



The Badger Bulletin

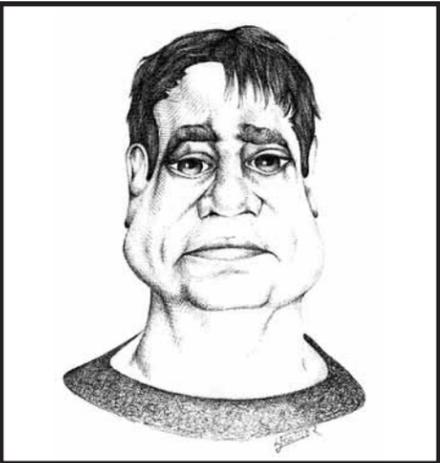
The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD



New Contract?

Make no mistake about it if we lose the White House and the Senate in 2012 this exact thing will be happening to us. There is a right wing conspiracy funded by corporate money taking place in this country. The conspiracy is to eliminate unions and drastically reduce or eliminate corporate taxes in America.

The right wing says this will create jobs. We know better. This is to make the rich

will be insolvent by the end of this fiscal year. By law the USPS has a 15 billion dollar debt ceiling. We will reach that limit by September 30th of this year. At that time the USPS will no longer be able to meet its financial obligations. Your pay could be one of those obligations. I will contact locals to help you with your legislative efforts.

President Guffey addressed the NPC

sole emphasis be the grievance procedure. He feels we have to put as much emphasis on legislative efforts as we do the grievance procedure and I agree. This does not mean that our grievance efforts will slip but everyone in the APWU should not be dealing with grievances. From now on our NBAs will schedule arbitrations and make sure the cases we arbitrate are arbitration ready.

The APWU loses a million dollars a year in withdrawn cases. Our regional coordinators will be taken out of the grievance procedure and will be more responsible for legislative efforts. Also NBAs will be given more leeway and time to do things like accompany you to Congressional offices and visit your workroom floor. Expect to hear from your national and state officers asking you to get more involved legislatively. It is vitally important for our survival.

“Now we must work to recall the governor and his cohorts and give Wisconsin workers their rights back.”

Hopefully by the time you read this we will have a negotiated national agreement. Read it carefully. No doubt there will be concessions. We have been told there will be some innovative items in the contract that will change the way we operate on the workroom floor. The APWU's negotiating team has said that their main focus was regaining lost work for the crafts and at the same time work with the USPS to keep it viable as our employer. When and if the contract is ratified we will schedule a seminar to familiarize us with the changes to the contract and get us ready for local negotiations.

Negotiations have been going on for six months. Our national officers deserve credit and thanks for sticking to negotiating through thick and thin. One of the reasons for the longevity of negotiations is that unlike in the past the negotiating team wants a contract not open to interpretation after it is signed.

APWU SUPPORTS STATE WORKERS

On Wednesday March 2nd the APWU of Wisconsin hosted a rally in support Wisconsin state and local employees. As you know the Republican Governor and legislature think that this is an ideal time to break the backs of Wisconsin public unions by introducing a budget repair bill that is represented as a bill to help solve our financial problems but is really a bill to take away workers rights. Unfortunately for them they misjudged not only the resolve of state workers but that of the citizens of Wisconsin as well. Rallies have taken place in Madison and all over the state in support of workers' rights.

Our rally had 350 APWU members from Wisconsin, surrounding states, and Washington DC. We were loud and proud. A special thanks to the three busloads of members from Illinois.

As long as this fight lasts the APWU will be involved. As I am writing this article the legislature removed all financial provisions from the budget repair bill and voted for only the anti union portions. So much for this being a financial matter. *Now we must work to recall the governor and his cohorts and give Wisconsin workers their rights back.*

richer period. The trickle down theory hasn't produced more jobs or a better standard of living for the middle class in the past 30 years and it will not now. In fact as you can see by the state of our economy it has done the exact opposite. Corporate Welfare has gotten us to where we are now and it must be stopped. We must stand up now and stop this conspiracy or we will be next.

NPC LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The APWU National Presidents Conference held its biennial legislative conference in Washington DC March 5-8. It is your dues that sent me there and I appreciate it. Accompanying me was President and Vice President of Milwaukee Local Paul McKenna and Bob Wood. After the legislative conference the three of us went to Capitol Hill to lobby Wisconsin Legislators. Our only focus was the dire financial condition of the USPS and what Congress can do to help.

We told our representatives of the coalition of unions, USPS, and mailers who together want to rid the USPS of the crippling obligation to prefund future retirees' health care costs. This prefunding is the primary reason for the poor financial shape of the USPS. Without the congressionally mandated prefunding the USPS would have been in the black over the last four year period since the prefunding bill was passed.

We also told our representatives that USPS and independent studies have shown that the USPS has overpaid into both its retirement systems to the tune of 55-80 billion dollars depending on what study you use. We urged them to pass a bill that would apply this over funding to prefund future retirees' health care costs and eliminate the 5-6 billion dollars we are required to pay each year into the fund through 2016.

It is very important that every local initiate a legislative contact effort with your Congressional representatives' local offices. Without relief from the prefunding requirement the USPS

on the Monday of the conference. He told us of changes he plans to make within the APWU. He stated that no longer can our

It's About Freedom!



You can tell by the expression on this young protesters face as he looks at the sign that states "It's About Freedom" he knows that his future rights are being violated. (The sticker on his hat says: "A Voice for Wisconsin's Students & Public Schools.")

Photo by: John E. Durben

THE UNION NEWSPAPER IS THE MOST VISIBLE SIGN OF LIFE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT



Badger Bulletin

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The APWU of Wisconsin publishes this newsletter as a means of communicating with our members. The union encourages letters to the editor; letters must be signed but name will be withheld upon request. All opinions expressed are those of the writer, and not necessarily those of the state organization or its officers. The *Badger Bulletin* is a proud member of the APWU Postal Press Association. The *Badger Bulletin* is printed six (6) times per year. Articles not credited are those of the editor.

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION . . . BY RICK GALLO, DIRECTOR



With all of the energy pouring into Madison to fight for workers' rights; I thought I would provide some information for this issue of the paper concerning Wisconsin's Labor History.

As you should be aware, workers and unions helped make our nation great, and helped to establish our good standard of living, as well as top wages and benefits for all workers. This did not come without many struggles, however. As the Industrial Age began in the 1800's, life was difficult for workers who only made less than \$2 a day on average in 1890. At the same time, industrialists made huge incomes. In that day, workers were considered "property." Despite numerous efforts to form unions, the National Molders Union became the first permanent union in 1859. The first national labor federation did not emerge until the 1860 with the Knights of Labor. The American Federation of Labor wasn't formed until 1886, led by Samuel Gompers.

One major struggle involved the quest for an eight-hour day. A goal had been set of establishing an 8-hour work day by May 1, 1886, or there would be demonstrations and strikes. For most workers, the 50 or 60 hour week was the standard. On May 4, 1886 at Chicago's Haymarket square, eight demonstrators were killed when a bomb was thrown into their rally. Seven more were killed the following day by state militia who fired into a crowd of 1,500 workers who were peacefully marching toward the Bay View Rolling Mills on Milwaukee's lakefront. Finally, more than 22 years later, Congress established the 40-hour work week by passing the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938. Keep in mind that this happened only after a great deal of organizing, and after blood was shed.

Employers continued to stymie union growth through the use of "yellow dog" contracts in which workers promised not to join a union or they'd be fired if they did, and through the use of injunctions. A summer-long city-wide strike erupted in Oshkosh involving some 1,500 woodworkers, but three strike leaders were charged with conspiracy (another favorite employer tactic). They were ultimately acquitted, after famed attorney Clarence Darrow argued on their behalf, and that helped to end the use of conspiracy charges against workers. Not long after, in 1935 the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) becomes law. For the first time, workers have the right to organize, and employers are required to bargain with unions. Workers began to flock toward unions, and by the 1950's more than one out of every three workers were union.

Some Wisconsin Labor History

Wisconsin led the way, and in 1911 became the first state to pass workers compensation protections. In 1932, again in the lead, Wisconsin enacted unemployment compensation. In another first, The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSME) was founded in 1936 in Madison. In 1959, Wisconsin became the first state to pass collective bargaining laws for public employees.

Today, the United States is the richest country on earth. U.S. earnings permit the majority of Americans to enjoy the highest standards of living. Unions played an important role in that achievement. But, how did it come about that workers now average more than \$11.75 per hour? Many factors played a part, including the fact that the U. S. contains vast natural resources, along with the fact that capitalists made many investments via the free enterprise system. But workers toiled many long hours to produce the wealth. Ultimately, it was the collective action of unions which forced employers to pay fair wages to workers. That collective union effort is how workers secured a fairer share of the wealth. Workers in Wisconsin, in particular, played an important role in the ultimate growth of unions, and the improvement of working conditions.

Wisconsin workers had to fight for the rights and protections they received. Major strikes occurred at Allis-Chalmers, where the UAW was forced into two long strikes. J.I. Case in Racine forced workers into a 14-month strike shortly following World War II. Kohler Co. fought off unionization for more than 30 years, and through two multi-year strikes before finally agreeing to foster peace in 1962.

Unions continue to show an interest in making a better life for all citizens. They provide leadership for many progressive changes in our communities. Labor union support has been deemed critical to passage of the following:

1. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination in employment based upon race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
2. The Voting Rights Act of 1965.
3. The Age Discrimination Act of 1968.
4. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.
5. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Therefore, members should be proud of their Wisconsin union heritage. Perhaps this provides a small glimpse of perspective as to why Wisconsin union members get very upset when somebody wants to strip such hard-fought rights away.

Finally, Justice For 9/11 First Responders

Firefighters, police officers and emergency medical responders celebrated on Dec. 22nd last year when the James Zadroga 9/11 Health Compensation Bill was finally passed. President Obama signed the measure the following week.

International Association of Fire Fighters President Harold Schaitberger hailed the action as "a major legislative victory." The bill was passed three months earlier in the House of Representatives, but Senate Republicans blocked it on procedural grounds until the final hours before Congress adjourned at the end of the year.

The bill includes \$1.8 billion to monitor the health of first responders who worked to

rescue World Trade Center victims and later to recover remains. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who was a key sponsor for the bill when she was still in the Senate, was on hand to mark the passage along with Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, her successor in the Senate, and New York's senior Sen. Chuck Schumer. Clinton was one of the original sponsors of the measure, along with Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) in the House.

The act was named for James Zadroga, a New York City detective who died in 2006 from health problems related to his recovery work on the World Trade Center site.

— Source: Label Letter

Editor's Comment:

Recently Wisconsin Republicans attempted to pass legislation requiring a Photo ID to be eligible to vote in elections.

— Why don't they attempt to pass legislation requiring an IQ Test instead?
— (*Badger Bulletin*)

LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Governor Scott Walker . . . The New Union Buster

Scott Walker has been Wisconsin's governor for less than 6 weeks and was elected by just 52% of the vote yet is attempting to destroy decades and decades of achievements earned by the sweat of union members through collective bargaining.

The governor talks about a three billion dollar plus deficit and believes that it should be placed on the backs of public workers. Governor Walker has asked for the public workers to pay more monies into their retirement and to pay more to into their health insurance. Representatives for the state unions and their members have agreed to pay more into their Retirement and health insurance but, that's not enough, now Governor Walker wants a little more blood. The Governor now wants to deny public employee unions the right to negotiate over health care coverage, staffing levels, seniority, sick leave, vacation and more! In short Governor Walker wants to take away the right to Collectively Bargain from ALL public employee unions!

The Governor states that this whole ordeal is only about the money! Really?

What makes this even more amazing is that this is coming directly from a governor who **THREW AWAY (OR SHOULD I SAY DERAILED) 810 MILLION DOLLARS** in guaranteed federal monies to the Wisconsin economy when he said NO to high speed train here in Wisconsin. Not only was that money lost forever but just think of all the jobs that would have been created to not only build but to maintain that high speed rail system.

When Former Democratic governor Jim Doyle took office the outgoing republican Governor Tommy Thompson left him a defect of 3.2 billion dollars but, you didn't hear Jim Doyle screaming and whining about what the republicans had left upon our state. In fact I don't remember hearing anything from Scott Walker on that deficit his fellow conservative buddies had left us! When former Governor Jim Doyle faced a budget deficient he reduced it by using the federal stimulus monies, increased corporate taxes and reduced spending. At **NO TIME** did former Jim Doyle attempt to destroy workers rights!

On Feb. 25 at 1:00 a.m. while there was only 13 of 37 democrats present as the GOP controlled State Assembly passed the . While the Democrats had staged a filibuster but the GOP had put in place a 60 hour time limit on amendments and discussions and then voted! Of course it passed But, the union supporters starting chanting SHAME - SHAME - SHAME at all the state assembly representatives who walked away with their heads down just like that of a coward!

This now has to go to the state senate of which there needs to be 20 senators present in order to take a vote. While there are 19 republican state senators who will vote for this bill they are still one senator short! There are 14 state senators that are democrat, if just one of those senators shows up for the vote **even though he/she would vote against it** then it would definitely pass because the republicans hold the majority in the state senate and they only need a simple majority for it

to pass and Scott Walker's anti-union policy would become law! While the 14 Democratic state senators have no problem showing up and making their voices heard let's face it with Governor Scott Walker and the GOP controlled Senate their voices would fall upon deaf ears making it a waste of time to even try to discuss it!

The following are the 14 State Senators who are PRO-LABOR, that's right, these are the true friends/heroes of organized labor and the labor movement;

- Tim Carpenter3rd District
- Spencer Coggs 6th District

- Timothy Cullen 15th District
- Jon Erpenbach.....27th District
- Dave Hansen.....30th District
- Jim Holperin.....12th District
- Robert Jauch.....25th District
- Chris Larson.....7th District
- Julie Lassa.....24th District
- Mark Miller.....16th District
- Fred Risser.....26th District
- Lena Taylor4th District
- Kathleen Vinehout.....31st District
- Robert Wirsch.....22nd District

What this is really about is POWER! According to the New York Times "the efforts

to impose limits on public labor unions has been a particular focus in Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin all states with republican governors". As you well know the eyes of labor in the United States and labor movements around the world to include the union busters are watching to see how this event here in Wisconsin will turn out!

It doesn't matter how you look at it, the facts are plain to see and it is a fact that *Governor Scott Walker is a UNION BUSTER!*

We must all stand strong **TOGETHER** and we all must realize...that the struggle continues.

NARFE Says Info On Federal Pay Presented At House Hearing Was 'Grossly Misleading'

Joseph A. Beaudoin, president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) – one of America's oldest and largest associations, representing the 4.7 million active and retired federal employees nationwide – released the following statement today following the House Oversight Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and Labor Policy hearing titled "Are Federal Workers Underpaid?":

• "Grossly misleading information was presented to members of Congress today in a subcommittee hearing that was held to answer the question, 'Are Federal Workers Underpaid?' The majority party of the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform suggested that, on average, federal workers earn \$101,000 a year, compared to the average private worker earnings of \$60,000 a year. This faulty comparison includes all wages and all workers and fails to consider the many important differences between America's federal and private work forces.

• "The numbers – presented today by Chairman Dennis Ross and the Heritage Foundation – are hollow. America's federal workers perform highly skilled jobs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and at the FBI that protect our country. Yet the salaries of these critical jobs are being compared to the salaries of high school students working part time at a local restaurant.

• "NARFE fears that changes to policies that affect federal employees – such as the freeze on all pay increases, including promotions, proposed by Congressman Issa – not only harm employees, they also threaten the future of the vital services they perform. Without competitive employment packages, the U.S. government will struggle to attract the best workers and retain the most knowledgeable staff to serve our country.

• "During continued tough economic

times, we cannot allow this bad data to turn our federal employees into national scapegoats. Federal workers are the Americans who protect us from infectious diseases, warn us if a bad winter storm is coming, and care for our veterans. We cannot afford not to fully support these critical services that taxpaying Americans demand from their government.

• "We must not be hasty and allow federal employees to become the fall guy in the raging budget battle. Instead, we must

be austere, yet smart, to find a new way forward. This way forward will require a strong federal work force. I urge Congress to be mindful of the facts and falsehoods about our compensation and recognize the value we add to the daily lives of all Americans."

— Source: *NARFE*

Editor's Note: Active and retired employees should check to see if they have a Local NARFE Chapter in their area and join. You can do so or get more information by looking on the internet.

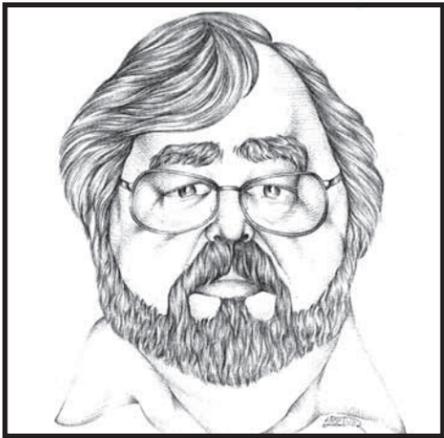
APWU Marched In Madison



On March 2, APWU marched into Madison in support of the public workers who were fighting for their rights to bargain with their employers. APWU members came from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan as well as National Officers from Washington. (Center) APWU Vice-President Greg Bell addresses the supporters from the steps of the Capitol Building.

Photo by: John E. Durben

BADGER BULLETIN BOARD



by John E. Durben,
Editor

The Headline above that the APWU supports the rights of Wisconsin Workers is only because the current turmoil between Republicans and Tea baggers vs. the "Middle Class" began here in Wisconsin because of our puppet Governor and the rest of his party. In reality, we support the rights of all workers across this great Country. Wisconsin just happens to be the first victim that fell between the crosshairs of Corporate America. Like a well funded predator, they have decided that they will crush their prey . . . the middle class (the Unions) and brainwash the poverty stricken working class. The ones who are working two or three jobs to try to make ends meet.

Why don't they strive to raise the wages of the lower income workers up to at least middle

APWU Supports Bargaining Rights Of Wisconsin Workers

class and eliminate the lower class . . . instead of the opposite? It's because of Corporate Greed and the legislators they have bought and put in their back pockets. Legislators who have become traitors to their constituents just to receive future funding to protect "their jobs" in high office! The republican reps were too bent on walking lockstep with their corporate puppet than representing the majority of the citizens that they are supposed to be representing.

I take offense to the republicans and anyone else that says that the Democrats weren't doing their jobs when they left the State. To me they had the guts to make a hard decision that slowed down the train during this railroad job. By being out of state – they were attempting to preserve my rights as well as the tens of thousands of Wisconsin Public Workers and remember, this is only the beginning.

APWU Leadership has indicated that we as members have to start getting more involved in politics. Your elected Union Representatives cannot do it by themselves. We need your help. We need you to make phone calls and write letters. We need you to protest in Madison. We need you to vote when a recall vote on the

enemies of Labor comes about and that will only happen if you sign a recall petition for the representative in your District.

Don't fool yourself because you think we may be close to having a Contract with the postal service. So did the Wisconsin State Workers with their employers. What good did

it do them? If you want to hang on to what you have you're going to have to speak up and fight back! Wisconsin Republicans may just have woken up a sleeping giant?

Remember: "Some men rob you with a six-gun. Others rob you with a fountain pen"
—Woody Guthrie

Healthy Ways Of Dealing With Change

There are many changes occurring in the postal service these days. There are reduced hours, closing and consolidation of post offices, excessing, and new job postings just to name a few.

Dealing with change can be easier if we are open to the occurrence of it. The following are some tips for dealing with changes as they occur.

1. Recognize that change is a part of life. Life would be boring and stagnant if things didn't change. Change keeps us fresh, alive.

2. Anticipate change. Don't become too complacent. Being flexible and open to change will lessen the surprise when it does happen.

3. Monitor change around you. Be an active participant in life and notice your

surroundings. You'll be able to spot change and deal with it a lot easier.

4. Adapt to change quickly. When you begin to anticipate and monitor change, you'll be able to adapt faster with less stress.

5. Learn to enjoy change. Understand that change is a necessary part of life.

6. Expect that change will happen over and over-and over again. Life is a series of changes.

Resources Are Available: Additional information, self-help tools and other resources are available online at www.EAP4YOU.com. Or call us for more information, help and support. Counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you. Call 800-EAP-4YOU (800-327-4968).

— Source of information received from EAP



Farmers Support Labor



Farmers brought their tractors to the Capitol in support of Labor on March 12th.

Photo by: John E. Durben

*The next Badger Bulletin
due date will be May 1, 2011.*