



# The Badger Bulletin

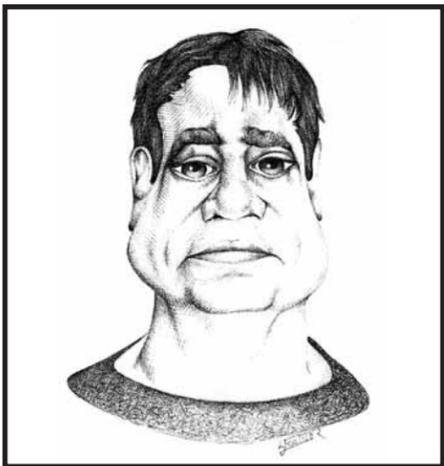
The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

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2009 PPA Award Winner

March-April, 2010

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD



### 4 STATE CAUCUS

I would like to start out by thanking Madison Local President Marty Mater and the Madison Area Local for the great job they did hosting the recent 4 State Caucus. The 4 State Caucus marks the beginning of a very busy and important year. The 4 State Caucus was started in the eighties to enable the 4 states of the Minneapolis region to get together and formulate more pertinent resolutions to be presented with a united front to the APWU National Convention. Many of these past resolutions were adopted and became part of our National Constitution or National Bargaining Agreement. Two years ago at the urging of the 4 state presidents NBAs Lyle Krueth and Willie Mellen came up with a new format for the caucus.

This year marked the second time the new format was used and in the opinion of the participants it works quite well. About 50 resolutions were developed by 5 different committees at the caucus. The resolutions that passed will now go on to be debated at our state and national conventions. Some of the resolutions can be looked at as the "pie in the sky" variety such as one that called for the OT rate to be raised to double time and the penalty OT rate to be triple. But, there were also resolutions that will be hotly debated at upcoming state and national conventions.

Resolutions that call for a \$1.00 per pay period dues increase to be split up by the national, state, and local organizations (President Burrus earlier in the year proposed a \$1.00 increase all designated to go to the national treasury) and another resolution that would give the authority to the National Executive Board to eliminate elected positions if needed if they become vacant during the term of office. Our upcoming APWU of Wisconsin State Convention will debate all of the resolutions to come out of the 4 State Caucus.

This will also be your opportunity to present resolutions of your own on topics important to you and your local. Remember they are due by April 1st. Thanks to all of you for the great attendance numbers at the caucus. It is important to realize how one voice

# A Busy And Important Year

can make a difference in our union and how important it is to have your local represented at functions like this so you can have input on things that will certainly be considered at a national level.

There were other interesting events that took place in Madison. Madison Local President Marty Mater continued his campaign to become an NBA from the Minneapolis Region. NBA Lyle Krueth announced he would not run for reelection as NBA but would instead be running for Assistant Clerk Craft Director. National Clerk Craft Director Jim McCarthy told us he would be running for APWU National President.

### APWU OF WISCONSIN STATE CONVENTION

By now you should have received the information I sent out regarding the upcoming APWU of Wisconsin State Convention. Please plan on attending. We will be debating the resolutions that have come out of the 4 State Caucus. It is also your opportunity to present resolutions that you and your local feel are important and should be debated. I will be

presenting at least two resolutions myself. I feel both are important and necessary.

The first resolution will incorporate APWU of Wisconsin per capita and Wisconsin AFL-CIO per capita. Right now locals pay two separate per capitas. The resolution will make payments easier for both the local and state secretary-treasurers. It will also freeze AFL-CIO per capita at the present rate.

The second resolution will establish 4 or 5 regional MAL stewards. This resolution is needed and way past due. If it passes each MAL will know where to turn if they need representation.

Make sure that your local is well represented at the convention. It is important that your local have a voice in the debate over the important issues we will be dealing with. The 2008 APWU of Wisconsin Convention set a record for COPA fund raising by raising \$5,300. Wouldn't it be awesome if we could set a new record this year? You still have time to have a fund raiser in your local. Don't forget to bring your COPA donations along with your raffle/auction items.

### 2010 . . . AN IMPORTANT YEAR

I stated in the beginning of this article that this will be a very important year, maybe the most important year in our history. We face tough negotiations for our soon to expire National Bargaining Agreement. No one knows how that will turn out but, stay tuned because things usually get clearer the farther we progress in a bargaining year. We also have two venues to decide the direction our union will take in the coming years.

The first is the national convention in Detroit where dues structure and officer structure will be hotly debated. The second is our upcoming APWU National Elections. For the first time in many years we will have to make a choice between two viable candidates for National President. This choice will determine the future of the APWU. It is up to us to make an informed choice. It is up to us to make every effort to make sure each member votes. I believe we will look back on 2010 as one of the most important years in our history.

Thanks for listening.

## HUMAN RELATIONS . . . BY RENEE HEANEY, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS



# APWU Of Madison, Wisconsin Hosts Four State Caucus . . .

Resolutions are still happening and there does not seem to be an end in the immediate future due to mail volumes declining and the state of our economy. Unfortunately we are all being affected.

Excessing can be a frustrating process for the clerks that it affects, directly and indirectly and also for your Local, State and National Officers. Management rarely, if ever gets it right and the Union is left with correcting it. Union leaders will help you with this process if you are affected by it, so please come to us we are here to be sure you are fully represented, know the facts, and understand the process. Don't simply believe management, all too often they don't know what's what. It is a terrible situation to be in because it can disrupt your life by uprooting your family, causing a shift change, or taking extra hours from your day due to travel time to a different facility.

If you have excessed clerks coming into your office try to remember **IT WAS NOT THEIR CHOICE**. Welcome your Union Brothers and Sisters and help make the tran-

sition for them easier. If they come into your office they will bring their seniority with them, this is a right they have covered by the contract, and will be able to bid on vacancies with that seniority. As long as you stay in your craft you take your seniority with you; however, if you do chose to switch crafts you begin a new period of seniority. PTF's who get excessed go to the bottom of the seniority roster at the gaining installation and regain their seniority once they become regular.

One of the greatest things about our Union is our **NO LAY OFF** protection. I would stress that you should try to stay in the craft for this protection. You are guaranteed a job. This is a right covered by our contract for all employees on the rolls as of Nov. 20, 2006, and will continue throughout the duration of the contract. No other government agency has this protection and we should fight to protect this for our future. The Postal Service can't simply hand you a pink slip and leave you without a job. With contract negotiations

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EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION . . . BY RICK GALLO, DIRECTOR

# USPS Problems



Over the past several months, there have been many doomsday predictions concerning the future of our employer and our jobs. For its part, the Postal Service, and most enthusiastically, the Postmaster General, has indicated that the business model under which USPS operates must be re-written. They assert that they need more business model flexibility, and must change the way that we conduct business. According to USPS, the financial mess is in part attributed to "its biting annual pre-payments for retiree health benefits, coupled with a massive decline in mail volume." PMG Potter proposes, among other things, a reduction in mail delivery to five days per week.

Recent predictions from the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that between 2008 and 2018, mail sorters, processors and processing machine operators will drop 55,000 or 30.3%; and clerks are projected to drop an additional 14,000 or 18%. These projections indicate that we will lose some 69,000 more APWU positions in the next eight years. During that same period, BLS projects national employment to increase by 15.3 million, or 10.1%.

As a career postal employee, I am disheartened by the above statements. First, I am dismayed at the fact that postal performance is so dismal. We know for a fact that our members have been forced to absorb tens of thousands of hours in reductions over the past year or more. But I fail to find equal reductions in the management ranks. Postal management are the ones responsible for steering the ship; so these dismal numbers, despite the huge reductions in work hours and overtime, must fall squarely at their feet. This is further compounded by the ridiculous work sharing discounts given to

major mailers. President Burrus has repeatedly pointed out that, "For 1,000 automated letters, which cost the USPS \$6.17 to process in delivery sequence, the Postal Service "forgives" \$105 in discounts for a portion of the work required to sort the mail into delivery sequence, resulting in a loss of \$98.83 per 1,000 automated letters. That amounts to a loss of \$98,830 for every 1 million letters." Again, who is making these decisions? Management, that's who!

Over at least the past five years, the number of USPS managers/supervisors has only declined by about 9,000. During that same period, bargaining unit positions (the ones that actually do the work) have decreased by some 72,000. Unfortunately, the ratio of bosses to workers remains at about 1:8. That's right, there is one boss for every eight workers in the USPS. By what possible standard can this be efficient, or necessary? On average, supervisors make about \$10,000 more per year than the workers they supervise. This amounts to about \$4.50 per hour. But when you account for all the higher and higher pay at each ascending layer of management, those numbers go up very fast.

Over the past several years, USPS has shifted more and more work from bargaining unit clerks to supervisors. Just look at time-keeping functions, or window work in small offices. What if supervisors do just one hour of our work each day? That can't amount to much, right? Well, there are about 37,000 post offices in the United States. At only one hour per day; that would be 37,000 hours per day. Now multiply that times six days per week, and then 52 weeks per year. That little one hour that didn't amount to much actually represents some 11,544,000 hours! Now remember that USPS is more than

willing to pay an additional \$4.50 per hour to have supervisors do this work rather than bargaining unit employees. That amounts to almost \$52,000,000.00. By now you are asking yourself why the people responsible for steering the ship would gladly pat \$52 million more than necessary by having supervisors do clerk work. Fundamentally, it doesn't make any sense. USPS's long term financial health would actually improve significantly if USPS could reduce its labor costs. Yet, they insist upon paying more to get the same work done by having supervisors do it. If upper management is truly serious about saving money, and ultimately saving USPS, they need to seriously expand the work of bargaining unit employees. The pendulum should be swinging the other way, i.e. they should be shifting as much work as possible away from higher paid supervisors, and back to bargaining unit employees. Not only would this ultimately reduce costs, it would provide additional jobs, thereby putting additional workers back to work and further strengthening our economy. It's a win-win situation. Of course, the above example was based on only one hour per day. What if supervisors actually perform more of our work than one hour. Perhaps the real effect is in the hundreds of millions . . . Yikes!

Now there is quite a bit of talk about the goals and expectations management has for us as employees. Guess what? We too, as employees, have goals and expectations for those managers and supervisors. We expect them to treat us with dignity and respect. We expect that they will be honest and trustworthy; that they will demonstrate a high level of integrity. We expect them to make good decisions that are right for both the employees and the USPS. Can they live up to OUR expectations???



## Badger Bulletin

**APWU OF WISCONSIN  
GENERAL OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

STEVE LORD  
PO Box 2321  
Oshkosh, WI 54903  
HM 920-426-5285, WK 920-233-8454  
lordsa@charter.net

**SECRETARY-TREASURER**

DALE ANDERSON  
PO Box 26022  
Madison, WI 53708  
608-240-1024  
triumph110@sbcglobal.net

**DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION**

JEFF WORDEN  
4984 S 24th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53221

**DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS**

RENEE HEANEY  
PO Box 1  
Wausau, WI 54402  
715-370-1738  
Hurricaneh@charter.net

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
AND ORGANIZATION**

RICK GALLO  
PO Box 1396  
Kenosha, WI 53141  
HM 262-652-6242, WK 262-657-5955  
APWU840@wi.rr.com

**EDITOR**

JOHN E. DURBEN  
PO Box 10021  
Green Bay, WI 54307  
HM 715-745-2248, WK 920-498-3987  
chillihead@frontiernet.net

**APWU OF WISCONSIN  
AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

DEBRA KOSZAREK  
5321 S. LaSalle Dr.  
New Berlin, WI 53151  
414-425-8672

**SECRETARY-TREASURER**

Arlene Beisbier  
916 Chestnut  
West Bend, WI 53095  
262-338-8663

**DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION**

BARBARA MACIEJEWSKI  
2145 S 89th Street  
West Allis, WI 53227  
angelmajek@aol.com

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.

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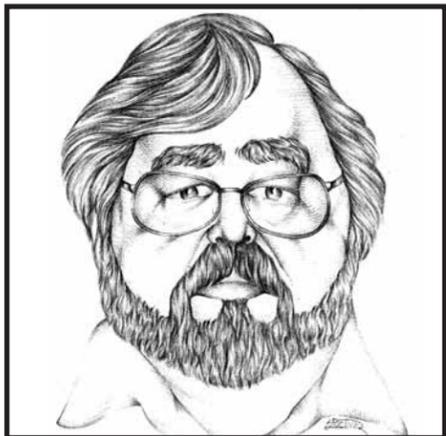


THE BADGER BULLETIN

STEINER

# BADGER BULLETIN BOARD

## Our Man With The Plan . . .



by John E. Durben,  
Editor

Recently Potter made public his “wish list” regarding the future of the Postal Service. Perfect timing one might say with the upcoming contract negotiations fast approaching with APWU later this year (August to be exact).

One of the items mentioned in his doomsday plea was that they will be forced to raise postal rates. Dah . . . Did anyone do any research? Did no one not notice that our competitors have been raising their rates all along? I am amazed that **with the high quality management and professional financial advisors** we have we were unable to put 2 and 2 together to make 4 (or something close to that).

We’re crying now about raising rates because our bottom line bottomed out. As I remember that trend has been going on for a little while now. Why aren’t we going to raise the rates like we have been for the last couple years in May of this year? Is it because we didn’t lose enough money yet? Or is it because we’re setting the stage for

negotiations while destroying the best postal service in the world. Perhaps if we stopped subsidizing these very same mailers with the generous discounts that will eventually take us over, our bottom line may stop falling? It reminds me something like when we subsidized UPS when they first started out years ago. That’s when we didn’t want to do parcels anymore.

It was announced today that the postal service is again the most trusted government agency. The people voting in this survey sure don’t work here. (I had to get that in while I thought about it — otherwise I would have forgotten it.)

Our postal boss made it clear that they want to continue to close small offices in the future which could affect a number of our members here in Wisconsin A.O.’s. It appears that they are not going to give up on this issue. They continue to cut **our clerk craft hours** yet their postmasters are doing our work. Why not get rid of the postmasters or reduce their hours? I’ve been saying for over 20 years now that with the smaller offices, we only need one Postmaster for 5 to 6 offices. There are provisions for higher level window clerks (associates?) like we have here in Green Bay. I know our clerks can run the office (and many of them may already be doing it out there on a day to day basis because their bosses can’t) and a higher level PM could oversee these offices if required.

They want to have the ability to contract out more of our work. He (Potter) really

didn’t say it in those exact words but you don’t really have to read between the lines much. The more of our jobs that can be transported out to places like “Waaaal-Mart” or something similar is good for them. How about the APC’s in our lobbies that replace our window clerks? This is a beautiful piece of work that costs them every day because people trying to figure out if they’re mailing a flat or a parcel or Bound Printed Matter (which really got tricky because you now need a permit imprint) rate vs. media rate vs. a not flat machineable, well we’re screwed and we’re losing money. The other thing on this issue is that I’ve heard window clerks say that customers have come to them and said why should I come to you when it cost me more when I can go out in the lobby and mail it cheaper. . . AND IT STILL GETS THERE!

One of the main things our leader is trying to push is the **5 DAY WORK WEEK**. I’ve been employed as a clerk for almost 39 years and have seen a few changes (actually many changes). This would be a major change and it would have a major impact on America and the way America does business. The first thing that comes to my mind is it’s Tuesday and I notice that I only have few days left on my heart medication. No problem — I’ll get my Doctor to fax in a prescription and I’ll have it by Saturday. . . Wrong! We don’t deliver it on Saturday but if you would like to pay for Express Mail (which I no longer trust after being an Express Mail Clerk) we’ll give you a “money back guarantee if it doesn’t get

there” — but if you die — your spouse can get your postage back. —That don’t really cut it for me, and probably not too many of the older Americans out there with health problems.

The other issue here is that they (postal management) is selling us out (the Post Office) as it’s been know since its existence. The company that you and I work for has been known as a reliable institution that serves the American public. All of a sudden we are no longer an American “Service” but we’re a business competing with Corporate America. I agree to an extent, but we are still here to provide a service. We are not here to make a profit but to provide equal service to all Americans at an affordable price. (Oh. . . there’s that discount thing again. If we have universal service why are you and I getting shafted and the big guy mailer can mail for 10 cents cheaper than us? That doesn’t sound universal to me.

I could go on yet because there are a few more issues Mr. Potter brought to light in his carefully planned announcement to us all but I appear to be running out of space.

**Please note:** We are not only on the “Worldwide Internet” — now we are also on “Facebook”. Come be a Fan.

The next *Badger Bulletin* due date will be on May 5, 2010 for anyone that wants to or is required to submit an article for publication in the May/June issue. This will allow for news items from the State Convention to be included. (<http://apwuwi.blogspot.com/>)

## LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

# Just An Update On What’s Going On

In January the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued an announcement that the United States Postal Service had been overcharged 78 billion dollars in contributions to the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) pension fund. The Postal Service had previously been required to overfund its pension obligations. This had originally been noticed in 2002 and 2003 that the postal Service was well on track to be overcharged for CSRS military credits. Those earlier overpayments were corrected in 2003 and 2006. While the error was and is again being corrected, one must ask just how it is possible for billions of dollars to go unnoticed for a few years! When fully corrected these monies will definitely offset the Postal Service deficit for 2010 and if need be the deficit in 2011.

At present most of the issues pertaining to postal issues have been put on the back burner. That’s not to say that they’re not going to be dealt with or that there are not important, it’s just that the Health Care issue has taken center stage at this time. As more information becomes available I will definitely pass it along to all concerned.

From Feb 19-21, 2010 the APWU of Wisconsin hosted the 4-State Caucus in Madison, WI. Representatives from all four states; North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin attended this event. There

were numerous APWU National Officers who gave classes and spoke on important issues affecting **ALL** postal workers. One of the discussions was the possibility of “Five-Day mail delivery”. This would hurt the postal service not only as a loss of jobs but also the loss of the customer service the public has come to enjoy. I would like to say that I thought the break-out classes, (which were done on Saturday Morning) the small groups that were assembled to each work on a specific area of concern in the national agreement worked out very well.

While at the Four-State Caucus the delegates raised \$1600 for COPA by way of various items that were raffled off. One interesting note; the 50/50 raffle generated \$520.00 which is 260.00 for COPA and of course 260.00 for the lucky ticket holder, **BUT, NOBODY** claimed the 260.00 so **ALL of the money (520.00) went to COPA** thereby making it a grand total of **\$2120.00** that was raised for COPA. Thanks to all who purchased tickets.

Recently, I received some information from Janice Kelble the APWU Grassroots Coordinator from the APWU National Union. It seems that Whirlpool Corporation (A Multibillion Dollar Corporation) is now planning to move 1,100 jobs (Mostly Union) from the plant in Evansville, IN. to a new

plant in (guess where) . . . Mexico! Whirlpool is spending 110 Million Dollars to build this new plant. Just think of all the jobs that Whirlpool would be helping to create if they spent the \$110 million dollars to build a new plant **in the community of Evansville, IN**. Just think of how that would impact (positively) in the community of Evansville, IN. Let’s not forget that just recently Whirlpool received some 19-million dollars as part of the **American Recovery and Reinstatement Act**.

Let’s help our union brothers and sisters at IUE-CWA, just as we would ask them to call/write for us on issues affecting our jobs.

Please call Whirlpool Corp. at **1-800-705-7083**. Tell the company: Keep it made in America and save our jobs. You can also go online and you will find a form where you can fill in the blanks and electronically send it. The e-mail address is; [www.unionvoice.org/campaign/whirlpool](http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/whirlpool).

In closing I would like to thank the **Madison, Wisconsin Area Local** for hosting the Four State Caucus. Also, I would like to thank the APWU Auxiliary for all of their hard work at this event and of course a thank you to locals who attended. See you at the Wisconsin State Convention. Take Care.

## APWU Of Madison, Wisconsin Hosts Four State Caucus . . .

*continued from page 1*

nearing this is a time all local unions should be thinking about their LMOU as well. Since excessing has become almost a guarantee, this is a time when you can get language in your LMOU addressing issues leading to excessing, for instance what determines when a position should be reposted, i.e. PPA changes, days off, hour changes, or whether a person would have the right to accept a job with changes that go beyond what is laid out.

Rough roads are ahead for many but as

long as the contract is followed and you get the appropriate information from your Union leaders we will get through this. We are very lucky to have one of the strongest Unions in the Nation we enjoy many benefits that non-bargaining workplaces would love to have. In the near future we need to be aware and elect the appropriate Union leaders to get us through this and pave the way for our future. Elect someone who is in this for the greater good of the membership and our Union will stay Strong.

# 4-State Caucus A Success

Delegates at work during the recent 4-State Caucus hosted by **Madison**, Wisconsin Area Local American Postal Workers Union. APWU members from North and South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin come together to hammer out resolutions for the upcoming National Convention to be held in Detroit later this year. The meetings are

very important for each Local to participate because it forges the future for their local membership as well as the rest of the APWU. Anyone not thinking it is not worth spending the money from the Treasury for this event as well as the State and National Conventions are truly mistaken. *NOTE: BADGER BULLETIN PHOTOS BY: RENEE HEANEY*



# Joyce Richards Memorial Scholarship Program Rules For 2010

**Sponsored by the APWU Wisconsin AUXILIARY**

There shall be one (1) or more scholarships of \$250.00 each.

1. The funds for these scholarships are to be raised by the APWU Wisconsin **Auxiliary**.
2. This scholarship is for graduating high school seniors only.
3. The student must prove their acceptance to an accredited University, College, Trade, Technical and/or vocational School not later than September 30, 2010.
4. The student must have maintained a "C" or 2.0 grade average over their high school curriculum. Verification of grades and graduation must be supplied before payments are made.
5. **At least one parent or legal guardian must have been a member of the APWU Wisconsin AUXILIARY** in good standing for a minimum of **six months** immediately and consecutively preceding the deadline date for application; as well as a minimum of **six months** following the award drawing when selected, except in the case of death of a member.
6. The Scholarship Committee shall consist of up to five (5) members. Two (2) of these members shall consist of the current elected President and Secretary-Treasurer of the APWU Wisconsin Auxiliary. The President of the APWU WISCONSIN Auxiliary shall appoint the remaining members.
7. The Committee shall be convened by July 15, 2010 or the Monday thereafter. The Committee Chairman will have verified all the membership qualifications by this date.

8. The submission deadline for scholarship applications is **JULY 9, 2010**. The drawings shall be held at the July 2010 APWU Wisconsin Auxiliary Scholarship Committee Meeting.
9. The Committee, upon verification of each application, shall place said applications in plain "like type" envelopes and the envelopes are to be placed in a drawing container. There shall be one (1) winner and an alternative drawn. If funds permit there shall be more than one winner and alternative drawn.
10. The scholarships will be paid to the school scholarship offices. The scholarship must be used within the following scholastic year.
11. The selected students(s) shall submit, to the Committee Chairman, proof of their full time enrollment in the school of their choice as set forth in rule number four (4). Payment shall be made upon the receipt of verifications.
12. All disputes concerning the Scholarship Program shall be submitted to the Committee Chairperson within thirty (30) days of the drawing, in written form. They shall be answered in writing within fifteen (15) days.
13. These rules governing the JOYCE RICHARDS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND-sponsored by the APWU Wisconsin **Auxiliary** can only be amended, changed, or deleted once a year at the fall meeting of the Scholarship Committee.
14. Only one application per student will be allowed.



## Joyce Richards Memorial Scholarship Application

\*\* This scholarship Application is offered to Current Graduating High School Seniors, whose Parent or Legal Guardian is a **member** in good standing of the APWU Wisconsin **Auxiliary**.

**THIS APPLICATION MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE "JOYCE RICHARDS SCHOLARSHIP" COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON:**

**DIANE GREEN  
2547 S 92ND ST  
WEST ALLIS, WI 53227-2311**

**NO LATER THAN 4:00 P.M. MONDAY, JULY 9, 2010**

**One application per student**

\*\*Applicants must have maintained a "C" Average throughout their High School Curriculum.

Transcript of same will be requested of winning applicants.

**\*\*APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Scholarship Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*APWU WISCONSIN AUXILIARY MEMBER INFORMATION**

Parent's Name (or Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* JOYCE RICHARDS SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION**

(To be completed by APWU WI **Auxiliary** Committee Chairman Only)

Date and Time of Application Receipt: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Verification: \_\_\_\_\_

Verified By: \_\_\_\_\_

APWU of Wisconsin  
John E. Durben, Editor  
PO Box 10021  
Green Bay, WI 54307

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED