



The Badger Bulletin

The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

Volume 42 No. 4

2007 PPA Award Winner

July-August, 2009

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



Happy Summer and Hello from John Akey's home local (Wausau, WI). As most of you know we have a big convention coming up in August. Now is a more important time than ever to get together and learn how to weather the postal storm that's brewing. Now more than ever management is attacking the Union. Excessing and changing of jobs is taking its toll on member's beliefs about our Union. That is why I encourage any who are able to attend the Akey Seminar to come and educate yourself and let your voice be heard.

2009 John Akey Seminar

CLASS SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

Friday August 14th;

9:00 a.m. to Noon:

- Clerk Craft Roundtable
- MVS Roundtable
- Sec/Treasurer Survival (All Day class)
- Basic OWCP (all Day Class)
- Maintenance Roundtable
- Support Services Roundtable

1:00 p.m.:

- Grievance Writing
- Fitness for Duty
- Parliamentary Procedure
- OSHA and You

Saturday August 15th:

9:00 am to Noon:

- Stewards Rights
- Excessing Redux
- Local Safety and Health
- Holidays/Overtime
- National Reassessment Program
- Retirement

1:00 p.m.:

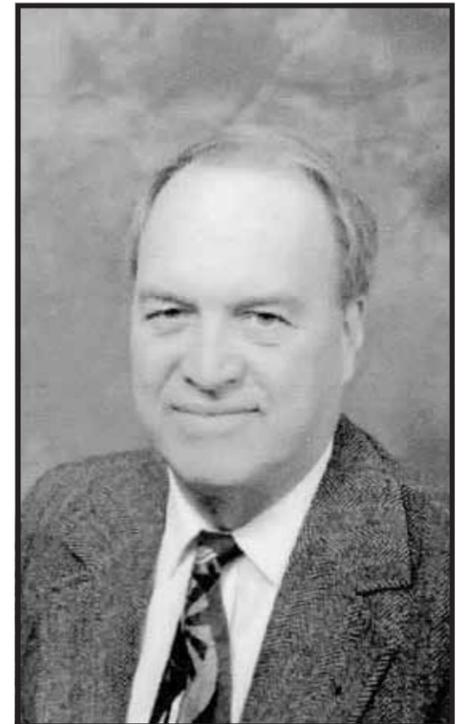
- Subcontracting 101.2
- Developing Interview Skills
- Energizing Membership
- Dealing with OIG
- I Remember When
- Current Legislative Issues

If you have any questions on attending please talk with your local President, President Kelly Heaney from Wausau Area Local(715-571-8981) or feel free to call me as well (715-370-1738.) If you are already planning on attending don't forget your wallets we will have many raffles for COPA and I'm sure we will have the traditional Texas Hold-em Tournamnet as well.

Hope everyone has a fun and safe summer and I hope to see you at the Seminar.

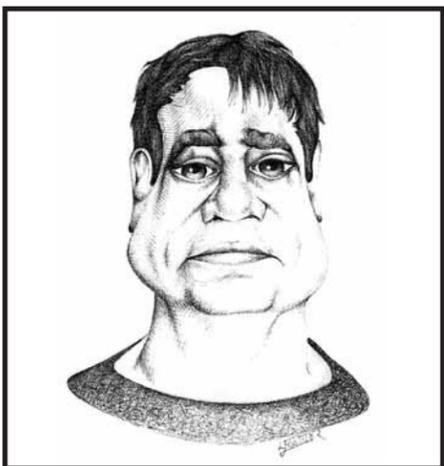
Editor's Note: More information regarding the 2009 John Akey Seminar can be found on our website at: <http://www.apwuwi.com/>.

(Also please note that Renee's dog's name is AVA.)



John Akey

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD



Recently I attended the National Presidents Conference in Virginia Beach, Virginia. As always, I want to thank the membership for allowing me to attend these conferences. A lot of valuable information can be gathered at these conferences. As in the past I will try to pass on to you what I learned at this conference. There was much discussion about the state of the USPS and the APWU. National officers were on hand to give us their reaction to our discussions on both topics.

First let us talk about the USPS plans to address our dire financial condition. The USPS continues to excess employees. I recently attended an excessing meeting

- USPS Issues -

in Milwaukee. The Milwaukee PO has informed 83 clerks and 20 maintenance employees that their services are no longer needed in Milwaukee. Attrition will reduce these numbers somewhat but the number is still significant. With all the excessing going on around the country the question is will there be anywhere to excess employees to.

The so called Tour Compression continues. President Burriss states that the only grievance we have to fight Tour Compression is that we weren't notified in a timely manner. Small Offices, branches and stations are not immune from the fallout from these tough economic times. The USPS continues to implement the Delivery Unit Relocation program. When offices delivery units are combined usually clerks are relocated also or their hours are significantly reduced. We must be vigilant that if offices are combined postmasters in the losing or receiving offices are not doing more work than they have done historically. If they are we will file a grievance on the 1.6B violation.

The USPS is currently identifying stations and branches within Level 24 installations and above that can be combined. The

APWU position is that this goes against the consolidation memo in the contract. If this is happening in your office you must react strongly to stop it. It appears the USPS plans to open contract stations in these former USPS stations and branches.

President Burriss also commented on many issues relevant to the state of the USPS. He stated that if HR22 does not pass soon the USPS will not be able to meet its financial obligations by the end of Fiscal 2009. Burriss reiterated that the financial condition of the USPS is due only to the loss in volume due to the economy and only an increase in volume can save the USPS. He says it is a slap in the face to all APWU members that the last rate case gave increased discounts to large mailers. We must fight to get our bar coding volume back. President Burriss also stated that without our current no layoff clause up to 40,000 employees could have been laid off. As far as concessions Burriss said "There will be no concessions in this contract period! We should not be expected to bear the major brunt of the pain. Pain must be spread evenly before any talk of concessions".

The National APWU has asked for

2005-2009 data for hours in 1.6B offices. If PMRs have been hired where there used to be clerks national grievances will be filed at the regional levels. The APWU is taking the position that employees excessed to another craft should take their no layoff status with them. Finally, President Burriss stated unless we retain them by arbitration these items will most likely be gone: Annual Leave Exchange, The Consolidation Memo, No Layoff Clause, and No PTFs in 200 YEAR Offices.

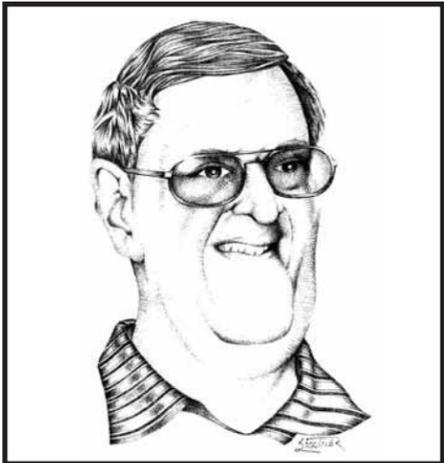
APWU ISSUES

It is no surprise that with the loss of members due to attrition the finances of the APWU have become an issue. This has been the case for the last few years. However, no one seems to be able to come to a consensus on what should be done. On top of that we are getting mixed signals from the National APWU on the state of our finances. Depending on who and when you talk to them we are either broke or flush with cash. The one thing everyone does agree with is that with decreasing membership comes less revenue.

continued on page 3

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION . . . BY RICK GALLO, DIRECTOR

USPS Struggles



As we go to press with this issue of the "Badger Bulletin" USPS is dealing with monumental struggles. In large facilities level 24 and above; USPS is currently reviewing operations to see whether or not some of these facilities can be consolidated. Of the 3,243 offices, branches and stations involved, already 740 have been identified for closing or consolidation in some fashion. In small offices around Wisconsin, USPS is either in the process, or has already consolidated by moving rural routes to a neighboring office for delivery, and leaving only the window and box section remaining in the original office, which is then largely performed by the postmaster.

No matter how you look at it, these changes often have a devastating effect upon APWU members and their families. As workers, we have a very serious stake in the health of the Postal Service. Similarly, as workers we cannot help but notice the significant declines in mail volumes. Automation units that normally ran significant volumes are setting new records for low mail volume, where only a few years earlier, they were setting their records at the high end of the scale. The significance of the change is scary stuff! In most cases, we have roots in our communities, and we live somewhat close to our jobs. When USPS implements changes that alter our work site, or our hours, or what we do during the course of our work day; it can have a very devastating effect on us.

Contractually, APWU has established various levels of protection in our contract.

There is an orderly procedure for accomplishing these changes. That procedure is designed for, and intended to minimize the impact upon employees. Having said that, however, it does not completely insulate employees from the devastating effects these changes can bring.

When briefing APWU about the examination of consolidations in level 24 and above office, USPS stated, "These offices have experienced serious volume, transaction, and revenue declines . . . Many factors including impact on employees, service standards, cost savings, customer access, environmental impact, real estate values, and long-term needs of the service would be taken into account . . . We would expect these local manager reviews to result in a significant increase in the number of lease terminations and/or facility disposals." [Emphasis added.] USPS also conceded that among the reasons for closing stations and branches is that there are fewer "procedural requirements" for closing stations and branches than for small post offices. They also said that 34 percent of current postal revenue comes through alternative access, and that they are striving to increase that percentage. As a result, they also changed the rules for Contracting for Contract Postal Units. APWU has filed an appropriate challenge at the national level.

You should also know, that back in May, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report titled "U.S. Postal Service – Network Rightsizing Needed to Help Keep USPS Financially Viable."

The GAO study concluded that due to

mail-volume decline, the Postal Service will suffer a loss of more than \$6 billion in FY 2009; with similar projections for mail volume and revenue losses for FY 2010.

The GAO criticized the USPS for failing to take the necessary steps to remain viable, such as "rightsizing its retail and mail processing networks by consolidating operations and closing unnecessary facilities," and "reducing the size of its workforce."

"The USPS has substantial excess capacity in its mail processing network," the report says. "In the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, Congress recognized USPS has more facilities than it needs, and strongly encouraged streamlining its networks."

Perhaps even scarier than the changes that might appear on the horizon, is the fact that those changes will be crafted by our existing postal management. Now, after 37 years working at the post office, I have seen many downright stupid decisions. I have seen some of these managers promoted for some downright stupid reasons. Many of these individuals have little or no integrity, and in my opinion, even less brains. These are the people responsible for making the decisions that could alter the very lives of thousands of postal workers. It is often difficult for the union to reason with management, and the set of potential changes we are facing is, indeed, monumental. But the union is the only thing between the workers and the changes. We can use the support of every member as we face these challenges. Now IS the time to support your union!



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.



LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

It's Time Again To Beat That Dead Horse

First off, I would like to say that I hope everyone is having a safe and fun summer. The summer months may mean a time for fun but your union is very active especially when it comes to raising money for COPA.

I know I know everyone hates to talk about it but the facts are CLEAR! We all need to have our union brothers and sisters contribute to COPA (Committee on Political Action). COPA is the best way for ALL postal workers to have their voice heard in the upper echelons of government. The NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers), Mail handler Union, Rural Carriers Union and even NAPS (National Association of Postal Supervisors) donate monies to COPA. You can ACTUALLY do this for only \$1.00 per pay period. Just imagine if ALL APWU members gave just \$1.00 per pay period, the results would be phenomenal! You can make it easy by giving to COPA through payroll deduction. To contribute through Postal Ease just follow the instructions listed below.

1. Add your Social Security Number to this 8-digit COPA account number (29320001) in line 11 below. This 17-digit number (no hyphens) will enable the APWU to identify this contribution as having come from you.

2. Dial 1-877-477-3273 (1-877-4PS-EASE)

3. Press #1 for PostalEase.

4. When prompted, enter your employee identification number.

5. When prompted again, enter your USPS PIN number.

6. When prompted, choose option #2 (to select payroll allotments)

7. When prompted, choose option #1 (to select type of allotment)

8. When prompted, press #2 to continue

9. When prompted, press #3 to "add" the allotment

10. When prompted, add routing number: 054001220

11. When prompted, enter the COPA account number: 29320001, followed by your Social Security Number (no hyphens, 17 digits total). Press #1 if correct.

12. When prompted, press #1 for checking.

13. When prompted for the dollar amount of the allotment, enter \$____.00, your choice for a biweekly allotment. Press #1 if correct.

14. When prompted, press #1 to process. At this point you'll be provided with a confirmation number and the start date of the allotment. Record the confirmation number _____ and start date _____.

15. Press #1 to repeat, or press #9 to end the call.

NOTE: To obtain your PIN: Call PostalEase at 1-877-477-3273. Press #1 for PostalEase. When prompted, enter your Social Security Number. When prompted for your PIN, pause, then press #2. Your PIN will be mailed to your address of record the next business day. Take Care.

— THE LIGHTER SIDE —

Groups of Americans were traveling by tour bus through Holland. As they stopped at a cheese farm, a young guide led them through the process of cheese making, explaining that goat's milk was used. She showed the group a lovely hillside where many goats were grazing. 'These' she explained, 'Are the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produce.' She then asked, 'What do you do in America with your old goats?'

A spry old gentleman answered, 'They send us on bus tours!'

"American Made" Tee Shirt Is Made In Mexico, J. C. Penney's Says It's Meant To Show Pride In America

by Rich Kline

Most of us would assume that a tee shirt lettered "AMERICAN MADE" across its chest would be made in America. But that's not the case with J. C. Penney's tee shirt so decorated. It's made in Mexico.

When a 78-year-old retired clothing manu-

facturer discovered this canard he was incensed. It seems that Joe Allen's company was driven out of business by unfair foreign competition.

Allen brought the matter to the attention of the Alliance for American Manufacturing which contacted J.C. Penney.

Penney's spokesperson replied to the

AAM that "American Made" refers to the wearer of the garment, not the shirt. J. C. Penney told Business Week the shirt will remain on store shelves throughout the summer. Penney's says the tee is "intended to evoke our American lifestyle and pride in being American." Huh?!

If you want to share your views on this with J. C. Penney, please call Kelly Sanchez at 972-431-3961 or email her at ksanch18@jcpenny.com. If you prefer, contact for Myron Ullman, J.C. Penney CEO, at 972-431-8200. —Source: *Union Label & Service*

Trades Department

Wal-Mart Lowers Prescription Drug Prices By Putting Their Customers At Risk

The cost of prescription drugs has been a recurrent theme in health care reform, and Wal-Mart has promoted their \$4 generic drugs in an attempt to address the issue. However, the group "Wake Up Wal-Mart" has released a report saying that Wal-Mart's medication comes from Ranbaxy - a disrespected Indian drug maker - and that

Wal-Mart actually profits off these foreign investments. The FDA and the Department of Justice have repeatedly investigated Ranbaxy for insufficient contamination policies and for issuing false records, and eventually banned the importation of drugs manufactured at two Ranbaxy facilities. According to the Department of Justice,

Wal-Mart's supplier is responsible for introducing potentially "subpotent, superpotent, or adulterated" drugs into the market. Medications used by millions of Wal-Mart shoppers could have contained active ingredients from unapproved sources, in unapproved blends, and in amounts weaker than FDA-approved doses. Despite these

investigations, Wal-Mart has given Ranbaxy the "Outstanding Supplier Award." Stated **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance, "Wal-Mart has been putting consumers at great risk. 'Safe' and 'affordable' are not mutually exclusive."

—Source: *Alliance for Retired Americans*
Friday Report

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD

- USPS Issues -

continued from page 1

Some delegates to the NPC figured the only way to address our financial issues was through a national referendum where all members vote on an issue. A national referendum must be presented by a local and have 26,000 signatures attached to it. The possible referendum issues brought forth at the NPC were dues increase, APWU restructuring, and private sector organizing. After much debate and after President Burris spoke the referendum idea lost momentum. This does not mean the referendum idea will not resurface in the future, but the number of signatures needed to make a referendum possible seems to be an obstacle almost impossible to get around.

The NPC was addressed by Secretary Treasurer Terry Stapleton and President Bill Burris. What follows is a brief synopsis on what they reported.

TERRY STAPLETON

The APWU currently has 198,000 members. That is 5000 fewer than last year. Every 5000 member loss means a loss of 1 million dollars in revenue. We have lost 1/3 of our membership since 1998. National staff has been reduced by 1/3 since the year 2000. This year we are on pace to be 3.3 million in the black. Our organization is set up to represent 300,000 members. Adjustments should be made to reflect our current membership.

PRESIDENT BURRIS

We should be over 3 million dollars in the black by the end of this year. We get 6 million dollars from non dues revenue. We will have a budget this year that shows true cost versus income. We can cut another \$4-500,000 from the budget. We need a 50 cent per pay period dues increase. In 2011 our building will be paid for which the savings can make up for losing 30,000 members. I do not believe we need to restructure and will fight any attempts to do so. I don't believe it

will achieve the desired result of saving the money we need to save. I believe you are sending conflicting messages to me when you vote at convention for things that cost more money and then you ask for cuts to be made. You vote to make me fill positions and then ask for restructuring. I ask that at the next convention that you do not impose any additional costs. Cuts in staff should proceed in this order:

1. Employees
2. Senior Staff
3. Elected Officers

We should approach our financial situation from convention to convention and not

try to protect our finances for 10 years. On private sector organizing I do not believe the results are there. I will not spend money just because it is in the fund. The National APWU will no longer pay for MAL representation at Step I and Step II. The constitution states that this is the job of the state organizations. Many state organizations do this already.

Please be aware that I am reporting to you what was said by Secretary Treasurer Stapleton and President Burris. It doesn't mean I agree with everything that was said. In fact, reading this you can see that they don't agree with each other in some matters

such as restructuring. The finances of the APWU will always be an issue. I hope we don't have to go into deficit spending before we can all agree what should be done.

WELL DONE JOHN

John Durben has been appointed to the Executive Council of the Area Labor Federation of the AFL-CIO John also is the President of the ABA and an active member of the PPA as well as the Editor of the Badger Bulletin. Thank you John for being such a great representative of the APWU of Wisconsin.

Thanks for listening.

2009 APWU-ABA Scholarship Winner

On behalf of our 85,000 members and executive board we are happy to announce the winner of the 2009 APWABA Scholarship: REBECCA WESELOH the daughter of APWU-ABA Member, JAMYE WESELOH

of the EUREKA, CA local will receive the \$1,000.00 award. Much thanks to all 195 applicants!

The scholarship honors both Thomas Hartos and Michael Tosches -both long time

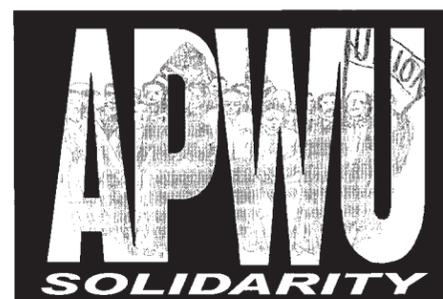
union activists who walked the picket line during the great postal strike which was the catalyst for collective bargaining and many, if not most of the benefits that some take for granted. Congratulations to our winner!!!

Disability Retirement

Disability Retirement is for those workers that are not physically capable of performing the duties of your job. You have to meet the criteria and your computation is different than the normal computation for full retirement. For those under the FERS program, you must file for Social Security disability the same time you process your federal disability application. All disability annuity payments are taxed. If you are receiving payments from the Department of Labor for OWCP, then you are not taxed. There is a difference which many do not realize. Disability is not just something you want and file for, you must qualify. It can take many months to have approved but your retirement

effective date will remain the same once you are in a non-pay status and have applied for disability.

Source: From an article by: Yoggi Riley
(The Newscaster)







The APWU of Wisconsin are Proud 100% Members of the APW-Accident Benefit Association. REMEMBER: If you are a Member-at Large and you pay dues to APWU of WI. This benefit also belongs to you.

<http://www.apw-aba.org/>

#1901-009

— APWU Legislative Watch —

Listed below are four key legislative issues that are currently being monitored by our Legislative Department. APWU supports these Bills and in some cases still seeking support from our Legislators on these Bills. If your Legislators are not currently co-sponsors of this important legislation please contact them and ask them to do so.

SUPPORT HR 22 USPS NEEDS FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY

The Postal Service is facing severe economic challenges. Without relief, the USPS will be forced to make drastic changes to its business model that would devastate employees and cut service to customers. H.R. 22, a bill introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. John McHugh and Rep. Danny K. Davis, would provide some much needed help.

H.R. 22 would modify a provision of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which requires the Postal Service to make annual payments ranging from \$5.4 billion to \$5.8 billion from 2007 to 2016 to "pre-fund" healthcare benefits for future retirees.

H.R. 22 would allow the Postal Service to pay its retiree health premiums from its Retiree Health Benefits Fund, rather than from its operating budget.

Please ask your U.S. representative and senators to support financial relief and flexibility for the USPS. Without it, the Postal Service will be forced to consider drastic action.

FMLA RESTORATION ACT

The FMLA Restoration Act (H.R. 2161), introduced in the House by Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH) on April 29, would reverse changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act regulations that were imposed by the Bush administration on Jan. 16, 2009, just four days before he left office.

The Bush Administration regulations undermine the 1993 law by making it harder for workers to use FMLA leave and by permitting employers to intrude on workers' medical privacy.

As a result of the new rules, employers are obtaining medical information from workers' doctors without their consent and rejecting previously accepted FMLA certifications. In addition, workers are being forced to visit

their doctors repeatedly for re-certifications at their own expense.

If enacted into law, Rep. Shea-Porter's bill would nullify the rules that weaken the Family and Medical Leave Act. It would nullify regulations that:

- Allow employers to contact an employee's healthcare providers without the employees' knowledge or permission;
- Require employees to provide more medical documentation about their conditions and to provide it more often;
- Permit employers to request FMLA re-certification every six months in conjunction with an absence, at the employee's expense, and
- Define "Serious Health Condition" more narrowly.

SUPPORT HR658

Please write your U.S. Representative and ask them to support HR 658, a bill introduced by Rep. Albio Sires of New Jersey. Sires' bill, amends title 39, United States Code, to "modify the procedures governing the closure or consolidation of postal facilities."

HR 658 would prevent the USPS from closing or consolidating a postal facility until they have conducted an investigation "to assess the need for the proposed closure or consolidation and provide appropriate notice to the persons served by such facility to ensure that such persons will have an opportunity to present their views."

In their decision-making process, USPS shall consider:

1. the effect such closing or consolidation would have on the community served by such postal facility;
2. the effect such closing or consolidation would have on employees of the Postal Service employed at the facility; and
3. whether such closing or consolidation would provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining.

Current cosponsors include Representatives Rothman (NJ), Payne (NJ), Ortiz (TX), Cardoza (CA), Murphy (CT), DeLauro (CT), Stupak (MI), Woolsey (CA), Sherman (CA), Pastor (AZ), Lee (CA), Courtney (CT), Wu (WA), Space (OH), Ackerman (NY), Grijalva (AZ), DeFazio (OR), Connolly (VA), Murphy (PA), and McGovern (MA).

COSPONSOR HR1686

Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Stephen Lynch, has introduced in the 111th Congress a bill, HR 1686, which would restrict the postal service's ability to contract out the work of postal employees. HR 1686 would require the USPS to negotiate with the union if over a 12-month period the contract:

1. Would involve at least 50 work years of work, or
2. Cost the postal service \$5,000,000 or more.

Contact your Representatives today and urge them to support HR 1686.

Note: The information above is from the APWU Congressional information Center

Some Things To Think About

by John Smeekens, Veterans Director (*The Michigan Messenger*)

REFLECTIONS

The average age of the military man is 19 years. He is a short haired, tight muscled kid who, under normal circumstances is considered by society as half man, half boy. Not yet dry behind the ears, not old enough to buy a beer, but old enough to die for his country. He never really cared much for work and he would rather wax his own car than wash his Dad's, but he has never collected unemployment either. He's a recent High School graduate; he was probably an average student, pursued some form of sports activities, drives a ten year old jalopy, and has a steady girlfriend that either broke up with him when he left, or swears to be waiting when he returns home from half a world away.

He listens to rock and roll or hip-hop or rap or jazz or swing and possibly even a 155mm howitzer. He is 10 or 15 pounds lighter now than when he was at home because he is working or fighting from before dawn to well after dusk. He has trouble concentrating, thus letter writing is a pain for him, but he can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less time in the dark. He can recite to you the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively if he must. He digs foxholes and latrines and can apply first aid like a professional. He can march until he is told to stop, or stop until he is told to march. He obeys orders instantly and without hesitation, but he is not without spirit or individual dignity. He is self-sufficient. He has two sets of fatigues: he washes one and wears the other. He keeps his canteens full and his feet dry. He sometimes forgets to brush his teeth, but never to clean his rifle. He can cook his own meals, mend his own clothes, and fix his own hurts.

If you're thirsty, he'll share his water with you; if you are hungry, his food. He may even share his ammunition with you in the midst of battle when you run low, but he'll remind you to pack more the next time. He has learned to use his hands like weapons and his weapons are like they were his hands. He can save your life or take it, because that's his job. He will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half



the pay, and still find ironic humor in it all. He has seen more suffering and death than he should have in his short lifetime. He has wept in public and in private, for friends who have fallen in combat and is unashamed. He feels every note of the National Anthem vibrate through his body while at rigid attention, while tempering the burning desire to "square-away" those around him who haven't bothered to stand, remove their hat, or even stop talking. In an odd twist, day in and day out, far from home, he defends their right to be disrespectful.

Just as his Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather did, he is paying the price for our freedom. Beardless or not, he is not a boy. He is the American Fighting Man that has kept this country free for over 200 years. He has asked nothing in return, except our friendship and understanding. Remember him, always, for he has earned our respect and admiration with his blood.

And now we even have women over there in danger, doing their part in this tradition of going to War when our nation calls us to do so. So don't think it unrealistic, to change the gender of the masculine terms above, to the feminine terms.

Editor's Note: Although Memorial Day has come and gone, I feel it is appropriate to constantly think about our Troops.

10 Worst Mistakes Federal Employees And Retirees Make

1. Failure to elect survivor benefits for a spouse who has his/her own income or retirement.
2. Pick up your first retirement check, sell your house and head for a warmer climate.
3. Failure to consider your spouse's routine when you retire.
4. Failure to realistically review your life insurance needs at retirement.
5. Expecting to receive a full Social Security retirement based on your total Social Security earnings.
6. Not electing a survivor benefit for a spouse--either at retirement or upon marriage (remarriage) after retirement.

7. Failure to meet the requirement to have FEHB coverage for 5 years before retiring in order to retain the coverage.
8. Electing a self only FEBH enrollment (when spouse has other non-federal health plan coverage).
9. Enrolling in the High Option of a fee-for-service plan when the Low (or Standard) Option provides good benefits at a substantially lower premium.
10. Two federal retirees elect two self only fee-for-service enrollments instead of one family enrollment.

For More Information go to: www.NARFE.org



Unprecedented View Inside The Prison-Like Conditions At High-Tech Sweatshop In China

Producing for HP, Dell, Lenovo, Microsoft and IBM

The National Labor Committee (NLC) has released a 60 . . . page report, *High Tech Misery in China*, documenting the grueling hours, low wages and draconian disciplinary measures at the Meitai factory in southern China. The 2,000 mostly-young women workers produce keyboards and other equipment for Hewlett-Packard, Dell, Lenovo, Microsoft and IBM. Along with worker interviews, photographs of primitive factory and dorm conditions and extensive internal company documents were smuggled out of the factory.

Workers sit on hard wooden stools as 500 computer keyboards an hour move down the assembly line, 12 hours a day, seven days a week, with just two days off a month. The workers have 1.1 seconds to snap on each key, an operation repeated 3,250 times an hour, 35,750 a day, 250,250 a week and over one million times a month. The pace is relentless.

- Workers are paid 1/50th of a cent for each operation they complete.

- Workers cannot talk, listen to music or even lift their heads to look around. They must “periodically trim their nails,” or be fined. Workers needing to use the bathroom must learn to hold it until there is a break. Security guards spy on the workers, who are prohibited from putting their hands in their pockets and are searched when they leave the factory.

- All overtime is mandatory and workers are at the factory up to 87 hours a week, while earning a take home wage of just 41 cents an hour. Workers are being cheated of up to 19 percent of the wages due them.

- Ten to twelve workers share each overcrowded dorm room, sleeping on metal bunk beds and draping old sheets over their cubicles for privacy. Workers bathe using small plastic buckets and must walk down several flights of stairs to fetch hot water.

- Workers are locked in the factory compound four days a week and prohibited from even taking a walk.

- For breakfast the workers receive a thin rice gruel. On Fridays they receive a small chicken leg and foot to symbolize “their improving life.”

- Workers are instructed to “love the company like your home” . . . “continuously striving for perfection” . . . and to spy on and “actively monitor each other.”

- China provides large subsidies to its exporters. In 2008, the U.S. trade deficit with China in advanced technology products is expected to reach \$74 billion. There are 1.4 million electronic assembly jobs left in the U.S. — paying \$12.72 to \$14.41 an hour—which may be lost due to China’s low wages and repression of worker rights.

One Meitai worker summed up the general feeling in the factory: “*I feel like I am serving a prison sentence . . . The factory is forever pressing down on our heads and will not tolerate even the tiniest mistake. When working, we work*

continuously. When we eat, we have to eat with lightning speed . . . The security guards are like policemen watching over prisoners. We’re really livestock and shouldn’t be called workers.”

God help us if the labor-management

relations being developed in China become the new low standard for the rest of the world. The \$200 personal computer and \$22.99 keyboard may seem like a great bargain, but they come at a terrible cost. The low wages and lack of worker rights’

protections in China are leading the race to the bottom in the global sweatshop economy, where there are no winners.

Note: This full report is available at: <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=613> — Source: 101 FACTS

Rolando Elevated To Letter Carriers’ Presidency

WASHINGTON - Fredric V. Rolando assumed the presidency of the 300,000-member National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO) today, following the retirement of William H. Young after more than 6 1/2 years as head of the postal union.

Rolando, 56, a member of Sarasota, Florida NALC Branch 2148, moved up from his position as the union’s executive vice president under terms of the union’s constitution.

The new president began his postal career 31 years ago as a letter carrier in South Miami, Florida. Holder of a degree in criminology and psychology from Florida International University, he became active in the union because of what he said was the antagonistic way management treated letter carriers.

Recently, Rolando has focused on working with officials of the U.S. Postal Service to restructure delivery routes of mail carriers in a manner that protected their contrac-

tual rights as employees while allowing the Postal Service to have flexibility to meet the financial challenges posed by changing communications technology and the economic crisis.

He was first elected to national office as Director of City Delivery by acclamation at the 2002 NALC Convention in Philadelphia, having been appointed to that post in February 2002 by former President Vincent R. Sombrotto to fill a vacancy.

As a member of South Florida Branch 1071, his first union post was as a shop steward in South Miami where he worked. When Rolando relocated to Sarasota in 1984, he soon became chief steward there, and in 1988 was elected president of Sarasota Branch 2148. Rolando later served as director of education for the Florida State Association of Letter Carriers and as a full-time Regional Administrative Assistant for NALC’s Atlanta Region before coming to Washington as a national officer.



Rolando and his wife, Jolene, currently reside in Fredericksburg, Virginia. They have two daughters and two sons.

— Source: NALC

Never Sign A PS Form 2488

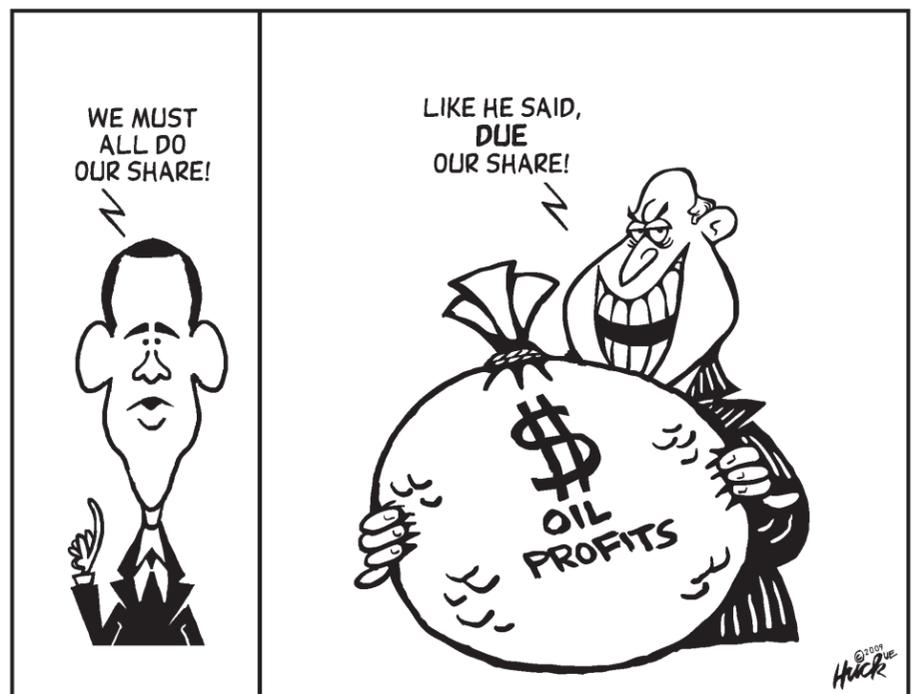
This is an extract of APWU Local 458 regarding medical records.

“When an employee is injured at work, many forms will be placed in front of the employee to sign. Most will be the standard forms. One will be slipped in and it is PS Form 2488. This is an authorization for medical report. Under no circumstances should this form be signed. It gives postal management the authority to dig into all your medical records from birth until today. Most of this medical information postal management has no business knowing. If management says an employee needs to sign this form in order to process their claim easier, this is totally false. This is your private record and management has no right to do it. Do not allow them this access.”

As a reminder, don’t ever let anyone have access to your medical records at your doctor’s office either, especially for an on the job injury. Even though privacy act rules are pretty stringent, don’t make the mistake of allowing anyone access to your medical records other than someone

you trust such as your spouse, parents, or children, in the case of an emergency.

— Source: As printed in *Montgomery Echoes*



Labor Secretary Solis: 'Level the Playing Field'

by Seth Michaels

We've said it before and we'll say it again: Elections have consequences. Speaking today in an interview with The Washington Post, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis re-affirmed the administration's commitment to passing the Employee Free Choice Act and restoring workers' freedom to form unions and bargain.

Here's what Solis had to say about why we need the Employee Free Choice Act:

I think it helps to level the playing field because, in many cases, workers have been disadvantaged. They've been intimidated, they've been harassed, and we have case after case after case that we can look at. And you probably hear from the opposing side, that they will say, "Well, no, there have been successes where people have

been able to organize, and they have been able to push forward a unionization." But when you look at the attempts that have been made over the past few years...there have been barriers that have been put up. And I think that the past administration was not very favorable for unions. They were not supportive in many ways.

A video of the interview with Solis, which includes a discussion of green jobs, the unemployment rate, worker training and wages, is available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/video/2009/06/30/VI2009063000992.html?sid=ST2009063000771>, and a transcript is available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/vop_solis_transcript.html.



It's refreshing to have an advocate for working families in such a critical position.

Solis is the child of two union members and has a record in Congress of supporting workers—including co-sponsoring the Employee Free Choice Act.

Make no mistake, this is going to be a tough fight against determined corporate opposition, but the efforts of working families in 2006 and 2008 have given us strong pro-worker majorities in Congress, a president who will sign the Employee Free Choice Act and a secretary of labor who actually fights on behalf of workers.

President Barack Obama and his administration have reiterated several times their continued support for the Employee Free Choice Act. Working families won in 2008, and now it's time to make our economy work for everyone again.

— Source: AFL-CIO NOW BLOG

— Filing A Traumatic Injury —

by Randy Downard,
Human Relations Director,
The IPWU Dispatch

When our members are hurt on-the-job for the first time they are surprised by the paperwork they have to fill out. For a traumatic injury (an injury that has occurred at a specific time and place) you would fill out Form CA-1. You should ask for that form from your supervisor, and they are required by law to provide it for you.

If your Supervisor can not find a copy of the correct up-to-date form you can find one using a link off of the (APWU.org) web site. The form you fill out (CA-1) provides a 'Notice of Injury and a Claim for Benefits' The first page is filled out by the claimant or their representative, whenever you fill out a CA-1 you should seek medical attention from a qualified physician. The form contains instructions for filing, the claimant fills out the front page, the claimant's supervisor fills out the second page and the

claimant should receive a receipt signed by their Supervisor indicating that an on-the-job injury claim has been filed

There are instructions for completing Form CA-1 and the claimant should ask to see them and take time to read them. Once you fill out the CA-1 and you receive a receipt you should tell the Supervisor that you want a completed copy of the CA-1 as soon as he is done with his portion of the form. All records concerning on-the-job injuries are governed by the 'Privacy Act of 1974' so if they give you a difficult time trying to get a copy of your records, make your request in writing and cite the 'Privacy Act of 1974' you will want to call for a Union Steward. Once you receive a completed copy of the form you should check it carefully to make sure it is accurate and complete, anything that is not correct should be corrected as soon as possible and submitted to the Labor Department on behalf of the claimant.

Question 15 asks the claimant to select sick leave, annual leave, or Continuation of Pay (COP), I cannot think of a reason for a claimant to select anything other than COP. If your Supervisor tells you that they are not going to pay you COP you should document the reason they are refusing to pay, and make sure it is one of the nine reasons listed in the Supervisors instructions for filling out a CA-1. I have known Supervisors that have told claimant's that if they select COP it could take months to get paid, or that they are more likely to be disciplined, that simply is not true. COP is placed on your card like sick leave or annual leave, there is no interruption of your pay, and your COP includes night differential if your normal tour of duty falls between the hours of 6 P.M. and 6 A.M.

While you are on COP you continue to accumulate sick leave and annual leave, Sunday pay should be included if your

regular schedule includes any time from 12:01 a.m. till midnight Sunday. COP does not include over-time, and for part-time employees with different schedules on a weekly basis, they receive the average number of hours that they worked in the previous year. If you are due a step increase that should be included in your COP. COP is paid for 45 calendar days, the first day is generally paid as administrative leave and the next day after the injury is considered day one (1).

COP is administratively controlled by the Postal Service, and is grievable.

Every time a CA-1 is filled out Postal Regulations require management to fill out a 1769 (accident report) you can ask your Union Steward to review that document and check it against the CA-1 for accuracy. If management tries to discipline you call a Union steward right away. I hope that this article settles any confusion over filing a claim for an on-the job injury.

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KONOPACKI
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In order to pass the 1935 National Labor Relations Act,
Southern racist Dixiecrats demanded that domesticworkers
and farm workers be denied labor law protections.

Those racist exemptions still exist.
They should be abolished.

NLRA

Play It Safe With Exercise

Avoiding injury is important when you add physical activity to your day, especially if you're starting a new activity. Here are some suggestions:

Adults

- If you haven't exercised in awhile, start slowly and build up
- Choose activities appropriate for your fitness level
- Build up the time you spend on an activity before switching to activities that take more effort
- Use the right safety gear and sports equipment
- Choose a safe place to do your activity
- See a doctor if you have a health problem

Children

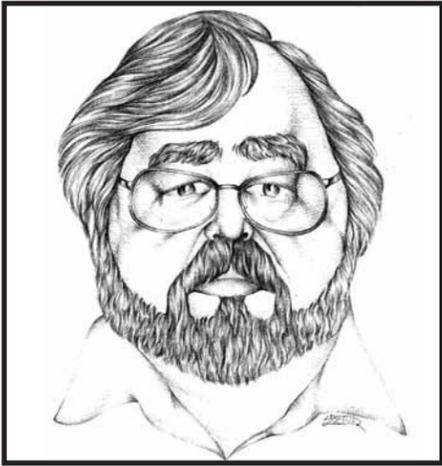
The most common sports-related injuries in children are sprains and strains, growth plate injuries, repetitive motion injuries, and heat-related illnesses. The following minimize the risk:

- Enroll your child in organized sports that are properly managed and have a commitment to injury prevention
- Wear protective gear, for example a helmet
- Warm up and cool down
- Make sure your child has access to water or a sports drink
- Know the rules of the game
- Watch out for others
- Don't play when you're injured

— Source: The Health Connection

BADGER BULLETIN BOARD

Updating The APW-ABA Website



by John E. Durben,
Editor

The next *Badger Bulletin* due date will be on September 1 for anyone that wants to or is required to submit an article for publication. If anyone has some good **clean** jokes please submit them for publication on *The Lighter Side*.

The postal service reports that the Breast Cancer Research semi-postal stamp has raised about \$68.1 million for Cancer research to date.

As President Lord mentioned in his article, I also fill the position of President of the APW-Accident Benefit Association (APWABA). I am reprinting my last article here which appeared in the *ABA Quarterly* so that it may serve to inform some of our members regarding this APWU only benefit.

WWW.APW-ABA.ORG

Recently the Organization has updated various portions of our website in an effort to make it more convenient for the members to retrieve current information regarding membership, coverage or claims.

I'd like to take this time to comment on one of the pages on the website that some of you may not be aware of. That page would be the "Downloadable Forms" page. This page as the name suggests has a list of useful ABA forms with "PDF" links attached to them. What is new is that some of these forms can be completed right on your computer. Once they are completed you can print them, sign them and then send them to us for processing. (A portion of the claim form would still be required to be completed by your attending physician.)

Below are a few of the downloadable forms and their purpose:

- **100% Local/State Discount Program... How To!** – Local and State APWU Organizations can use this form to bring a motion before your membership at a meeting to enroll into the APW-ABA in the 100% Discount Program.

- **Claim Direct Deposit Authorization** – Members can have their claim benefits deposited to their checking or savings account. This could be useful if you are disabled for a long period of time.

- **Option Transfer Form** – Active members using DCO (Premiums are deducted from their pay checks) can use this form to opt from the Value Plan to the Advantage Plan. A member's spouse may use this form too if they are already members of the Value Plan.

- **Instant Dues Check-off Application** – APWU members that are not members of a 100% Local or State Organization use this form to join the ABA and authorize DCO.

- **Spouse Enrollment Form** – An ABA member's spouse would use this form to join the Value or Advantage Plan.

- **Application for Change of Beneficiary** – ABA members use this form to change their beneficiary. A very important form for members if you have to change your beneficiary due to a change in marital status or death in the family. This is a form you may want to complete.

- **ABA Plus Application** – Self Explanatory
- **Retiree Electronic Payment Authorization Value or Advantage** – APWU Retirees may use this form to deduct their ABA dues from their bank account.

- **Retiree Electronic Payment Authorization Plus** – APWU Retirees may opt to have their ABA Plus premiums deducted directly from their bank account.

- **2009 ABA Claim Form** – This form

was recently revised and allows the member the option to complete the claim application using the various fields on their computer.

We have provided these forms and more on-line to make them more accessible to our members. Now they are only one "click" away. Next time you are surfing the internet – stop in at: www.apw-aba.org you may be surprised what you learn about your APW-ABA Plan.

APWU Local Go to Bat For EFCA

APWU members across the country are stepping up to the plate to help pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which would help level the playing field for workers who want to form unions.

Answering a call to help finance a national media campaign, APWU locals have raised more than \$25,000 so far for the AFL-CIO's Turn Around America Fund [contributors' list – PDF]. The national union also has contributed to the fund, which is dedicated to building public support for EFCA.

"This is just the beginning," said Secretary-Treasurer Terry Stapleton. "We are asking every local to make a donation."

"The Employee Free Choice Act is the most significant labor legislation in decades," he wrote in a March 2009 letter [PDF] to APWU local and state presidents co-signed by Legislative and Political Director Myke Reid. They asked locals to contribute a minimum of \$2 per member to help pay for the EFCA ad campaign.

The Employee Free Choice Act is based on a simple premise: If a majority of employees in a workplace want a union, they should be able to have one. The legislation (H.R. 1409 in the House of Representatives and S. 650 in the Senate) would:

- Require employers to recognize unions when a majority of workers sign up for union representation;

- Encourage employers to bargain in good faith, and stiffen penalties for employers that retaliate against employees who try to gain a voice in the workplace.

At an April 19 union meeting, APWU San Jose Area Local members signed a letter urging Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) to support the Employee Free Choice Act (S. 650).

At local meetings, APWU members have authorized contributions to the fund and have written to legislators urging them to support EFCA. Local leaders have been presenting a slide show about the bill and other important items on the union's legislative agenda, including the Mail Network Protection Act (H.R. 1686), and H.R. 22,

which is desperately needed to save the Postal Service from a crushing financial crisis.

APWU members and activists have also been supporting EFCA individually by donating online and contacting their legislators online through the APWU and AFL-CIO Web sites.

Stress Squashers

Feeling stressed? Following are some stress squashers to provoke you into thinking more realistically about stress and how to handle it.

1. Develop a sense of the ridiculous. Learn to laugh at yourself and at life's hard knocks. Humor melts stress.

2. Learn to worry effectively. Hardly anyone breaks down from over work--only from over worry! Your attitude and thoughts make you what you are.

3. Discuss rather than argue. Walk away from unnecessary fights.

4. Watch your spending habits. Don't spend \$25 on a 25 cent problem. Put things in the right perspective. It may be important today, but who will care five years from now?

5. Simplify life. Don't make big deals out of everything. Don't buy a cow to get a glass of milk; don't buy an airline to visit Uncle Joe.

6. Imagine yourself on wheels. You probably take better care of your car than your body. Watch your refueling habits, exercise, get plenty of rest,

have checkups.

7. Celebrate the temporary. Don't wait until you retire to enjoy life. Celebrate now! Life is what happens to you while you make other plans.

8. Ventilate with vigor. Get a babble buddy — someone who will listen. Talk about your problems, tensions, and concerns. Get a pet if people won't listen.

9. Take a trip on a rainbow. Look at all the beautiful things around you on the way. It's a lovely world if you take time to look at it.

10. Take a rocket to Mars or a trip to the garage or the basement where you can be by yourself. Take time every day to relax, meditate, and be alone.

11. Take slowdown training. Don't rush all the time. Plan more time for everything — including yourself, your work, and your recreation.

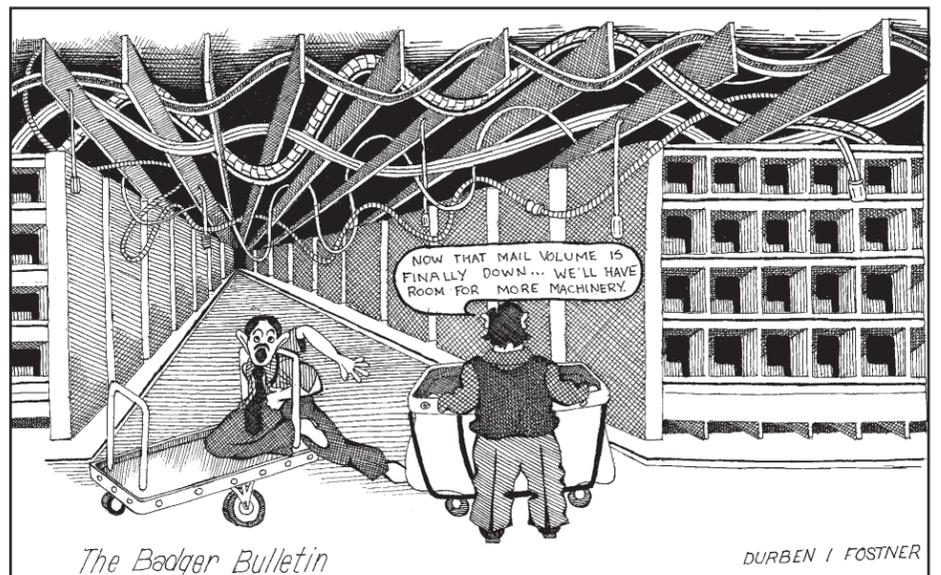
12. Learn to daydream occasionally. Tomorrow's dream takes the stress out of today's burdens.

— Source: *Postal Press Newsletter*

APWU
of
Wisconsin
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www.apwwi.com



The Badger Bulletin

DURBEN / FOSTNER

Always The Wrong Move – The USPS Story

I am incredibly amazed by the good people of the APWU who are joining the whining for the USPS financial situation. "Beg Congress . . . bail them out. I don't think so. Tell them to cut out the 120,000 administrative jobs that not only do not move the mail or bring in a cent of revenue, but actually impede service, turn away customers, and create little empires securing their existence:

I am not inclined to suddenly embrace the idea that NOW it is all of us together fighting for the "company". The "company" has royally screwed US the workers. US the ones who generate the revenue; and US the ones who move the mail. Let's take a look at some of the ridiculous moves the UPS has taken in the recent past 80,000 bargaining unit jobs in the last three years cut: Service Cut: Mail delayed.

Since I came into the service in 1975 it has been decried that without the trains we have never had reliable transportation. Airlines bumped mail off flights. Contractors were hot and cold. At least six times during that period major airlines have gone bankrupt and sold aircraft, for a dime on the dollar. These were golden opportunities for the USPS to become transportation self sufficient for major hub routes. Instead THEY contracted with Fed EX to move the mail That is a lot like McDonald's contracting to have Burger King supply their hamburger. Really, Really, Really Stupid.

In 1984 and again now, the USPS has

an income shortfall. The idiot response both times has been to shut down Post Offices for 1-3 hours at lunch time and reduce or curtail hours on Saturday. Yes, let's close the doors when people are out of their offices at lunch time and at home in their bedroom communities. That way we can be sure no money goes into the till. Hey. . . better yet, let's cut out Window Clerk positions and make customers stand in line so long that they are willing to leave and pay the UPS, store \$10.00 for an \$8.40 book of stamps. Let's cut out Window Clerk jobs and then take out all the vending machines so that the customers can't get stamps at all and then we won't have to fool with any of that old nasty money. Instead of holding close, those exclusive things which bring people into the Post Office . . . let's put it out there like it's eggs and flour that you can get anywhere. Destroy your own identity, reduce your importance and make yourself a NONESSENTIAL part of American life. After all "they have to get the stamps from the Postal Service, let everybody else do the selling". Tell them to go on line for postage. That way they can find out that FED EX and UPS will let them establish retail draw accounts to mail their packages and we won't have to fool with that crap either. Give away your business and then cry when it is gone. There is not less mail" packages and flats, we are just getting less of the market share. While we close Post Offices and reduce access to our windows, FED EX, Kinkos, and UPS-Mail Boxes, etc./ UPS Store have opened 6500 retail units. Why

because they know that the public wants service and that the USPS is not giving it.

How about advertising? Remember the surge we got from "2 pounds 2 Days Three Dollars"? Do it again??? No way, let's kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Complicate Priority Mail (which was more than taking up the slack for declining letter volume). Go to size based pricing and confuse the hell out of the public. Advertise stuff that nobody cares about and try to get the fewer and fewer Clerks and Carriers and Carriers to find new business accounts. Forget the walk in trade and providing service. And hide those give away Priority boxes.

But wait, don't, forget about Parcel Post. (Oh my God, I said the PP word, discipline is sure to follow). **The United States Postal Service Build UPS and Fed Ex with its own bungling hands.** THEY gave away the Parcel Post Business in the 1970's while at the same time, building an ambitious network of BULK Mail Centers to . . . Oh yes, handle parcel post. Instead of being known as the SERVICE who provides the right product at the lowest price: instead of having Clerks tell the customer, "we can save you money another way," threaten Clerks if they don't try to sell Express Mail for a 2 block delivery. Let's pretend that the public is as stupid as Postal policy makers. Bore the customers with fifty questions, make the Clerks look stupid, ignore employee ideas, but be sure to ask the customer if they want tries with that, but never, never give them the service they need at the best possible price. That would make them appreciative and they might come back.

Give big mailers 11 cent discounts to, spray on a barcode that we care accomplish for 1/2 cent. Then defend it in spite of logic. Give big mailers money back from other customers for spraying barcodes with a VAR . . . USPS is not just giving away its business; it is paying, people to take it away.

Go back to Congress and ask for more, money after announcing the third rate increase in as many years: Clever move. You spent three years lying to Congress about the new Postal Reform Law making you self sufficient and completely misrepresenting the financial situation, then go back to Congress with your hand out just after you give the big boss a huge bonus and golden parachute. Tell the committee how bad you need help when your Worker to administration ratio has gone from 4:1 in 2006 to 3:4 in 2009, (UPS is 25:1, Fed Ex 16:1). Of course, Congress was stupid enough to bailout AIG . . . twice. Maybe you can pull it off. Give big mailers money back from other customers for spraying barcodes with a VAR.

It would be very difficult to conjure up an entity which could make more wrong moves than has the Postal Service. It has taken its greatest strength, its people, in a labor intensive industry and presented it as the great liability. The slash and bum approach adopted by the Postal Service to deal with people has destroyed the Service by killing the interest of the American public in the Post Office. The leadership of the USPS has changed the P.O. from a daily part of life to an ordeal of wasted time to be endured as infrequently as possible.

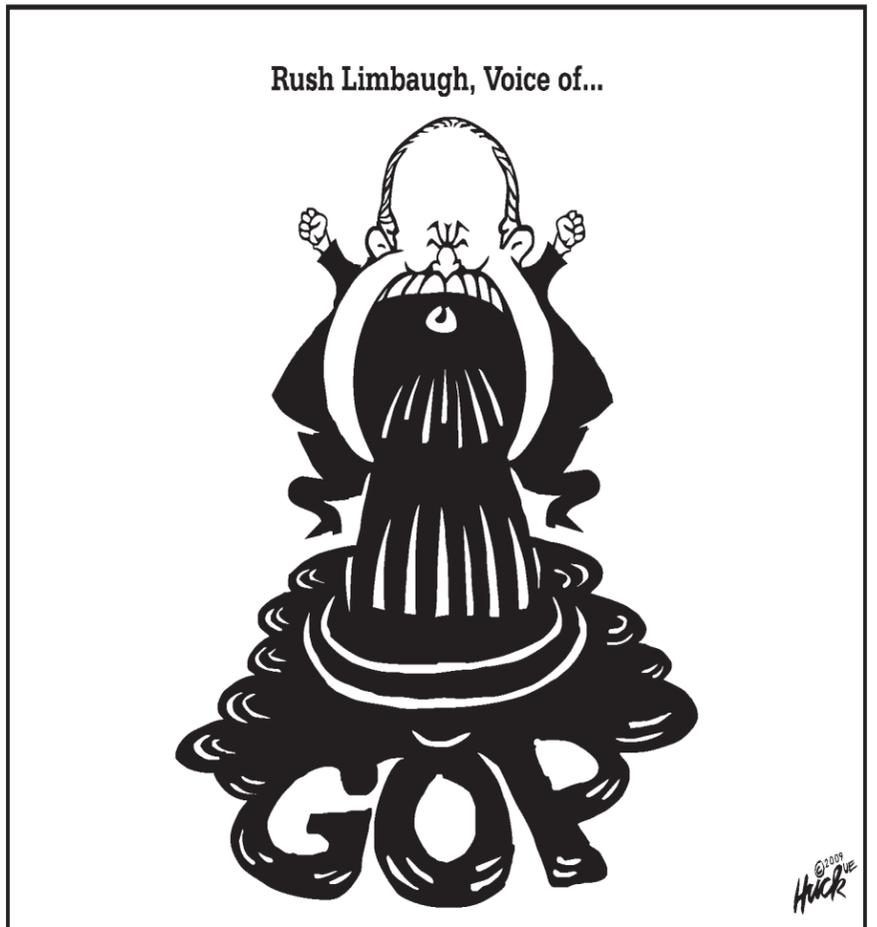
The Postal Service is on target to bust through their Absolute debt ceiling of \$15 Billion in October this year. What next? Well most likely the wrong move as usual. Instead of rationally dealing with the issues the USPS will keep listening to the logic which caused the recession (Later day Depression). The Harvard School of merge, slash, bum, take profits, then run away. The only problem is that this time there are no profits, only the greatest Constitutional loss in American History: The loss of a viable mail service.

— reprint from Dave Daniels, President, KYOWVA Area Local



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



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