



The Badger Bulletin

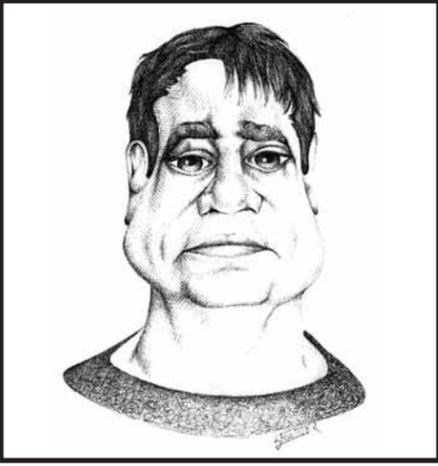
The American Postal Workers Union of Wisconsin

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2009 PPA Award Winner

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . BY STEVE LORD



APWU Membership To Vote On Tentative Agreement

None of us expected us to keep "no lay off", COLA, and get a pay raise. The agreement also allows us to organize the new category of casuals which will grow the APWU. Way back in the Stone Age when I was hired you became a casual first and were hired off of the test register. I always thought it was a good system. This is the way it will be done again

how eager we are to obtain this information. As I mentioned earlier I think that the political climate hampered our efforts to get the perfect agreement we would have liked. If that is even possible to get something perfect. The political situation is what is driving the USPS to insolvency. We are saddened with the ridiculous burden of

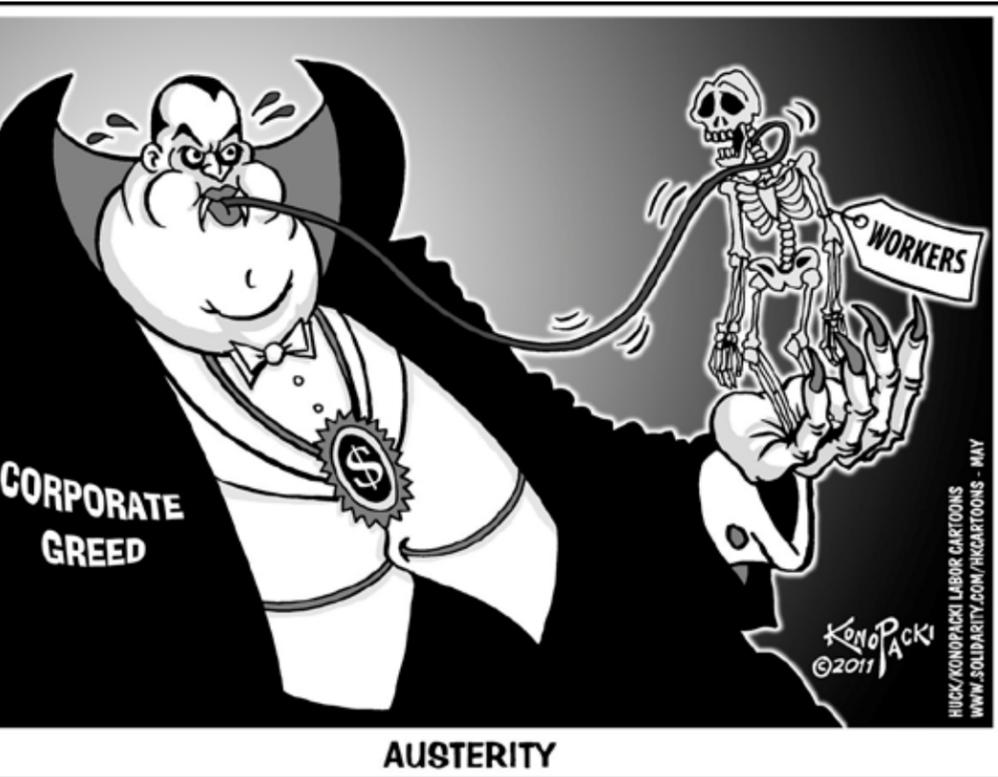
porate America is close to getting a free ride on the backs of the working class in America. Corporations and wealthy Americans are not paying their fair share. It is disgusting to me when the likes of Scott Walker call unionized workers the haves and non-unionized workers the have nots. He goes into a factory and says "look what they have and you don't.

In my last article in March I wrote that we did not yet have a contract.

A few days later an agreement was reached. I am in the same boat again. I have to write this article not knowing whether our agreement was ratified. It is my hope that by the time you read this the contract will have been ratified. The agreement is not perfect but, with the USPS facing huge deficits and the political climate of the Country I think our bargaining team did an outstanding job getting the agreement that they did.

I know many of you have read the letters and e mails urging you to vote no. I have no problem with members sending these out. The problem I have are the half-truths and outright misinformation contained in them. Also, some of the correspondence contained personal attacks on members of the bargaining committee. They said that the agreement was reached so they could keep their cushy jobs in DC. Many of us who personally know these dedicated officers know that nothing could be further from the truth. It is unfortunate that a better forum of debate presenting the truthful pros and cons of the agreement could not have been somehow provided.

Some of the provisions of the agreement that are not so palatable such as the two tier wage scale and more part time workers will be able to be addressed in future negotiations.



with the new agreement. If the agreement is ratified there will be a lot of work to be done. Already management at the district level is interpreting such items as the 50 mile excessing limit differently than our negotiators have told us it will be. Also, LMOUs will have to be drastically altered to provide for the new categories of employee when it comes to Annual Leave Calendars, and OT and Holiday scheduling. Hopefully many of these subjects will become clearer after our contract and LMOU seminar in Appleton. The amount of members signed up shows

prefunding future retirees' health care costs. Without this burden we would be in good shape financially. Our lives are no longer as simple as relying on getting a good contract through bargaining or arbitration. Everything is political. Republican Congressmen are calling for the elimination of federal unions altogether. We face the real possibility of losing our bargaining rights. Our financial security would be left up to the USPS and the United States Congress. This is the political climate we live in. We in Wisconsin have seen what the Republicans think of unions. Cor-

Let's take it away from them." Instead of saying I want to bring all of you up to a higher standard of living. But then the corporations that you give huge tax breaks to couldn't make huge profits could they Scott? Yet many American workers still buy into the Republican philosophy. It is a well thought out divide and conquer strategy. How far down do we have to get before all working class Americans say enough is enough? If we let the Republicans take over the Senate and the White House in 2012 we may find out how low we can go. We cannot let that happen. We all have to get politically involved now if we want to save our jobs as we know them now. I heard many postal workers say "I wouldn't have voted for Walker if I knew he was going to do this." Wise up before it's too late! The anti-worker, anti-union, pro corporation and pro wealthy Republican agenda should be clear to you now. You can start getting involved by volunteering in the upcoming recall elections. If you don't know where to start call or e mail me I'll put you in contact with the right people in your area. Your future is in your own hands. You can no longer rely on others to do the work for you. C'mon let's get to work!
Thanks for listening.

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Badger Bulletin

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

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION . . . BY RICK GALLO, DIRECTOR



As I write this, the membership ratification vote is currently under way concerning the new contract. As I told my own Local members, if you look for reasons to support the contract; there are many. Equally true, however, if you look for reasons to oppose the new contract, those also exist. I voted in favor of the agreement, and I have every confidence that the contract will be ratified. The changes are many, and they are significant. Perhaps some of the most significant changes focus upon the performance of bargaining

**New Contract:
 A Few Random Thoughts**

unit work by management. As a union, we have been fighting this issue forever! Do I think that the new memorandums placing additional barriers and clarifications on what work, or how much work management can perform will settle the issue once and for all? The answer is no. What I do believe, is that we will continue to grieve and fight and argue about the issue. Hopefully, the new language will give us additional tools with which to wage the battle, but I do think the battle will continue.

The reason is simple. All that changed is the contract language. The players remain the same. Management has not changed, nor has their attitude. As long as we continue to deal with managers who loathe the contractual restrictions placed upon them, it will not matter what language we put in the contract. Those managers will continue to ignore the language, violate the contract, and deprive

our members of their contractual rights. Unfortunately, the number of managers who even read the contract and attempt to follow the spirit and intent of its provisions is very small to begin with, and getting increasingly smaller all the time. Worse, higher level management, such as we have in the Lakeland District, permeates that deplorable attitude, and as a result, converts even those managers who want to follow the contract to follow the lead of their bosses and they end up following along like good little minions. That means that managers will continue to violate, challenging members to file grievances to enforce their rights. And so, you must! Failure to do so will relegate the contract, including any changes in that contract, to be meaningless. If enough grievances are filed, and management gets spanked enough times, maybe their attitudes will change. Let's hope!

HUMAN RELATIONS . . . BY LUCY HAUSER, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS

Official Personnel Folder

Your OPF is available online. Go to *LiteBlue*. You need your employee ID number and your PIN. Look in the middle of the page under Employee Apps – Quick Links. Click on eOPF to access the application. I urge you to take a few minutes and look at all the documents that are in your OPF, especially if you had disciplinary action taken against you in the past. Do not assume that just because enough time has lapsed that the old discipline was removed from your file. If you find that there is a Letter of Warning in your file that should have been removed contact your Union steward to file a grievance so that the Labor Relations rep can remove the discipline from your file. Incorrect,

inaccurate and outdated info in your OPF can cause havoc when it comes to transfers or retirements and create unnecessary delays.

You should also check to make sure the Veterans Preference Code on your Form 50 is correct and that your DD214 is included in the file, too. If there are medical records in your OPF you may request that they be removed by completing a PS form 8043 and mail it to our District Human Resources office in Milwaukee.

All documents in your OPF can be viewed and printed. If you request a copy of your OPF you will be charged 15 cents per page for anything over 100 pages.



APWU Members Encouraged To Contribute To The Postal Employees' Relief Fund



APWU Web News Article 051-2011, May 3, 2011

In the wake of the deadliest tornado outbreak in U.S. history, APWU members are encouraged to contribute to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) to provide assistance to those impacted by the storms.

Between April 14 and April 28, nearly 500 tornadoes touched down in 23 states, with a confirmed death toll of 385 and hundreds reported missing. Thousands of homes were damaged and a significant amount of property was destroyed in the affected states, including the Ringgold (GA) Post Office.

"I encourage all APWU members to give generously to PERF to provide much-needed aid to postal families," said President Cliff

Guffey. "Our contributions will help our coworkers who are coping with the devastation caused by the storms."

APWU locals and union members who wish to donate to the relief effort should visit PERF's Web site at www.postalrelief.com.

PERF provides financial assistance to postal employees and retirees who have suffered substantial losses as a result of natural disasters or home fires if they are not reimbursed by insurance or other

grants. Supported and administered by the unions and the Postal Service, PERF is a tax-exempt charitable organization that is funded through donations from postal employees.

"PERF accounts are running low," said Human Relations Director Sue Carney. "In the aftermath of these storms, the need for assistance will be great. It is more important than ever that postal employees contribute generously."

LEGISLATIVELY SPEAKING . . . BY JEFF WORDEN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Energizing Wisconsin Workers

On April 5th an energized and ready for change public voted for a new Milwaukee County Executive . . . Chris Abele, 134,838 over Republican Jeff Stone 87,913. The election was held to replace the former county executive (now governor) Scott Walker until next year's elections.

Just about all of organized labor in the Milwaukee County area was backing Chris Abele.

One of the reasons Chris Abele won was due to Jeff Stone's involvement with Governor Scott Walker and his belief in destroying public employees right to collectively bargain!

Jeff Stone had admitted that he and Scott Walker shared a similar conservative philosophy. During the campaign Jeff Stone tried to paint Chris Abele as an "Amateur" and said that because of his government inexperience he would hurt the county.

What Jeff Stone forgot to mention is that HIS OWN BACKING of Scot Walker is what kept him from winning the office of County Executive!

Also, the race for the State Supreme Court has raised some serious questions about how someone could actually forget to input an entire city's votes! That's right; someone forgot to input the votes for the entire city of Brookfield! While writing this article there are about 7700 votes separating the two candidates? The incumbent, David Prosser (who was appointed by former Governor (R) Tommy Thompson back in 1998 and then ran unopposed in 2001) was thought by many people to be a guaranty or (lock) to win the Wisconsin State Supreme Court race.

The first time challenger JoAnne Kloppenburg, had pretty much the vote of organized labor yet, she did in fact consider herself Neutral. I believe the reason for JoAnne Kloppenburg receiving a large amount of votes from organized labor (especially for a first timer) was because of all the ANTI-UNION TACTICS of Governor Scott Walker.

As of current David Prosser does hold the lead. But with the talk of a recount we'll just have to wait a see what happens.

Recalls: There are plenty of recall attempts going on throughout the state. According to www.totalrecall.com there are recall petitions underway to recall up to possibly 6 that's right six! According to this web site a source (close to the efforts to get signatures to recall republican state senators) is confident that they will have enough signatures to launch elections for a minimum of six (6) republican senators but they could tentatively have enough for seven! The **republicans** in question are the following:

- Dan Kapanke (District 32)
- Randy Hopper (District 18)
- Luther Olsen (District 14)
- Shelia Harsdorf (District 10)
- Alberta Darling (District 8)
- Mary Lazich (District 28)

As time goes on we will hear more of the efforts to recall the Scott Walker "cronies" and what you can do to help. REMEMBER, these are the republican State Senators who agreed with Governor Scott (union busting) Walker on stripping away state employees' collective bargaining rights.

Let's hope we can keep the Wisconsin worker "Energized" as we've seen over the past few months.

As former APWU National President William (Bill) Burrus use to say "The struggle Continues". Indeed it really does!

I would like to wish all members and their families a safe and fun summer. Take Care.

Ask Your Representative To Co-Sponsor HR 1351

Please contact your Representative and urge them to cosponsor and support HR 1351, a bill introduced by Rep. Steve Lynch (D-MA).

The U.S. Postal Service is currently facing a financial crisis partly due to the recession but more significantly caused by the burdensome requirement of the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act that it make payments of \$5.4 billion dollars annually to prefund it retiree health benefits. Absent those prefunding mandates the Postal Service would actually be operat-

ing at a surplus over the last 4 fiscal years.

Recent independent audits performed for the USPS Office of Inspector General and the Postal Regulatory Commission have shown that the USPS has already overfunded its Civil Service Retirement Fund by over \$50 billion dollars and also has overfunded the Federal Employee Retirement System by nearly \$7 billion dollars.



H.R. 1351 is a bill that would resolve those financial inequities and bring the Postal Service into financial solvency with no use of tax payer money.

Please take the time to contact your Representative and ask that they cosponsor, and later support HR 1351 when it is considered in the House of Representatives.

— Source: APWU Legislative Dept.

Bill S.644 Would Affect Thrift Savings Plan

Republican Senators Richard Burr, (R-NC) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma), recently introduced a bill (S. 644) that would eliminate the pension portion of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) for all new federal employees hired after 2012. The legislation would not affect Thrift Savings Plan benefits and agency-matching contributions. It also will not

affect FERS pensions for current federal employees and retirees. It would, however, apply to members of Congress. The fact that postal pension plans are self sustaining and do not rely on tax dollars was not mentioned. Senator Coburn also noted that current federal workers under FERS enjoy both a defined benefit pension and a Thrift Savings Plan (equivalent to a 401 (k) with

up to a 5% match, paid for by the taxpayers, while the average private sector employee gets a 40 I (k) with a 3% employer match and no pension. Federal workers also continue to enjoy federal health care benefits (FEHBP) after they retire, a benefit that is becoming increasingly rare in the private sector.

— Source: 101 Facts (Scranton PA)

Report:

NAFTA Has Cost 683,000 Jobs — And Counting

To date, 682,900 U.S. jobs have been lost or displaced since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) took effect in 1994, a new Economic Policy Institute (EPI) study finds. The main reason for the job loss is a \$97.2 billion trade deficit with Mexico. In 1993, one year before NAFTA was implemented, the United States had a \$1.6 billion trade surplus with Mexico that supported nearly 30,000 U.S. jobs.

All 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have seen jobs lost or displaced to Mexico in the past 17 years, says Robert Scott, EPI's senior international economist and author of "Heading South: U.S.-Mexico trade and job displacement after NAFTA."

During a phone conference, Scott said NAFTA supporters argued the pact would create jobs in the United States. Backers of proposed trade deals with South Korea and Colombia are making similar claims, he said. But his research has shown that each trade agreement would cost thousands of U.S. jobs. In the first eight years, the current deal with Korea could cost 159,000 jobs, he said, and Colombia could swallow up 60,000 U.S. jobs.

Scott found the five states that experienced the largest percentage of local jobs displaced by trade with Mexico since NAFTA began are Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee. The five that have the largest actual number of jobs displaced due to Mexico trade deficits are California, Texas, Michigan, Ohio and Illinois.

NAFTA made outsourcing to Mexico

much more attractive for U.S. companies, Scott said. Mexico eliminated a wide range of longstanding that companies claimed were expensive, he added.

Most of the jobs displaced by trade with Mexico — 415,000 jobs, or 60.8 percent of the total—have been in manufacturing. The hardest hit manufacturers have been in

computer and electronic parts (150,300 jobs lost or displaced, or 22 percent of the total number of jobs) and motor vehicles and parts (108,000 jobs, 15.8 percent). There has been a huge surge in motor vehicles and auto parts in the last three years that cost 30,000 U.S. jobs, Scott said.

— Source: Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

Under 55-Year-Olds Need An Extra \$182,000 To Pay For Republican Medicare Plan

A 54-year-old today will have to save an additional \$182,000 in their IRA or 401(k) before he or she retires to pay for the House Republican plan to dismantle Medicare, an analysis released Thursday by U.S. Rep. **George Miller** (D-CA) found. The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) estimated that individuals born in 1957 would need \$182,000 by the time they retire at 65 to pay the additional costs imposed by the Republican plan if they live to 84. The analysis was included in a letter to Rep. Miller. "Under the Republican plan, seniors will go into debt. They will be forced to sell their homes that they spent a lifetime paying off. And they will have to rely on their children just to pay for basic medical care," said Miller.

Last month, House Republicans voted to end the guaranteed benefits of Medicare, and replace them with a plan that would force seniors to find private insurance with the assistance of a voucher. Since the voucher's value relative to health care costs would decrease over time, and private insurance costs are higher than traditional Medicare, seniors retiring in 2022 under the Republican plan would be forced to pay much higher costs than under current law. As a result, CEPR found that the average senior beginning in 2022 would have to save \$182,000 to cover these additional costs. The data assumes a return of 3% in real interest during the retirement years.

— Source: Friday Alert - Alliance of Retired Americans

Statement By AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka On April Jobs Report

Building on renewed job growth in the past several months, our economy added a surprising 244,000 new jobs in April, including 268,000 in the private sector, even as the unemployment rate rose back to 9.0 percent. The monthly job growth is welcome news, but the economic recovery and job market remain fragile. Proposed deep federal budget cuts and continuing job losses in state and local government could jeopardize prospects for sustained job growth, given ongoing weakness in the housing market and record foreclosures, high levels of consumer debt, and weak income growth for the middle class.

For the 13.7 million Americans still officially unemployed and the 11 million more underemployed, any job growth provides a sense of relief. However, this news is clouded by a slowing of economic growth in the first quarter and rising levels of new claims for unemployment insurance over the past few weeks. Unless our government acts soon to boost job creation through investments in infrastructure, state and local aid, and easing of credit for small businesses, we will likely face several years of unacceptably high levels of unemployment.

Just yesterday, we saw a startling example of how high profits do not automati-

cally translate into a better economy for all. Fortune 500 companies saw their profits rise by 81 percent, while weekly unemployment claims jumped by 10 percent. This juxtaposition reminded us of the continued and growing dramatic imbalance in our economy.

But too many in Washington have shifted the debate prematurely to austerity, political posturing and misguided fears of the deficit.

As a result, Wall Street continues business as usual, wages stagnate and economic growth remains woefully inadequate to create jobs for the almost 25 million Americans who need jobs.

Above all, we must renew our focus on job creation, including by ensuring that state and local governments have the support they need to maintain vital services. Successful job creation is the key to deficit

reduction over the medium term. We must commit to the sizeable and sustained level of public investment needed to rebuild our crumbling roads, bridges and schools and prepare our country for the next generation. From technology to education, investments today will make responsible fiscal balance achievable and — most important — create good jobs for America's workers and help us win the future.

Americans Aged 45 And Older Now The Majority Of The U.S. Electorate

New data is showing that Americans aged 45 and above now account for 119 million Americans, and over 51% of the voting-age population. This number has risen from 46% in 2000, and highlights an overall trend of an America that is getting older. The preliminary figures are based on the Census Bureau's 2009 population estimates as well as the 2009 American Community Survey, which samples 3 million U.S. households. Broken down by subgroups, older boomers ages 55-64 were the fastest-growing group since 2000, jumping 43 percent to approximately 35 million. They

were followed by seniors 85 and older, who increased 33 percent to more than 5.5 million, due largely to medical advances that have increased life spans. Based on actual election turnout, which is higher for older Americans, census data show that baby boomers and seniors ages 45 and older represent about 60 percent of voters in national races, judging by the 2008 presidential race. Nearly 1 out of 2 voters is 50 or older. "These numbers should give pause to elected officials who want to dismantle Medicare, or turn it over to private insurance companies," said **Ruben Burks**,



Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance.

— Source: Friday Alert - Alliance of Retired Americans



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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For The Good Of The Membership

by Dave Daniel, Asst. National Director – APW-ABA

Your APW-ABA is proud to be able to announce to you new and exciting benefits. Our offering of a \$50,000 whole life insurance policy **without any medical requirement** is unheard of in the insurance industry. We have also provided expanded accident and dismemberment benefits which enhance our existing *daily tax free* benefits. Our new products are provided in conjunction with our partners Unum, USI, Affinity, Sun Life and The Buckley Group. Our base plans provide the highest daily benefits and the lowest cost in the industry. Our Plus Plan already provides up to \$100,000 additional accidental death coverage. The new products provide additional coverage in AD&D benefits as well as **additional whole life** insurance up to **\$100,000** for active members and \$50,000 for spouses and retirees.

A year and a half ago I learned on a personal basis why the APW-ABA is such an important benefit. I fell and did serious damage to my right shoulder. I was off for 8 1/2, months. My local, The KYOWVA Area Local is a 100% at the **\$24 ADVANTAGE PLAN** level. This resulted in a benefit of \$5,760.00 for me. I incurred huge medical bills/co-pays and a loss of the ability to earn overtime and

extra income. The benefit from the ABA was a Godsend to me and my family. I will forever be an appreciative poster child for the trilogy of sick leave, the APWU Health Plan and the APW-ABA.

I take great pride in the fact that my local holds the membership first in providing the **ABA Advantage Plan** as a 100% local. I take comfort in knowing that my local and all other member centered locals will provide their members with information and assistance when the **APW-ABA counselors** visit **Postal Facilities in their respective areas**. The ABA remains a non-profit organization which only exists to provide APWU members the highest quality benefits and products at incomparable prices. The ABA is the greatest recruiting tool available to locals. At virtually no cost. More important than that APW-ABA provides benefits that your members deserve and would not or could not acquire on their own. It's all for the good of the membership.



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