

The Corner Stone

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

January 2004



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

President's Report

By: Dwight Slaikeu



Well, there goes another year. I remember back in high school wondering whether I would see the year 2000, and how far away it was at the time. All of a sudden that was 4 years ago now. I guess the fact that I'm still up & kicking is a good thing. And, yup, that puts me at 50 something and eligible to put extra "catch-up" dollars into my TSP, IRA or wherever since I don't have enough there to join the retirees section. The next question I have is whether this old body will keep up with those *#!&^# machines until I can walk out for good like so many of you will be doing shortly.

Speaking of losing more people to the VER, not to mention regular retirements and transfers, we only think we're short of help now. For what it's worth, I've been told that there are attempts being made to get at least a couple people in here. Sounds like you may see a couple of casuals show up "for 90 days only" while they work on the hiring process. Because of the withholding order we're under, they can't hire anybody except in the case of a regular retirement. And, as you well know, we can't get our PTFs converted either. I guess I don't see the overtime situation backing off much for awhile. Good for those who want it, not so good for those who don't.

With the new year also comes my annual reminder of the always critical COPA collection period. We have a new way to donate this time around and I hope you'll use it. I'll be getting a form to you in the near future that will explain how to have your COPA contributions taken directly out of your paycheck as an allotment. If you take part in this process, donating any amount you want per pay period, it will accomplish 2 things. It'll give a constant and predictable amount going into the national COPA account and, probably more important to you personally, **I won't ever bother you for this again!!** Do we need to keep the COPA account viable? Well, do you read the newspaper? Do you watch the news? Do you see the postal legislative items posted at www.apwu.org or on our bulletin board? If you're not helping COPA, you don't care what happens to your job.

The members at the last local meeting put together a committee, consisting of Meri Kay Chase, Chuck Konig, Chris Salinas and Linda Youngberg, for the purpose of making sure you're kept updated on what's going on with the President's Commission on Postal Reform recommendations and legislative subjects in general.

They each had comments in last month's *Cornerstone*... were you paying attention? Watch the bulletin board and come to the meetings to see what they've got for you. And don't forget, be generous to COPA again this year and use the allotment procedure so you can ignore me next year.

I'm running out of room but would be seriously out of line if I didn't say thank you very, very much to all of you who helped out with the Fall Seminar we held at the Convention Center in Nov. We had plenty of volunteers when we needed them and the food you provided was beyond what even I had hoped for. You all got many compliments and you deserved it. The convention went extremely well and a lot of it was to your credit. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

That's it for this month. The meeting is the 17th, see you there.

Yours in Solidarity,
Dwight Slaikeu

Some tips on writing an effective letter to your Representative or Senator

- 1: Keep your letter simple and straight to the point. Use the December letter as a guideline.
 - 2: Type your letter rather than using handwriting, if possible. If you can only write your letter by hand, use block letters (print) to keep it legible.
 - 3: Make sure you use your address in the letter so the Representative or Senator knows you are their voter.
 - 4: Always sign your name. It will add a personal touch.
 - 5: Write every month until you get answer! Comment and ask, on subsequent letters, **WHY** you have not received a response.
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Secretary's Report

By: Mike Burke 

APWU Local 451

Date: November 22, 2003

The November meeting of The APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:12 am. @ Johnny Poppers with 21 members present.

A motion was made to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the October meeting by Chris Salinas and was seconded, motion carried.

The treasurer's report was passed out and read by Meri Kay Chase. The report was accepted as read.

OFFICERS REPORTS: Presidents Report: Dwight commented on the following items;

1. Thanks to all who brought food and helped out on the convention and hospitality room. Great job!

2. Regarding health insurance, please check out the APWU Health Plan. You can take up your preferred providers

3. On www.apwuhp.org. Remember that some of the premiums will go back to our union at the national level. Also remember that you must use Postal Ease with your pin # to change health plans.

4. Dwight commented that he would like to host another fall seminar, although, we would have to raise the registration fee to at least \$25.00.

5. The seminar was very informative on items such as; privatization, globalization, NARFE (Nat'l. Assoc. of Retired Federal Employees), the Presidents Commission, and GATS.

6. Remember that if you get involved in anything to do with politics ; we as federal employees are under the rules of the Hatch Act. Contact Cindy Miller for a copy if needed.

7. Remember COPA it is vital to our Jobs. You can use Postal Ease and have it taken directly out of your checking account. This in turn, will keep Dwight off your back about donating, he promises.

8. Concerning FMLA, if you have an accident at work make sure you look around immediately to see if there are any witnesses. This is a good thing to have when filing a claim.

Steward Director: Cindy Miller commented that if you are filing FMLA paperwork get a copy of everything, CA-1 and a Form 1769. Send it in yourself. You should have a response of some kind in 2 or 3 days. This is your responsibility.

Editor: Chris Salinas commented that if anyone has to go before an Accident Review Board please take union

representation with you. Also a big THANKS to Chris for the video he presented. It was a good example of what is happening in the world, as-well-as in our own country.

Secretary: Mike Burke commented on the fact that there was so much important/crucial information coming at you at this convention that it is hard to keep it all straight. We need to read and re-read all the information and lock it in our minds. We must take advantage of this information to ensure both our future and that of our country.

State Union Rep: Chuck Konig commented that now is the time to get on the band wagon and notify your Senators and Representatives and let them know how you feel about issues concerning your job, NAFTA, GATS etc.

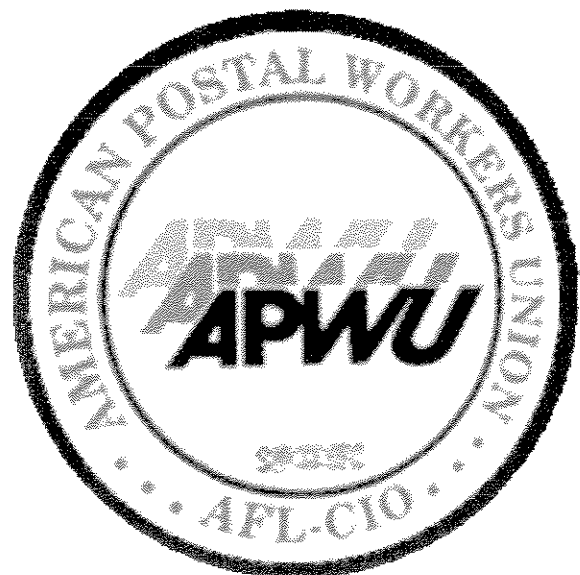
Old Business: Next meeting is January 17, 2004 at Johnny Poppers. We received a thanks from the Deere people for our \$100.00 donation for the Iowa's Bravest Program

New Business: Chris Salinas made a motion to form a committee, with Chuck Konig to head up the committee, in order to get the word out to our members on Globalization. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Kim Karol to hold the Drawing, second by Linda Youngberg. Motion carried. Mike Burke won again and promises he won't win next meeting. Ha!!!!

Motion to Adjourn: Cindy Miller motioned to adjourn, second by Meri Kay Chase. Motion carried.

Members present: Kim Karol, Jocelyn Druvenga, Dave Thiele, Jim Anderson, Dean Price, Bob Brendes, Mike Burke, Louis Ostlie, Dave Knebel, Chuck Konig, Dwight Slaikeu, Cindy Miller, Chris Salinas, Jerry Kemmer, Greg Kuehl, Glen Staudinger, Meri Kay Chase, Stan Drewelow, Gary Schmitz, Linda Youngberg, John Clark.



Steward Director's Report



By: Cindy Miller



WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

Have you had an accident lately?? Please be aware, this could happen to you.....

If you have an accident at work, make sure you receive a copy of your CA1 or CA2 and the 1769 that is filled out by management. This is important. These forms get sent to Des Moines and OWCP. You need to know what management is sending to them.

I recently had an accident at work and my 1769 was altered by an employee and management. My claim was DENIED! After numerous letters and visits to my doctor's office and 3 months later, my claim was overturned and accepted. I know who did this and I'm not going to stop until I receive acceptable punishment to this employee. Even if I have to notify the Postal Inspectors.

A grievance settlement at Step 2 was compromised and I am to receive a written apology from both management and this certain employee. (she knows who she is) So please be aware of you paperwork and make sure you receive copies!!!!

On a more happier note----- Make sure you get to your caucuses (I hope I spelled this right). I have never been to one, but plan on attending this one. It is extremely important that you do too. I recently read that Bush wants to go to the moon. Let's send him there on a ONE WAY ticket!

See ya at the meeting. Cindy

Treasurer's Report



By: Meri Kay Chase



Treasurer's reports will be given at the meeting until further notice.

If you would like more information, please see Meri.

For what it's worth.....

Well, it's a new year and it looks like everyone survived the holidays. This is good because we need everyone during this year in order to start thinking of our future and our children's future.

This is the year when things are going to be interesting. I don't mean that as a good thing. Congress and the Senate will be back to discuss things that will change the way we view all of our futures.

Just recently in December, our country was negotiating to expand NAFTA that included the Central America countries.

They were calling it CAFTA at the time. The only country that didn't sign this agreement was Costa Rica. Why? Because they didn't like the GATS agreement that was included in the negotiations. That's right, GATS is now a threat to us.

If you remember in Florida, during all those protests, negotiations of the FTAA was partially agreed upon and this included the GATS provision. They now call it FTAA "Lite". Catchy name don't you think? I didn't think so.

After Florida, they went to Central America and negotiated with those countries to join NAFTA. Everyone, but Costa Rica, signed up. But eventually Costa Rica will be forced to sign it as well. They won't be able to compete with the stringent laws and tariffs placed on countries not part of NAFTA. Or is that CAFTA? I'm confused now.

But it doesn't stop there, right now in South America, negotiations are going on to add some of those countries to NAFTA as well. Making the whole western hemisphere one big happy family. Isn't that wonderful?

So now everything goes to our legislature this year. They will debate and vote on these new trade rules that will "create jobs and opportunities" for Americans. The same rules that moved most of our manufacturing jobs out of this country. We really don't build much in this country anymore. Have you seen what has been posted on the bulletin board at work?

But something else will be going on at the same time, committees reviewing the recommendations on the Postal Commission's report for making the USPS "a better and more efficient service".

Sounds like "fluff", don't you think. Especially when they want to "limit union bargaining rights", for the benefit of "the people". Oh wait, I'm sorry, for the benefit of "big business". They're people too, aren't they? I mean they always care about their employees, Right? I mean they do what they can to give their employee's a better life. Don't they?

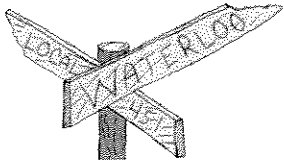
I for one, know better! I also know that our union will not be able to stop these things alone. WE, as Americans, must fight for our rights! WE must fight to keep our government from making decisions for US. WE must fight for our children's future as well.

No where in the Constitution of this great country of ours does it say "We, the big corporations" or "We, the Government". It says "We, The People". That's you and me in that piece of paper, scrawled out over 200 years ago.

But sitting back and hoping this will all blow over isn't going to help. We all need to get up and do the right thing. We must let our Representatives know how we feel. We must write, phone, email, whatever it takes to let them know "WE ARE WATCHING".

We need to take a stand! We need to fight! At least fight for our children's future!

Chris Salinas



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Union Meeting

Jan. 17th @ 11 am
Johnny Poppers
910 W 5th ST.

Waterloo Local #451 Officers

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|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 | |

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