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Western Arkansas Area Local

# The Paper

Volume 24

February 2003

## President's Report

Greetings,

The dates of our tri-state convention have almost arrived and our convention committee has been very busy. I want to thank everyone on that committee for all their efforts. I am sure the convention will be a success.

For the last two weeks I have been examining the function 4 report that the Southwest area managers prepared last June. Supposedly this function 4 review was the basis on which the postal service issued an impact statement that claimed we had 10 excess employees in Fort Smith.

The function 4 review contained numerous errors and discrepancies. One major problem was the mail volume was determined "solely" by the members of the function 4 team. In **all** cases the amount of mail volume that was recorded by the supervisors and /or clerks was significantly higher than the teams' figures. Some of the discrepancies are as high as 50%. **At no time were these discrepancies discussed with the supervisors or clerks that were recording the mail volume.**

Also, instead of the taking an eight week average as required, the function 4 team determined the daily workload based on "**their**" count of the mail on two days in the middle of the week, in the middle of the month.

Because the function 4 team based the daily workload solely on volume of the mail that "**they**" recorded on these "**two**" particular days, instead of the documented 8 week average, the daily mail volume in both ldc 43 (unit distribution) and ldc

44 (box distribution) was reduced significantly at every station. The average reduction in mail volumes for the combined stations in ldc 43 is 57%. Also, the average reduction in mail volumes for the combined stations in ldc 43 is 39%.

I also discovered the ldc 46 (vending) data was incorrect. The function 4 team based their figures on service time for 7 vending machines. Our SSPC clerk services 25 machines. Also the walk-in revenue at two stations was incorrectly recorded. This mistake reduced the ldc 45 hours (window) at the two stations by approximately 2300 hours.

The function 4 report also failed to include the data and worksheets used to determined to the ldc 48 figures. It is no surprise that this data was not included since the biggest reduction came from ldc 48. I am confident, that when and if we receive this information, that other discrepancies will be found.

I have shared my findings with our OIC, and have demanded that the postal cease from any excessing or abolishment of full-time positions based on this function 4 review. I have also sent a copy of my findings to APWU headquarters. I am sure these function 4 "scams" are happening all across the nation.

With the false figures it is no wonder the postal service claims that they have too many employees. It is a shame that clerks in our office, as well as clerks from all across the nation, have to put their life on hold because of the constant threat of being excessed, based on improper function 4 reviews such as this one. Hopefully our OIC will do the right thing and not bow down to the managers from the Southwest area.

See you at the next meeting.

*Dennis Taff*

## The Vice-Presidents Report

The tri-state convention is just around the corner and I hope that some of you have considered attending. As far as I know, this is the first tri-state that Fort Smith has hosted. Any member can attend and not pay registration fees. The classes are going to be very informative. The banquet has been paid for any member wishing to attend. A little insight; the door prizes that are to be given away will be after the banquet, it'll be worth your time to attend.

Recently, we have had problems with Tour 3 running the FSM 1000 with only 2 operators. The training manual states 3 operators are the minimum. A step 1 decision of "denied" was received and the grievance will now go to step 2. The union is asking that for each day there were 2 operators, each operator is to receive an additional 2 hours of overtime plus a "cease and desist" of running with 2 operators. Now, why wouldn't management approve that at the Step 1 level, knowing that they are in the wrong in the first place? Go figure!

A recent discussion with Darryl Lewis confirmed his job here at Fort Smith. He stated that he is here to revert and abolish jobs and to start cutting hours. The union's contention is that if he's going to start cutting hours then he needs to terminate all casuals in the Fort Smith area.

I know that I have stated this before, but obviously it needs to be said again. If you have a complaint or grievance, get it to your steward immediately so that they can file the grievance or solve the issue before the 14 days is up. Remember, we have 14 days from the date on which the employee or union first became aware of its cause to file a grievance. There are times when the stewards have only one day to file the requests for information, gather all evidence and file the grievance. This is not enough time, please get the information to your steward immediately.

*Chris Hagen*

In Memory of...

**Mary Stevenson**

She will be missed by many

### Just a thought!!

The state passed a resolution to keep our mail processing from moving to Fayetteville. This doesn't mean it won't move. But it's nice to know we have them on our side.

Try to attend any or all of the functions at the Tri State Convention. With so much happening in the postal service, it's a good opportunity to learn about things to expect and what we can do. The classes will be informative, so try to come.

I'll never understand why anyone would not be in our union. But for those who may ask themselves 'what does the union do for me?', here's a few answers. Look at your pay stub. The union is why you make the salary you do, get time off paid, have sick leave, holiday pay, etc. No, we're not perfect. Yes, we do make mistakes. But we are dedicated to trying resolving problems, enforce the contract, and save jobs. Remind your co-workers that aren't members of these things. Let's keep supporting our local and each other.

Kerry

#### Officers

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

#### Stewards

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



# January Minutes

January 12, 2003

Roll call of officers , all present

Dennis read his report and turned it in a copy.

Chris gave her report.

Minutes from last meeting read and accepted.

Financial report read and accepted.

There have been no committee meetings this month.

### Old business:

All the equipment/furniture was purchased for the union office.

Human Resources in Little Rock said that they have not gotten all the DD214's in the personnel files, this is the reason some members had been asked for another copy of their form.

David still has the union copier at his house. Dennis said we would try and go pick it up and bring it to the office.

Tours 1 and 2 were called in and told they were not allowed to come in on OT unless management has prior approval. We are still looking for a way to get the people whose hours were changed, changed back.

### New Business:

Dennis has sent out registration forms to a lot of the locals from the 3 states that are going to be attending the Tri-State. He asked them to register early and be sure and reserve their rooms.

Vacation sign up sheets have been posted at the offices.

Discussion on the casuals in lieu cases. Little Rock has been instructed to settle the grievances around the state. These grievances around the state are worth several million dollars for our members in the affected offices.

Discussion on tracking hours at the Downtown office and in Admin., and on who is/isn't working mail downtown. Dennis will go to the downtown office and look into what's going on with the mail.

There will be another tri-state committee meeting on Wednesday, February 5, 2003 at the union office. The meeting will be at 2:00 p.m.

Bob Harp's name was drawn for the \$50.00

Next Meeting February 23,2003 at Cavanaugh pizza

Motion to adjourn, so moved.

*Randy Cope*

**Union Meeting**

**February 23, 2003**

**1:30 pm**

**Cavanaugh Pizza**

**Convention Committee  
to meet at 1:00 pm**

# 2003 Tri-State Convention ARKANSAS-IOWA-MISSOURI

## AGENDA

### THURSDAY FEB 27

Registration—5 p.m. until 8 p.m. (Belle Star Room)  
Hospitality—7 p.m. until ???

### FRIDAY FEB 28

Registration—8 a.m. until 9 a.m. (Foyer)  
Welcoming and Introductions—9 a.m.  
General Session—9:30 a.m. until noon  
Lunch—12 p.m. until 1 p.m.  
General Session Continued—1 p.m. until 5 p.m.  
Banquet—7 p.m.—Theme-**MARDI GRAS**  
Live Music—9 p.m.-Midnight  
Pinkie and the Snakeshakers-Blues Band

### SATURDAY MARCH 1

Workshops and Craft Breakouts—9 a.m. until 1 p.m.  
Adjourn—1 p.m.  
Classes

Maintenance

OWCP

Retirement

Basic Steward Training

Motor Vehicle

Function 4 and Abolishments

Organizing and Documenting Grievances

Union Web Pages

Members of the Local 1211 can attend any of the meetings and banquet free. There is a \$10 charge for their guest at the dinner. MAL offices will be charged \$20 per person. Let an officer or steward know by February 24th if you will be attending the dinner. We need to turn in the total numbers. If you can't make the dinner, come to the party after, beginning at 9:00 pm. The theme is Mardi Gras. If your interested in renting a costume for the party, check out Helenes of Arkansas. They'll give 10% off if enough are rented for this event. But costumes are optional.

Come and show your support, learn a little about union business, eat a good dinner, and have a great time!