

The Corner Stone

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

June 2005



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

President's Report

By: Dwight Slaikeu



This month I believe I'll try to answer some of the questions that have been asked recently, sort of a Q & A article if you will...

Q: When are they going to post Vanda's old, old automation duty assignment?

A: I don't know. I've been told since before February that it will be posted but they won't tell me why it hasn't yet.

Q: When the newly bid scheme trainees finally start training will the computer actually work?

A: Nobody knows the answer to that one, but I have a guess.

Q: How many Clerks are they hiring?

A: I don't know. I've heard differing numbers just like you have, but apparently they don't find it necessary to let us know.

Q: When are they going to hire more Clerks?

A: Same as above.

Q: Are we getting more Casuals in the Clerk Craft?

A: I don't know. They're supposed to let us know when they will be hiring them, but so far they haven't told me anything.

Q: Do we have a grievance in the works related to the hiring of Casuals?

A: This one I can answer. Yes, we do. Actually there are 3 of them (2 Clerk & 1 Maint.) making their way through the grievance/arbitration process at this time.

Q: When is the Maintenance settlement sent in a couple months ago going to be paid?

A: I don't know. Nobody will tell us where the holdup is.

Q: When will the Willy Wonka Machine hanging over the AFCS actually be activated?

A: I don't know, they haven't told us. I guess just consider yourselves lucky that some of you have been loosely informed of the *strip & run* process associated with the alarm going off.

With one exception, do you see a pattern here? These are just some examples of things we would like to know. There are others, of course. I just picked these few to make my point. Let me put it another way...if you've seen and talked to our Plant Manager in the last 3 weeks or so, you're one up on me. I really hate spending time filing grievances just so down the road 2 weeks, or 2 months, later we can finally discuss something. It's so much easier to talk about it up front. Real communication, know what I mean? And you think you're frustrated.

Those of you who might be interested, take a look at the board for the article on transferring an IRA or 401k to TSP. Apparently it is possible. To learn more I assume information is available by calling TSP or going to www.tsp.gov.

Also please notice our Treasurer, Meri Kay, has put in notice of resignation from her position. We'll be nominating candidates for her replacement this month and the election will be at the meeting next month.

Oh yes, 2 more for the Q & A:

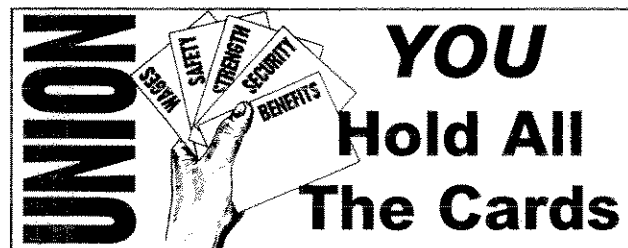
Q: How close are we to our \$6,000 COPA goal?

A: I know the answer to this one...\$250 short of 2/3 of it. We have a long way to go yet.

Q: When do we expect to reach the COPA goal?

A: I don't know...it depends on how soon we get a response from those of you who haven't answered the call yet. We need a \$60 *average* from all members and right now we're at only \$37.

That'd be it for this month. See you at the meeting and remember to see Cindy very soon for tickets if you want to be in on the raffle for the monster chocolate basket. The drawing will be at this meeting.





Secretary's Report



By: Mike Burke

APWU LOCAL 451
Date: May 21, 2005

The May meeting of the APWU Local 451 was called to order at 11:10 am. at the OP with 13 members present.

A **motion** was made by Jerry Kemmer and seconded by Kim Karol to accept the-minutes as printed in the Corner Stone. **Motion carried.**

The Treasurer's Report was read by Mike Burke. A **motion** to accept was made by Kim Karol and seconded by Chuck Konig. Motion carried.

Officers Reports:

Presidents Report:

1. COPA — The hat pass and the raffle collection was \$52.00. Right now we have approx. \$3300.00 for COPA this year. Keep the COPA dollars coming they may just save our jobs. Plus, as a bonus, we can see Dwight Slaikeu and Steve Adsit get their beards shaved off if we reach our goal of \$6,000.00 dollars for the year.
2. Randy Weverink has accepted the alternate steward position for tour 3.
3. Congrats go out to Vern Berry on his retirement. Good Luck!!!
4. At the recent State Convention the first whole day was spent talking about O.W.C.P. The next day we listened to the Legislative Director talk about legislative issues and why it is important to keep our COPA dollars coming in so we can keep our lobbyists fighting for our jobs. We also listened to our National Business Agents talk about the way some of the grievances are being sent to them. We also had a session on Social Security.

Steward's Director:

Cindy Miller stated that the APWU has come up with a Supplemental Insurance Plan-AFFLAC — More information on this plan at a later date.

Vice President:

Kim Karol - On the subject of OWCP. When you go to the Dr. for an on-the-job injury you are not locked in to that particular Dr. until the third visit or when you accept treatment. If you are off on OWCP with an injury make sure you stay within your restrictions because the inspectors will be watching you, filming you, photographing you and last but not least, setting you up. Be careful!!!

Also on the form CA-1 make sure you give a good description in the section where it says (Your own opinion).

Dwight stated that a witness in an OWCP claim is a big asset so if there are any witnesses get a statement from them.

Old Business:

The next meeting will be on Saturday June 18, 2005 at 11:00 am. at the OP.

Stan Drewelow reported that the picnic is August 21, 2005 at Exchange Park.

New Business:

Please feel free to use the Editor's website.

Drawing:

A **motion** was made to hold the drawing by Jerry Kemmer and seconded by Mike Burke. **Motion carried.** Steve Adsit Won!

Adjourn:

A **motion** was made to adjourn by Chuck Konig and seconded by Jerry Kemmer. **Motion carried** at 11:57 am.

Members Present:

Vern Berry, Chuck Konig, Cindy Miller, Jerry Kemmer, Dwight Slaikeu, Randy Weverink, Paulette Woods, Stan Drewelow, Kim Karol, Mike Burke, Steve Adsit, Penny Stokes, Nancy Hemesath.

Secretary Mike J. Burke

Steward Director's corner.....



Cindy Miller



Are you Frustrated, Overworked, Stressed Out, Tired, Harrassed and Unappreciated??? Then you must be working at the Waterloo Post Office! Don't feel like you are the only one, most of us feel this way. We need to thank our management for this! No new hires (except casuals), lack of communication, Failure to comply on grievance settlements and a lack of appreciation.....All talk and NO action. Which leaves me to believe this:

"We the willing, led by the unknowing, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful. We have done so much for so long with so little, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing."

Trying to stay positive!!!!!! See you at the meeting and don't forget the raffle for COPA. Working on a few more raffles in the future, too. Stay tuned.

Cindy



You really didn't lose your postal job, it was given to a minimum wage worker!

From the VP's desk...



By: Kim Karol



In this article I wanted to focus on a revision to the ELM recently published in the Postal Bulletin, issue 22155, May 26, 2005. The revision specifically addresses Return to Duty After Absence for Medical Reasons. Those of you who have attended regular union meetings know that I have been fighting to protect your right to privacy when it comes to providing documentation to the employer when you need to be off of work for medical reasons. This revision demonstrates the unions' success in getting revisions that reflect public policy that your privacy in these matters is paramount. The Postal Service did not agree, it argued that the security of the mail and safety of the workforce was paramount. While I agree that both issues are important, I do not believe that privacy must be sacrificed in order to assure security and safety. I have been arguing this issue on your behalf with local management and the managers on a district level. Hopefully this revision will provide management at all levels with the proper guidance for requesting medical information when an employee is ready to return to work.

Now let me discuss the changes so that you will better understand what to expect should you need to be off of work for medical reasons.

The **old language** in the ELM read: "Employees returning to duty after 21 days or more of absence due to illness or injury must submit medical documentation of their ability to return to work, with or without limitations. The occupational health nurse administrator or postal physician evaluates the medical report and, when required, assists in placing the employees in jobs where they can perform effectively and safely."

The **NEW language** reads: "Return-to-work clearance may be required (underline added for emphasis) for absence due to an illness, injury, outpatient medical procedure (surgical), or hospitalization when management has a reasonable belief, based upon reliable and objective information, that:

- ❖ The employee may not be able to perform the essential functions of his/her position, or

- ❖ The employee may pose a direct threat to the health or safety of him/herself or others due to that medical condition

In making this determination, management must consider the essential functions of the employee's job, the nature of the medical condition or procedure involved, guidance from the occupational health nurse administrator, occupational health nurse, and/or the Postal Service's physician regarding the condition or procedure involved to make an individualized assessment whether there is a reason to require the return-to-work documentation.

There are some very important distinctions you need to be aware of with this change in the language:

- ❖ Documentation is no longer automatic for absences of 21 days or longer
- ❖ Documentation is no longer automatically needed for the "Deadly Sins", contagious diseases, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, seizure disorders, or hospitalizations. This language has been completely removed from this ELM section.
- ❖ No longer is someone outside of the office telling employees to submit medical documentation. These officials are only lending informational support to local management so a determination can be made whether or not documentation is needed.

If you are asked to provide medical documentation for a medically related absence I recommend that you ask the supervisor why the documentation is being required. (What was the determining factor or reliable and objective information used in making the decision to ask for medical documentation?) Then ask yourself if the request is reasonable. If you are uncomfortable with the request, ask for union time and talk with your steward. If the request does not meet the criteria set forth in the ELM then a grievance may need to be filed on your behalf to protect your privacy.

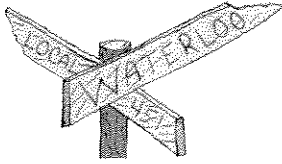
Remember there is no way to go back once your privacy has been violated; you can't put the genie back in the bottle. You are the best person to keep your own secrets, don't give out information unless you don't care who knows the information. Nothing you say to a manager is "off the record". Casual references you make to your personal information, including medical information, may be used to require you to provide medical documentation. So just be mindful of what you say and to whom you are saying it to.

This is a very complicated issue, if you have questions regarding what I have written please ask me. I will be at the union meeting, and most of you know what my schedule is and where my office is located.

Respectfully Submitted: *Kimberly Karol*

AMERICA WORKS BEST WHEN WE SAY ...





The Corner Stone

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Union Meeting

June 18th @ 11am

THE OTHER PLACE

3904 Lafayette Rd
Evansdale, IA

Waterloo Local #451 Officers

President - Dwight Slaikeu	Trustees - Dean Price
Vice-President - Kim Karol	Glen Staudinger
Steward Director - Cindy Miller	Dave Knebel
Secretary - Mike Burke	Editor - Chris Salinas
Treasurer - Meri Kay Chase	

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AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE
OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE WATERLOO
LOCAL #451

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NON-MEMBERS OF THE APWU, LOCAL 451 WATERLOO

- Nancy Huffman
- Nancy Kannegieter
- Jacqueline Murray
- Kevin Bash
- Norman Tolliver
- David Palmer
- Diane Knoop
- Kimberly Mettner
- Kathy Leyen
- Marcella Turner

The APWU stays strong because of
its MEMBERS, but are weakened by
the NON-Members.

