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Western Arkansas Area Local

The Paper

Volume 27

June 2003

President's Report

Greetings,

I hope every one enjoyed the picnic and the all the activities. Special thanks to all who planned, prepared and cooked. It was a fun day.

I hope all of you have filled out the COPA forms (along with your check or credit card #) and the form letter to your congressman and senators. Also, I hope that you have presented the petition to your friends and families. These petitions are a great tool to send to our senators and congressman. We still have extra copies of all the forms and petitions. See your union officer and steward if you need one. We need to get these in **NOW!!!** Your present job is on the line and also your retirement. I can not reiterate enough that the postal commission is the most serious threat to our livelihood since we attained collective bargaining in the 1970's. Please don't wake up on July 31st wishing you had performed a simple task as contributing a few dollars to COPA, filling out a simple form to your congressman and senator or asking your friends and family to sign a petition. Worst of all; please don't wake up after July 31st wishing you still had a job. This may be your last warning.

I just returned from our state convention. We had a good turn out at the meeting. Thanks to our local members who attended and served on committees. They helped the convention run very smoothly. I probably will have met our new OIC by the time this paper is published. I hope for a good working relationship. We will see.

As most of you know our outgoing OIC, Darrell Lewis, abolished and reverted several jobs before he left. I guess that was his going away present to

the employees of Fort Smith. Thank you Darrell, but we would have rather you not do us any favors. The union is grieving the reversions and abolishments of those positions and should be successful, hopefully with a monetary settlement for our members.

See you at the next meeting.

Dennis

Next Union Meeting

July 13, 2003

1:30 p.m.

Cavanaugh Pizza





Vice-president's Report

This last month has been really rough for me, with vacation and illness that kept me out of the work place for most of the month. I'd like to thank Dennis for taking on my responsibilities as far as meeting with Ron Ramsey at step 2 with several grievances of mine and I'd like to thank Thomas Henry for stepping in and taking care of a couple grievances on tour 3. I'm back, and although not 100%, but still able and willing. I have filed two grievances for tour 3. One, which is now going on step 2, is the one on the recent bid job (the flat sorter job with DBCS relief) and a grievance on Rick doing clerk work. I've also got a step 2 from Karla that is also about a supervisor doing clerk work. I have received several step 2 denials and will be appealing them to the next higher level. The main one is the about bid jobs without "principle assignment areas". I'm sorry that this has to go to the next higher level. Ron was having his strings pulled and told to deny them, although we did have quite a few arbitrations to back up the language on this grievance. Management just doesn't get it.

By the time you get this we will have had our annual picnic and I hope everybody that attended really enjoyed themselves. I think that this is the best way that our local can get together and enjoy the time with all their families.

Now, I know that I have said this thousands of times and so has other officers, but you people that go and do someone else's job just because you feel sorry for that person being all alone is just not the way we need to operate. Yes, I understand that you want to help. But, this is not going to get help for the tour. Management just says that they don't need help because so and so will come over and help later. If it's not your bid job, don't do it unless you are told to do it. Which, by the way, is a problem now that management does not want to put principal assignment areas on bid jobs. But, we know what

our job is and we shouldn't be running off to do someone else's job. Please consider who you are hurting when you leave your job to help others.

Chris Hagen

Meeting Minutes

May 18, 2003

Dennis called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. President, Sec/Trea, and Editor present, Chris was on leave.

Dennis read and turned in his report.

Minutes from last month's meeting read and accepted.

Financial report read and accepted.

Old Business

Safety committee met. Corky said the Postal Service is going to look into our tornado preparedness plan.

The picnic is planned and everything a go.

New Business

Discussions on:

Use of overtime on the FSM;

Lengthy discussion on the problems with Attendance Control in Little Rock and the additional paper added to the 21 day return to work form;

Nancy denying limited duty to an employee.

Next meeting June 8, 2003 at Grand Slam. The July meeting date is 13th at Cavanaugh Pizza at 1:30.

Motion to adjourn so moved.

Randy Cope



Call-In Procedure Update

The APWU has reached a settlement with the Postal Service on some of the problems we have encountered with calling into Attendance Control. This settlement was at the National level and will make it binding for all offices.

Once an employee has provided the expected duration of his or her absence such employee is not required to call in again for the same absence. However if the expected duration changes the employee should notify management.

When an employee requests sick leave for absences of 3 days or less, "medical documentation" or other acceptable evidence of incapacity for work or need to care for a family member is only required when an employee is on restricted sick leave or when the supervisor deems documentation is desirable for the protections of the interests of the Postal Service. A supervisor's determination that medical documentation or other acceptable evidence of incapacitation is desirable for the protection of the interest of the Postal Service must be made on a case by case basis and may not be arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable.

There are other areas about the call in procedure that are still being discussed between the APWU and the Postal Service but the ones I mentioned above have been signed off by both parties and are contractually binding.

When you call the Attendance Control office for FMLA they are going to send you Postal Service forms. It is my advice not to use their forms. They are very long, making it more of a burden on your doctor to fill out, and they ask for information that seems unnecessary. Use the forms provided by the APWU, they are shorter and more to the point. The Postal Service is contractually bound to accept the APWU forms. You can get these forms from your union steward, but if you are at home sick and don't want to

come to work to see your steward you can also get them if you have a computer, printer and internet service.

go to <http://www.apwu1211.com> and click on forms, that will take you to a page that has the forms available to be downloaded.

Thomas Henry

Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2003

Meeting called to order at 2:00 by Dennis

Motion to wave the rules by David 2nd, by Corky motion passed.

Drawing for the 10 \$50.00 bills: winners were Jan Atchley, Dennis Taff, Gerald Whitledge, Ginger Ballard, Howard Edwards, Shonda Smith, Randy Smith, Judy Dixon, David Bottiecher, and Julie Hearn. We had 36 members sign in at the meeting.

Randy Smith's name was also drawn for the last jacket that was in the union office.

The Executive Board decided to give away the rest of the shirts and bags to the members at the picnic.

Motion to adjourn so moved.

Randy Cope

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.

Just a Thought!!!

The picnic was a success, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Thanks to Thomas, Randy, and everyone who planned, cooked and cleaned up for us. The go-karts stayed busy the whole time, and there are some crazy drivers out there!

A few people have asked me for one or all the forms Dennis mentioned at the meeting. We have some in the union office. Just let your steward know if you need one.

The drive for COPA funds is going strong. It is the most crucial time to donate since I've been here. If you don't understand what COPA does just ask. We'll explain or get you the information to read. If we all just give \$10.00 it might be a cheap investment for our financial future.

Speaking of money, congratulations to the winners of the \$50.00 drawings at the picnic. And I think I can say a thank you for everyone for the free t-shirts given away.

Hope to see you at the next meeting.

Kerry



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If you have a name or address change
please let us know.

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