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Western Arkansas Area Local

The Paper

July 29, 2004

We Have Ways of Making You Talk

By Dennis Taff

I have received a lot of questions lately concerning the issue of "official discussion,," Or sometimes called "job discussion." Management has the right to have a discussion with employees. They can be for numerous reasons...attendance, work performance, and etc. Normally when a supervisor calls you in to have an official discussion you are not entitled to union representation. However, if this discussion turns in to an interrogation or question and answer session, you have the contractual right to union representation.

My suggestion to any employee is this:



if you are called in for a discussion, no matter what management decides to call it, ask for union representation. Also ask if this discussion could lead to discipline. If they deny you union representation then you have the option to answer or not answer questions. If you are given union representation you also have the right to speak to your union steward in private before the discussion continues. You also have the right to take personal notes during any discussion and I would strongly suggest you do so. If you have any questions concerning this issue please contact me or any other union Officer or Steward.

On The Road Again

A day in the life of Johnnie Gregory
By Corky Hunt

Suppose one day you were driving home along the interstate, minding your own business, paying attention, like you should, to all the traffic around you. Then suppose that unknown to you there is a criminal running from the police, a criminal who had already caused an accident in another part of the city, a criminal who had no concern for his safety, let alone yours, who pulled up on the interstate just in front of you.

While you're supposing, suppose this criminal that was running from the police at a high rate of speed had just pulled up the on-ramp and was beginning to merge with the interstate traffic. Suppose his hood, already damaged from the previous wrecks he'd caused, flew up and covered his windshield and this criminal couldn't see to run anymore.

What do you suppose he would do? Suppose after swerving across two lanes of interstate traffic he came to a complete stop right in front of you calmly riding your motorcycle.



If you were Johnnie Gregory what would you do? You would slam on both brakes, down shift through all the gears, and hold on! You would see the back of the car and the hood over the windshield getting closer and closer and know that in just a moment, in the twinkling of an eye you are going to have to make a decision that

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could change the course of your life — for the rest of your life — however long that turns out to be.

So there you are, the car is getting closer, “should I stay on, or do I get off?” goes through your mind. As your front tire goes under the missing rear bumper of the car, you think, “this is not good!” You decide to get off — at about 25 mph! Just as do, you start to accumulate a healthy dose of “road rash” on your arms and legs and side of your head — where your helmet visor used be. For good measure add a broken hand and a broken rib. During this 4-second event your heart-rate is at 234 beats per minute. (How would you know your heart-rate is 234 BPM, you ask? Johnnie was wearing a heart monitor that he had just picked up at the doctors office.)

While you’re scooting along the pavement trying to keep away from the motorcycle that you just left, you notice that the clown that caused the whole thing has put his hood down and is getting back in his car to drive away! Just as you come to a stop and begin thinking “you know. lying in the middle of the interstate is not any fun and probably not very safe either”, that little voice inside says “you need to get up and move off the road”.

When you gather yourself up and get on your feet you see the guy is starting to leave you so you begin running after him thinking “boy I sure wish I had a gun”. Meanwhile back at the wreck, people are beginning to stop to help, in another moment the State Troopers are on the scene and you say to yourself “I’m glad I **didn’t** have that gun!” Except for the standing in the middle of the interstate, a mangled motorcycle, the blood on your arms, legs, head, hands, a broken finger and a broken rib, life has returned to normal.

After the State Troopers had taken care of

all their business, the wrecker driver took off with the bruised, battered, and broken Honda on-board. Johnnie climbed into the back of the Trooper’s car and the two head down the interstate from Rogers Avenue toward Grand Avenue. About half way to Grand, Johnnie asked the Trooper if he had a flat. The cars was sounding odd and not handling quite right so they decided to stop and see what all the banging and thumping was about, coming from behind and underneath the car. As the Trooper pulled onto the shoulder and rolled to a stop so did Johnnie’s helmet. It had been hung up, bounced and kicked around under the car for about a mile or so. Johnnie, still full of adrenalin, jumped out, fetched the helmet and hopped back in. Off they went again!

But there was still banging and thumping — only this time it was coming from near the right side of the car. Unable to see the cause of the commotion in the right side mirror, Johnnie told the Trooper to continue and they would check it at the Grand Avenue off-ramp where they intended to exit the interstate. When they were nearly stopped at the exit Johnnie opened the door only to find that it was the heart monitor, hanging by the leads, still connected to his chest, banging and bouncing along outside of the State Police Cruiser. It had come unhooked from his waist when he retrieved his helmet and had taken a ride of about a mile on the outside of the Cruiser. It was still working and appeared to be no worse for the wear.

I am happy to report that after a week off work Johnnie is back. He is still wearing the evidence of a roll down the highway along with the classic black cast on his arm.

I like Johnnie.

I’m sure glad he’s tough!

Freedom Is Never Free
By Shawn Rapert

As we have just celebrated Independence Day 2004, I am reminded again of how blessed a people we are to still be enjoying the freedom that we have in this country.



I stand and applaud those who have sacrificed and served this country to ensure and preserve this freedom. I often take this freedom for granted but I realize that this freedom was not free. I have read about our Founders like Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their honor to create our independence. So many battles and wars that were fought, lives lost and "gazillions" of dollars spent throughout history for this freedom I/we enjoy today. I hope that we have all reminded ourselves that this freedom we enjoy in this country was not free.

Life Insurance Policy & Grievance Settlements

By Dennis Taff

The clerks in Fort Smith finally received the second casual violation settlement and the clerks in Van Buren received their cross-craft violation settlement. I encourage each of you to put a few dollars of your settlement into your life insurance policy, commonly referred to as "COPA." Giving to COPA protects you and your families current life style. You can make a donation to COPA by check or by cash. You can send it in directly to APWU headquarters or present it to any union officer and we will turn in as a group donation. From 1 dollar to 100 dollars, no donation is too small or too large but be as generous as you can. Remember just a few weeks ago when the house postal reform bills were defeated? That was the direct result of your COPA donations so. I have received numerous compliments from national officers concerning the generous donations from APWU employees in Arkansas. Let's keep up the good work.

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

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PhotoStamps

A new form of USPS®- approved PC Postage® known as PhotoStamps™ is in the market test phase. The new PhotoStamps™ labels (shown on this page) are in the mail stream beginning July 23, 2004.



Next Union Meeting

August 29, 2004

1:30 p.m.

Cavanaugh Pizza