

The Corner Stone

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

November 2006



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

Elections all around...

From the President's chair...



Dwight Slaikou



So, here comes the end of another year already. And, since we don't have a December issue of the paper, I guess this would be the month I need to include a holiday message, huh? It sneaks up on me every year. So, here's to a safe and happy holiday season for all of us. Go ahead and throw in a little snow for Christmas but keep the temperature tolerable, please.

Well, the big election is done and gone. America has spoken, and in a very loud voice. And you thought your vote doesn't count for anything...just look what you did! As postal workers we should have some friendly folks in power now but don't let them off the hook. Pay attention to what they do and take advantage of your option to contact them whether it's good or bad. The outgoing group wasn't listening; hopefully the incoming group learned a lesson from November 7th...nothing is forever. As Bill Cosby once said on his TV show and I believe it was repeated in a speech by our Assistant Clerk Craft Director Mike Morris, "We brought you in, we can take you out!"

And now that the big election is done we can look forward to our little one. Yes, those of you who are local members will be receiving ballots shortly for our local election. The election committee is working on them as I write. I realize how easy it is to throw the ballot out and not participate but we really wish you wouldn't do that. The election of your officers is important and it's just as easy to fill it out and send it in. The postage is even paid for you. Be sure to pay attention to the instructions, please, so you get it right. I hate when they have ballots that can't be counted!

As for the meeting this month, it's on the 18th. The reason I bring it up is because it's important that you plan to be there. Some of the officers, including me, will be at the Fall Seminar that weekend. Consequently, we will be missing a few bodies and need them replaced in order to have a quorum. The meeting will be at the O.P. in Evansdale at 11:00 and those who will be running it would really appreciate you showing up so they don't have to eat all the pizza alone. Just think, you'll have the opportunity to sit around for an hour or so with your co-workers and discuss what your officers are doing wrong. (Just be sure someone lets me know when I get back, OK?)

As of the 11th we're up to 3 PTFs again with 2 still hanging out on the street somewhere. I don't know when they'll get around to hiring them, hopefully soon?

There's been a lot of bidding going on so those of you looking to do something different, keep an eye on the board. I know the postings are hard to read and there are a lot of them up there but please pay attention so you don't miss out on something you might want.

As a finish I'll say something you don't usually hear from me: My suggestion for the month-Spend a little more time supporting your co-workers instead of cutting them down and worrying about what they're doing or not doing. Trust me, they're not getting away with any more than you have at some time or another. The "best" Clerk in the office died some years back so you're not it either. Keeping that in mind, regardless of what craft you're in, will lighten your stress load I'm sure.

Happy Thanksgiving!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

From the officers of Waterloo Local 451



Secretary's Report

By: Mike Burke



APWU LOCAL 451
November 18th, 2006

The meeting of the APWU Local 451 was not called to order do to a lack of a quorum. No minutes available this month.



APWU Contract Agreement Ratified

APWU members ratified a four-year Collective Bargaining Agreement by a vote of 84,486 to 12,016, in balloting that concluded Jan. 12. The new National Agreement, which is retroactive to Nov. 21, 2006, will expire Nov. 20, 2010.

Rank-and-File Advisory Bargaining Committee members Thomasine Derricks, Princella Vogel, and Jack Dougherty observe the vote count in Washington on Jan. 12. Vogel chairs the committee.

"I consider this contract to be among our union's strongest achievements," said APWU President William Burrus. "Wage increases, upgrades, and Cost-of-Living Adjustments were secured, and 'no-layoff' protection and other benefits were continued."

The agreement provides for a 1.3 percent wage increase, effective Nov. 25, 2006; upgrades for all APWU-represented employees, effective Feb. 16, 2008; a 1.2 percent raise, effective Nov. 21, 2009; and two Cost-of-Living Adjustments each year. New contract language will result in the conversion of approximately 10,000 part-time flexibles, and will eliminate Clerk Craft PTFs as a workforce category in offices of 200 work-years or more, effective Dec. 1, 2007. (A list of offices of 200 work-years or more will be posted at www.apwu.org as soon as it is provided by the Postal Service.) The agreement also will change the restrictions on the use and number of casual employees.

The Postal Service will pay 95 percent of healthcare premiums for employees enrolled in the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan, effective in 2008. The employees' share of healthcare premium costs in other plans will increase 1 percent each year in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011.

In accordance with Article 13.9.C of the APWU Constitution, members of the Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee unanimously approved the agreement before it was mailed to union members for ratification. The mailing took place Dec. 18-20, 2006.

More than 215,000 ballots were mailed to union members covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement. In addition, in an unprecedented organizing effort, non-members were invited to vote, provided they completed union sign-up cards enclosed in their ratification packets.

In a letter accompanying the mailing to non-members, Burrus wrote, "The stakes are too high for you to defer to others the decision on your future. The only way you can have a voice in whether or not the changes to the National Agreement are enacted is by becoming a union member." More than 700 non-members did so.

"We are very pleased that so many new members joined the APWU as a result of this process," Burrus said. "This is the most successful short-term organizing effort in union history." Participation among members was above 40 percent, which is a significant improvement over previous balloting. Nevertheless, Burrus said that he had hoped for a higher level of membership involvement in the vote.

"APWU-represented employees have made substantial progress," the union president said. "That is what the negotiation process is all about."

The next step, he said, is to convert the agreement into contractual language. "Once that is done, the Postmaster General and I will affix our signatures to the official document."

The vote count occurred Jan. 12, under the supervision of the American Arbitration Association. Members of the Rank-and-File Committee monitored the vote count. Princella Vogel, chairperson of the committee, announced the results at 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, shortly after the counting of ballots was complete.

Results showing the voting by individual locals will be posted on the APWU Web site as soon as they become available. The local-by-local count is expected to take several weeks.



Postal News

APWU Announces Negotiations Hotline

The APWU has established a Negotiations Hotline, which will help union members stay abreast of late-breaking developments regarding bargaining. The toll-free number is 800-992-APWU (or 800-992-2798).

Union President William Burrus will record a message Nov. 13. Updates will be made as events warrant. The current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires Nov. 20.

Lawmakers Have 'Last Chance' To Keep Plant Open

Iowa lawmakers will have their last chance to persuade the Inspector General of the U-S Postal Service to keep Sioux City's mail processing plant open.

Senators Tom Harkin and Chuck Grassley... and Congressman Steve King, will get a look at the final plan for the Sioux City plant.

Postal Workers picket across the country

October 26th was a day that the postal service wished it was like any other day. Postal workers walked the picket line at more than 100 plants and post offices around the country.

The main reason of the picket was to inform the public of the cost of same-day service to their community if the postal service was to consolidate plants without public input.

"Our nation's postal workers want to let the American people know about this stealth attack on our nation's mail service," said William Burrus, President of the American Postal Workers Union.

"This plan will mean serious disruptions to the mail stream, inconveniencing the citizens and small businesses who rely on timely mail service. Bills will be delivered late, checks will not arrive on time, and prescriptions delivered by mail will be delayed.

Lexington Institute continues its attack on postal workers

An article in the Federal Times by the Lexington Institute attacks the 1970 laws that allow postal unions to use arbitration if management doesn't agree with negotiations of contracts.

The Lexington Institute has been very vocal recently on postal reform, postal rate increases and union contract negotiations.

The Lexington Institute is well known for its conservative view as many on its board are well known conservatives.

REMINDER!

Local Officer election this month!
Follow instructions on the ballot
carefully!

THINGS GET
OUT OF BALANCE



Help a Non-Member to join the union.

For what it's worth....

Chris Salinas

First I want to thank everyone that volunteered for the picket last month and I also want to apologize to those we missed in calling when we canceled it because of the rain. I (as well as the other local officers) appreciate the effort of those who volunteered.

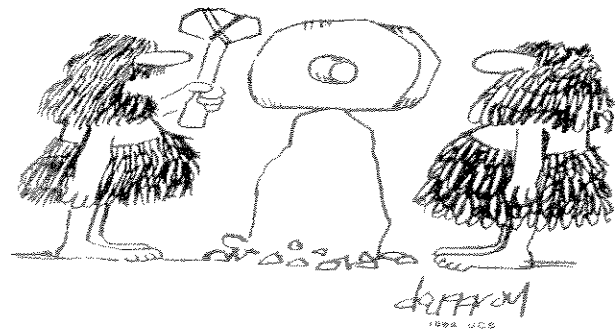
A few lessons were learned on how this picket could have been handled better and those plans will be put in place next time. We're not done by any means however. We must be ready for our National union to call on us again.

With that, I want to say I'm glad the Elections are over!! I can now watch TV without those negative ads. I think it's time for clean election laws. Don't you think? I would have enjoyed TV more if the parties and candidates would have talk about what they would do about the issues.

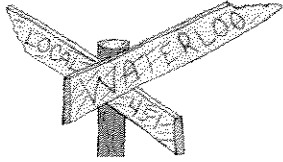
We have 2 new congressmen, Bruce Braley and Dave Loebsack. Let us all wish them well as they go to Washington DC and represent Iowa. Hopefully we can get true postal reform with the changes made in congress as well.

Local officer elections are going on this month and I hope everyone will take the opportunity to vote in this as well. I say this because there are people who complain about what are local isn't doing, but in the same breath don't vote. I say 'STOP COMPLAINING AND VOTE!' Or better yet, run for one of the local positions as a write-in.

On a final note, I want to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season. See you on the workroom floor.



"I just invented the first excuse for getting to work late."



The Corner Stone

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

Union Meeting

November 18th @ 11AM

THE OTHER PLACE

3904 Lafayette Rd
Evansdale, IA

MAKE YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!
ATTEND THE MEETING!

Waterloo Local #451 Officers

President - Dwight Slaikeu	Trustees - Dave Knebel
Vice-President - Kim Karol	Jenelle Brucher
Steward Director - Vanda Blankenship	Paulette Woods
Secretary - Mike Burke	Editor - Chris Salinas
Treasurer - Glen Staudinger	

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Our responsibility didn't end at the voting booth, it just got started.

Write your Congressman and Senators about the issues that effect you!