Kernaghan, director of the NLC. *"We hope that these same celebrities will now also challenge Toyota to improve its respect for human and worker rights. As a start, Toyota should cut its ties to the Burmese dictators and end the exploitation of foreign guest workers trafficked to Japan."*

The NLC report-which appears to be the first serious research in 35 years on Toyota's labor practices in Japan and the developing world-documents the following violations:

- **Toyota linked to human trafficking and sweatshop abuse:** Toyota's much admired "Just in Time" auto parts supply chain is riddled with sweatshop abuse, including the trafficking of foreign guest workers--mostly from China and Vietnam-to Japan, who are stripped of their passports and often forced to work-including at subcontract plants supplying Toyota-16 hours a day, seven days a week, while being paid less than half the legal minimum wage. Guest workers who complain about abusive conditions are deported.
- **Prius made by low-wage temps:** Fully one-third-10,000-of all Toyota assembly line workers in Japan are low-wage temps who earn less than 60 percent of what full time workers do, and even less when benefits are included. Temps have few rights and are hired on contracts lasting as little as four months.
- **Unpaid overtime and "overworked" to death:** Mr. Kenichi Uchino was just 30 years old when he died of overwork on an assembly line at Toyota's Prius plant, leaving behind his young wife and two children, who were one and three. Mr. Uchino routinely worked 13 to 14 hours a day, putting in 106 ½ to 155 hours of overtime-depending upon whether work taken home was counted-in the 30 days leading up to his death. Toyota claimed that he had only worked 45 hours of overtime and that the other 61 ½ to 110 hours were of a "voluntary nature" and unpaid. His wife had to go to court-which ruled that Mr. Uchino was overworked to death-to win a pension for their children.
- **Ties to Burmese dictators:** Toyota, through the Toyota Tsusho Corporation, which is part of the Toyota Group of Companies, is involved in several joint business ventures with the ruthless military regime in Burma. The dictators use these revenues to repress and torture the people of Burma.
- **Repression of freedom of association:** Toyota was cited by the ILO as, "...a multinational company, apparently with little regard for corporate responsibility..." for its role in suppressing freedom of association at its plant in the Philippines, where Toyota fired 227 workers for daring to exercise their legal right to organize.
- **Toyota and the race to the bottom:** Toyota is imposing its two-tier, low wage model at its non-union plants in the south of the United States, which will result in wages and benefits being slashed across the entire auto industry.

Access the new NLC Toyota report at: <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=562>

Or via the NLC's home page: www.nlcnet.org

NOTE: These are the minutes from the May meeting. These minutes were accepted as read by Bonnie Salinas at the June meeting. Do to the floods and technical glitches, it is provided for your reading.

APWU LOCAL 451

May 17th, 2008

The meeting of the APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:11 a.m. at the OP with 11 members.

A **motion** was made by Chris Salinas and seconded by Mike Burke to accept the **minutes** as printed in the Corner Stone. **Motion carried.**

Glenn Staudinger presented the Treasurers Report and a **motion** was made by Glenn to put the report on file for review. Gary Acuff seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Officers reports:

Presidents Report:

1) COPA – Right now we are at \$4046.00, thanks partially to the state convention and partially to another individual signing up for an allotment. a) If you want to give with an allotment and not sure how to do it see Dwight or Kim Karol they will help you. b) Raffle for Copa – Chris Salinas stated that items in the raffle are as follows: A Sirius Satellite Radio with a \$30 gift certificate, a Bath and Body Works bag, (secretary's note: It is not a Bed, Bath and Beyond bag, which was stated at the meeting), a Hawkeye pillow, some Movies (DVD's) and T-shirts. The drawing will be held at the July meeting, see Dwight for tickets. c) The hat pass netted \$21.00 – Thanks everyone. 2) The State Convention – Mostly I want thank all the volunteers, we have some of them here and I especially wanted to thank Meri Kay Chase who is not here to hear it. She did an excellent job on the hospitality room, she did a lot of jobs tied into that and I was impressed. We are slated again to host the State Convention in to years. 3) As most of you know by now we did get another Casual settlement, the Arbitration was successful which is our last Casual in lieu of grievance that we had. I apologize for not letting anyone know prior to the extra money showing up in your checks. 4) The 2240 Forms that Cindy brings around for you to sign and you are given a copy of it, you need to hang on to these and watch your checks and make sure that the money shows up, mistakes can still be made. Also if you could try to let us know that you got it (grievance payment) there

is know way we can tell that you got the money, we only know that is was sent in. When you do get the grievance payment on your pay stub ignore the hours number, just look at the dollars, the hours number and dollar amount don't match up. 5) Thanks to Terry McEntee all of our COPA trophies etc... have a new shelve that Terry built and put up for us, it is much appreciated. 6) I want to mention again three websites that have a lot of information on them and are pertinent to us, they are **www.apwu.org** this is the National website, **www.apwuiowa.com** this is our State Union website and **www.howtobuyamerican.com**, lots of links to places where you can buy American products and union made as well. 7) There was a staffing discussion; main point is to work safely.

Editor's Report: Information from the Black Hawk Labor Council (BHLC), there are candidates who turn in survey's in order to get the endorsement of the BHLC, they are having a tough time making decisions. Keep watch in your district in the next couple months for your senate and representative candidates.

Old Business: The next meeting will be Saturday June 21st, 2008 at 11:00 am at the OP.

New Business: Chris Salinas made a **motion** to send Bonnie Salinas as a Delegate to the National Convention with LWOP the only expense, all other fees flight etc... paid by her. Kris Englemann seconded the motion. There was discussion on the motion. Dwight asked to speak on this motion and relinquished chair to Kim Karol (Vice President) who will hold it until decision is made on the motion. Dwight spoke in length on the issue. Chris Salinas called for the question, all were in favor. Vote was held on motion. **Motion failed.** (Secretary's note: The discussion in it's entirety is on file)

Drawing: Gary Acuff made a **motion** to hold the drawing, seconded by Mike Burke. **Motion carried.** Glenn Staudinger won the door prize.

Adjourn: A **motion** was made by Chris Salinas to adjourn, seconded by Gary Acuff. **Motion carried.**

Members Present: Chris Salinas, Cindy Miller, Terry McEntee, Paulette Woods, Gary Acuff, Glenn Staudinger, Mike Burke, Bonnie Salinas, Kris Englemann, Dwight Slaikeu and Kim Karol.



From the President's chair...

Dwight Slaikeu



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nightly curfew during which I have to leave town regardless of my progress, it's difficult at best to get around due to debris everywhere and it won't quit raining. Now keep in mind, all of this is after I had my life flash before my eyes if I was unfortunate enough to have been there to ride out the most devastating storm I could imagine but fortunate enough to not be one of the 8 who were killed. Reasonable diligence? Several days later maybe!

I say all of that to say this...the storm was a real storm, it was a big storm, it was a devastating storm and it affected several of our USPS employees. Local volunteers, individuals as well as businesses, helped these people get through the worst days of their lives. Major corporations (Target, Hy-Vee, Fareway, yes even WalMart, to name a few) moved in to help. **Question #5:** Where is USPS, a company who has employees in every (Parkers)burg in the country? And **Question #6:** Why can't they, for once, just do the right thing and give up a few days of Administrative Leave for their workers? Oh yeah, the E.L.M. won't allow them to help out.

My heart and prayers continue to go out to those affected throughout the area as they continue to regroup, recoup and recover.

The meeting in July is the 19th.

I bring this to your attention because my hobby is a good example. I'm an Amateur Radio (some say "ham radio") operator as well as my wife. Most high-tech equipment for ham radio was made in Japan. Notice I said "WAS MADE" rather than "IS MADE". Even Japanese companies have gone global. Let me give you a short history.

Previous, before the 60's, you could buy radio equipment and accessories in the USA that were US made. The 60's and later saw an explosion of high quality Japanese-made radios. Many American companies struggled and went out of business. Some companies survived the struggle, but are shells of their original self. Then in the 90's, several companies from Taiwan made equipment and sold them for less than the Japanese companies could. Soon Japan would turn to China and Taiwan companies to help lower their cost on their lower cost line of equipment.

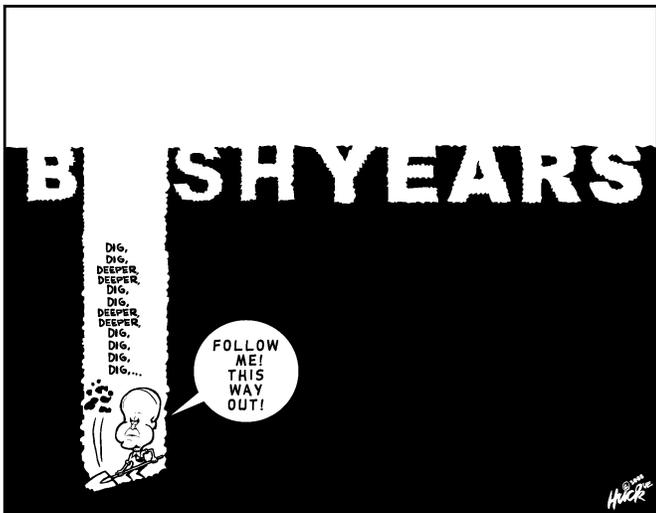
Now back to the present day of my hobby. I own 2 ham radios at a total cost of \$5k when they were new in their day (they are used equipment so they cost me less) and were made in Japan. But my accessories for these radios (Antennas and such) are made by US companies. It wasn't easy to find these US companies, but it can be done with a little research. The cost of their products was higher than their foreign counterparts, but buying American has made me appreciate this country and its workers more as too the quality of the products. Nothing is more patriotic than buying American.

So what does this have to do with this union paper, glad you asked. In order for our country (and our own union) to survive, we need to buy American products when all possible. This country used to be one of the biggest world manufacturers of products. Today, because of our country's factory closings, we are just the biggest CONSUMER of foreign products now, making our country a shell of itself.

Buying just American products helps our country and provides jobs for Americans. Union or not, we need to support our US companies that make products here. Any US companies that use foreign manufacturing only should be ignored.

As for those retailers that don't provide enough selection of US made products (Wal-Mart comes to mind), we need to skip them at all cost and go to those that do. When we do find that retailer that sells a good selection of American products, we need to let others know and patronize them. But overall, let's buy American-only products.

Buying American products is the only right thing to do in this day and age.



Doing what is right!

By Chris Salinas

Recently, I have come to realize that you can still buy items made in the USA. After shopping for prizes for COPA drawings a good union shopper (like myself) can find the items they want just by taking their time and checking the labels. Sometimes after looking, you're stuck with buying a foreign item.



The Corner Stone

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

Waterloo Local #451 Officers

President - Dwight Slaikeu
Vice-President - Kim Karol
Steward Director - Vanda Blankenship
Secretary - Bonnie Salinas
Treasurer - Glenn Staudinger
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**JOIN THE ACTION
ATTEND YOUR
UNION MEETING!**
July 19th @ 11am
THE OTHER PLACE
3904 Lafayette Rd
Evansdale, IA

Always buy UNION when possible!

**NON-MEMBERS of the APWU
Waterloo Local 451**



At least buy AMERICAN when available!

www.howtobuyamerican.com

The union is only as strong as its weakest link!

There is no excuse for them!

~ ~ ~
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