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Western Arkansas Area Local

The Paper

Volume 26

April 2003

President's Report

Greetings,

First of all I want to thank Chris Hagen for chairing last month's meeting. I was out of town visiting with family. Last week I, along with Chris and Corky, attended a labor management meeting. We discussed several items. This was the first labor management meeting we have had in a long time, mainly because they have not proven productive. The minutes of this meeting should be posted either by the time you receive this paper or shortly there after. Nothing earth shattering came out of this meeting but I felt it was at least somewhat productive.

In my last couple of articles I have touched on the function 4 report concerning our window and customer service clerks. I have finally got the Arkansas district to correct *some* of the discrepancies. However, there are still outstanding issues with this report and I will continue to pursue those issues to insure the least amount of disruption to our clerks. However, management is still planning on making some operational changes in the near future. I have not received any official notice of operational changes in writing, so there is no need to print rumors. But if and when management intends to make changes I will discuss these with the appropriate employees.

No matter what I, or anyone else says or does, there are going to be changes in the postal service. But changes are part of life inside and outside of the post office. However it is the union's goal to insure that, when any changes are made, there is a minimal amount of disruption to our members and

their contractual rights are not violated. Our members deserve to be treated in a fair manner. When management implements any kind of operational changes where employees are affected, years of service and seniority should be the determining factor. Our entire contract is built upon that principle. The union will do everything in its power to protect those rights.

One important thing to remember, if and when change does happen, it is management who makes the changes, not the union. So if future changes in postal operations affects you, put the blame where the blame belongs. In the meantime, you can learn more about your contractual rights by attending the union meetings. Nuff said.

Dennis



Next Meeting

April 13th, 1:30

Cavanaugh Pizza

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2003

Meeting called to order at 1:30 by the VP

Roll call of officers: President not present.
All other officers present.

Randy read Dennis' report.

Chris gave her report.

Minutes from last meeting read and accepted.

Financial report read and accepted.

Old business

Dennis is still working on the function 4.
No committee meetings this past month.

New business

Randy said a union insurance company wants to do a mailing to all our members. They will not contact our members unless our members request it. They are giving each member a \$1000.00 accidental death policy that is good for life at no cost to our members. Our president will be including a letter with this mailing.

Thomas Henry made a motion to send out the letter to our members for more life insurance. Motion 2nd by David B. Motion passed.

Oklahoma is hosting a state convention April 25-26, 2003, at Enid, Oklahoma. We have a maintenance conference in Philadelphia the first week of May. We have no one wishing to attend these meetings.

A motion was made by Thomas Henry, 2nd by David to have another picnic this year. Motion passed. Thomas Henry is the picnic chairman.

Herb is hosting the dinner at our May meeting.

There is a state meeting at Little Rock June 5-7, this will be posted on the bulletin boards.

David Bottiecher's name was drawn for the \$50.00.

Next meeting April 13, 2003 at Cavanaugh Pizza.

Motion to adjourn, so moved.

Randy Cope



United We Stand

Officers

Dennis Taff...President
Chris Hagen...Vice-President
Randy Cope...Secretary-Treasurer
Kerry Botteicher...Editor

Stewards

Dennis Taff	783-7898
Window Services	
Chris Hagen	484-6371
Mail Processing Tour 3	
Karla Shaffer	484-6371
Mail Processing T1 T2	
Randy Cope	484-6384
Maintenance T1 T2	
Thomas Henry	484-6384
Maintenance T3	
Kerry Botteicher	484-6344
CFS	
Bob Harp	785-5200
DT Station	

Opinions expressed by the writers of articles in this paper are those of the individuals and not necessarily those of *The Paper*, APWU, or local 1211.



State President's Report

Greetings,

I recently received notification from another union officer that that one of our members in our Local was "getting out the Union!" I naturally inquired as to why. The response was that this member felt that the Union was not doing enough for him. I thought to myself, another lame excuse for getting out of paying Union dues. I also thought, even if the Union was never able to negotiate another item, he is still much better off than most workers in this country. This also prompted me to publish the following letter I wrote to some non-members several years ago. The letter goes like this:

You may feel that you have valid reasons for not being a Union member. I have been a Union officer for 25 years (now 30) and I have heard every reason you can imagine. Some of these are: I don't like the Local Officers, the Union will not file grievances for me, the Local officers are on management's side, the Union foolishly spends my money, the Union protects the lazy workers, the Union stewards get special treatment, I can't afford to pay Union dues, and belonging to a Union is against my religion or political beliefs. The list goes on and on. The Union has never claimed to be without fault. The Union, on every level, makes mistakes. From the National Union Officer in Washington DC to the volunteer shop stewards in a small Local. The Union is just like you. Imperfect.

Myself, and the other proud Union members of our Local, want to share with you some of our reasons we belong to the American Postal Workers Union.

First of all, only 15% of American workers are lucky enough to work for a Union company. That in itself should be reason enough to be a member.

ALL the benefits you receive as a postal employee have been achieved thru the efforts of the American Postal Workers Union. If it were not for the APWU you would have NO job security,

Holiday Pay, overtime pay, health insurance, grievance procedure or the great wages and other benefits. That alone, is reason enough for you to pay Union dues. If you think that the Postal Service would voluntarily give you these benefits, you are sadly mistaken.

Your fellow co-workers pay their Union dues because they know they would not have the excellent wages and benefits that they now enjoy, without the Union. It is not fair for your fellow co-workers to pay for your benefits. You should pay your fair share!!!!!! We ALL need to be due paying members. There is NO reason for you not to be a Union member."

The majority of you know of a non-member. I am asking you to share this letter with them and/or share with them your own personal reasons why they should be a Union member. If it takes all the members of Local to publicly convince a non-member into joining the Union then we need to do so. If they are not going to pay their fair share then they do not deserve to be working here. They should not profit from the blood and sweat of our Union.

My final thought and comment to all employees who make a statement that they are "getting out of the Union" because they feel that they are being screwed or mistreated by management and claim that the Union is not doing enough for them. The Union officers do every thing they possible can to protect your contractual rights and to keep you from being mistreated. Remember, it is not the Union who is violating your rights or mistreating you-**It is Management!!!** "Quitting the Union" makes about as much sense as "Quitting the Post Office." "Quitting the Union" does not solve the problem, it only compounds the problem.

Dennis Taff

This article appeared in our union's state paper this month. I thought it was worth reprinting.

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