



The Corner Stone

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

November 2007



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

Take an active role....

From the VP's desk...



By: Kim Karol



I have to be honest with everyone, for several years now I have bristled anytime someone brings suggestions for "charitable donations" up at meetings. It hasn't always been that way and this year is no exception, but I finally took the time to try and figure out why my attitude has changed. I happened upon the key to my attitude change in an article written by the NARFE President in the November issue of the magazine. In this article she made referenced the theory that is attributed to Alexander Tyler from the book titled The Decline and Fall of the Athenian Republic. She asserts that he determined every civilization follows a certain development cycle. The growth cycle begins in the struggle from bondage to faith, from faith to courage, from courage to liberty, and from liberty to abundance. The growth cycle is then followed by a destructive cycle when abundance becomes selfishness, selfishness becomes complacency, complacency becomes apathy, apathy becomes dependency, and ultimately dependency returns to bondage.

Now I could be wrong, but it seems to me that I have lived most of my life in the stage between abundance and selfishness; with the majority of my adult life set in selfishness. Due to the selfishness of government and corporations the good of the many has been ignored for the benefit of the few. Workers wages and benefits have been either cut or prevented from keeping pace with the actual cost for earning an average living. This gap has increased the need for charitable giving. The problem is the charitable giving that I see is merely a means to ease the conscience of those who have created the need in the first place. A placating gesture to divert the attention of the masses from issues and ideas that could bring about real change and end the need for charity as it exists today.

When someone suggests to me that as an organization we participate in charitable giving without actively participating in activities that could facilitate a change to prevent the need for charity I become...agitated. For me this is no different than Wal-Mart giving \$300 million to charitable causes,

(this amount is only 1% of Wal-Mart's total earnings), but not sharing the wealth in a truly meaningful way such as increasing wages and benefits for its' employees. Simply throwing money at a charity should not be good enough to compensate for this inequity.

If our organization was truly interested in making things better for others- my definition of charity- then I think we should be actively participating in ways that facilitate changes for others in our communities:

Promote Civic Responsibility- volunteer with organizations that pursue political education- **break the cycle of complacency**, register to vote, assist with voter registration initiatives, learn about candidates- read position papers on issues that can bring real and positive changes, participate in your local caucuses and only support candidates that are willing to make the necessary changes to bring about real change, changes that benefit the many.

Volunteer your time and talents with organizations that promote self reliance- **break the cycle of dependence**- marketable job skills, mentoring programs that teach responsible life skills such as balancing a check book, making and sticking to a budget,

There are many groups that fit this bill. Right now the Black Hawk Labor Council is in need of establishing a list that can be called upon to help with many of the above suggested activities. It only requires a few hours of your time, periodically throughout the year. **BREAK THE CYCLE OF APATHY!**

I understand now why the idea of giving money is so difficult for me- I am not going to quietly stand back and watch as we complete Tyler's destructive cycle and slide from here to bondage. I believe the cycle can be broken if the spell of complacency and apathy can be broken. Action is the only means to break the spell. If the many join together to actively seek change- change will happen and charity as it exists today will not be necessary. I challenge everyone to take action! I can only support monetary donations if they are accompanied by action.



Secretary's Report

By: Mike Burke



APWU LOCAL 451

October 20, 2007

The meeting of the APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:04 am. with 16 members and retiree Vern Berry present.

A **motion** was made by Kim Karol and seconded by Chris Salinas to approve the minutes as printed in the Corner Stone. **Motion carried.**

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

Officers Reports:

Presidents Report:

1. COPA-The hat pass netted \$45.00. Dwight stated that at the end of this year we'll be a little bit over \$4,700.00.
2. National Officers Elections are over so watch the board for results.
3. If you work your holiday and put in your 3971 for annual in lieu of holiday pay, please give the 3971 to your immediate supervisor.
4. At the Fall Seminar the State Executive Board decided to endorse John Edwards for president. Also at the seminar the State APWU has opened up a website. Go to APWUIOWA.COM if you are interested.
5. If you are ever called in to talk to a Postal Inspector, remember, they are not obligated to get you union representation. If your talk or questioning turns into what you feel might be an interrogation or where you might feel that it could lead to some sort of discipline, at this point you should request Union Representation. Anytime you are being questioned or interviewed by an inspector take notes on everything for your own protection. VP. Kim Karol- you are not obligated to make any written statements for them. Simply state that you choose not to make any written statements.

Vice President:

Kim Karol also stated that if you qualify for FMLA please use it or we will lose it.

Old Business:

1. The next meeting will be Saturday November 17, 2007 at 11:00 am. at the OP.
2. If you are interested in becoming our delegate to the Black Hawk Labor Council contact Dwight. We also need volunteers to help with BHLC projects as needed. Contact Dwight for this also.
3. Dave Knebel investigated the officers salaries current vs. what they should be, however, after a motion by Dave K. and a second by Kim K., Dwight called a point of order, thus, mooting the

motion because changing these salaries constitutes a constitutional change. The officers salaries will be dealt with at a future meeting.

4. We are hosting the full State Convention the last week in April of 2008 at the Ramada here in Waterloo. We are looking for volunteers for the hospitality room and registration. Registration will be Thursday night and Friday morning and the hospitality room will be open, both, Thursday and Friday night. Delegates will be decided on at a later meeting. If you have any ideas for resolutions write them down and get them to Dwight, Cindy M. or Kim K.

New Business:

The Tri-State Convention is coming up in March 2008 in Des Moines.

A motion was made by Cindy Miller and seconded by Glenn Staudinger to table any voting on the Tri-State delegates until more information on the particulars is received. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Glenn Staudinger and seconded by Cindy Miller, in relation to the motion of the Sept. 15, 2007 meeting, to become affiliated with the Black Hawk Labor Council and to release the necessary funds to become affiliated. Motion carried.

Drawings: A motion was made to hold drawings by Cindy Miller and seconded by Chris Salinas. Motion carried. Chris Salinas won the door prize and Dwight won the \$100.00.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Cindy Miller and seconded by Knis Engelmann to adjourn. Motion carried at 12:13 pm.

Members present: Terry McEntee, Cindy Miller, Dwight Slaikou, Glenn Staudinger, Chris Salinas, Bonnie Salinas, Dave Knebel, Kim Karol, Kris Engelmann, Lora Thompson, Dave Hickman, Mike Burke, Rose Ann Garvey, Randy Wevenink, Steve Adsit and Bill Rice.

Happy Holidays!



From the



Officers of



Local 451



It's Open Season.

Beginning Nov. 12, you can update your health benefits, dental and vision coverage, sign up for flexible spending accounts, adjust your Thrift Savings Plan contributions and elect annual leave exchange. Or not. It's up to you.

Starting Monday, employees can make changes in their Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) coverage, including the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). The deadline to make changes in FEDVIP is midnight, ET, Dec. 10. Open Season for FEHB ends at 5 p.m., Central Time, Dec. 11.

Open Season for Flexible Spending Accounts also begins Nov. 12 and lasts until 5 p.m. CT, Dec. 29. Open Season for the Annual Leave Exchange begins Nov. 15 and ends at midnight Dec. 15.

You can make changes to all these programs online or by telephone. On the Internet, go to <https://liteblue.usps.gov> and select PostalEASE under Employee Self Service, or access PostalEASE at <http://blue.usps.gov>. If you prefer, call the Employee Service line at 877-477-3273 and select Option 1.

A message from Kim Karol about Open Season...

Just a reminder FEHB Open Season begins November 12, 2007 and will close Dec 10, 2007. In the wake of new contract settlements many changes will take place beginning January 1, 2008.

Certain insurance premiums will go up, and some premiums may be reduced. I encourage everyone to be cautious when making changes solely based on your bi-weekly payments. The old adage "You get what you paid for..." may apply to you in this case. For those of you that may not know, www.Liteblue.usps.gov has a great tool that will allow you to compare policies very quickly. The comparison tool allows you to filter through plans of interest based on items that are important to you and your family, i.e. co-payments, office fees,

bi-weekly payments, deductibles, etc. This tool will assist you in finding the policy that best fits your family needs.

I would discourage anyone from using only the bi-weekly cost as the only factor they used in making their choice of insurance plan; you may find that the money you save in your bi-weekly payment may not out way the money that you will have to spend to supplement your plan at the end of the year. For example the APWU Consumer Driven Option is very inexpensive on a bi-weekly basis, but there is a maximum of \$2000.00 for a family Personal Care Account, (PCA) each year. All of your family medical expenses will be taken out of this account until it is exhausted. If you are relatively healthy this policy may work great!

If you have regular prescription expenses, or any other regular medical expenses, choosing this plan may be a gamble for you. I have chosen to gamble the last couple of years, but I lost this year. I anticipate having to pay out of pocket at the end of the year and use the Flexible Spending Account to anticipate these expenses. This year I did not guess big enough and will have to pay more out of pocket than I expected. There are great features for this plan, but there are some real limitations for families with regular medical expenses that exceed the maximum for the PCA. Choose wisely!



Buy Union and American Made Products

www.apwu.unionwarehouse.com
www.unionvoice.org
www.carpenters.org
www.nosweat.com
www.justiceclothing.com
www.laborheritage.org
www.unionist.com
www.unionlabel.com
shopunionmade.org





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 - Mike Burke
Treasurer - Glenn Staudinger
Trustees - Dave Knebel
Jenelle Brucher
Julie Schmitz
Editor - Chris Salinas

ALL OPINIONS ARE THOSE OF THE WRITER AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE OFFICERS OF WATERLOO LOCAL #451. ALL ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION ARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND EDITING.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Waterloo, IA
Permit Number: 107



**JOIN THE ACTION
ATTEND YOUR
UNION MEETING!**
Nov. 17th @ 11am
THE OTHER PLACE
3904 Lafayette Rd
Evansdale, IA

GET SIRIUS WITH COPA!

Don't forget this is the last time to donate to COPA by November's meeting. You can do this by using Postal Ease and have it come from your paycheck or by giving cash/check to Dwight.

You get 1 chance to win a Sirius Satellite Radio with a year's subscription for every \$5 donated.

Details are posted on the bulletin board.

Thank you for giving to COPA!

★ APWU COPA APWU ★

**LET
YOUR
VOICE BE
HEARD**

★ APWU COPA APWU ★

NON-MEMBERS of the APWU Waterloo Local 451

**Marcie Turner
Nancy Kannegieter
Tammy French
Jackie Murray
Blake Tolliver
Dave Palmer
Kim Mettner
Betty Murphy
Kathy Leyen**

