

The Union Inkwell



www.apwu.org/links/local-links.htm

Meeting: Sunday June 14, 2009

Georgia Music Hall of Fame

Executive Board 1:00 p.m.

General Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Macon Local 1340 Minutes

General Meeting: May 17, 2009, 2:00 p.m.

Georgia Music Hall of Fame

President Kim Mallory opened the meeting with the roll call of officers. Secretary Chet Ruble read the minutes for April's 2009 meeting. Desiree O'Bryant made a motion to accept the minutes. Harold Tukes seconded it. Motion passed. Treasurer Chet Ruble read the monthly financial report. Sallie made a motion to accept the financial report. Desiree seconded it. Motion passed.

New Members in the Month of May: There were no new members in the month of May. Chet mentioned that we currently have 266 union dues paying members with 9 members who aren't paying dues due to extended illness, or military leave, etc. Kim stated if a union member signs up a non-member, the clerk would receive a \$25.00 gift card. A new member will receive their choice of a cap, tee shirt, or apron. Kim read a thank you card from Sallie Bush.

Old Business: Our reports from our officers and *See Page 2*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope everyone had a Happy Mother's Day and Memorial Day.

Keep up the good work with the great attendance at the Union meetings.

We will be voting at next month's meeting on having an APWU Family Day in the fall. Hope to get a great turnout.

I thank all of you that truly read the Inkwell. I want to always keep the membership informed of all updated information about our jobs.

I do realize that everyone just cannot make some of the meetings. But there is no excuse for those that are off on the days of the Union meetings. I appreciate those on Tour three that do take a little annual leave to stay informed of what's going on in our Union.

Our local is now on the APWU website. You can go on the website and also read our monthly Inkwell.

I want to give a big thanks to Dominick Ruggero for a job well done on creating our new website.

Again, all *See Page 3*

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There are New Family and Medical Leave Rules in the works. If you attended last months' union meeting, you might recall that handouts were passed out to you about this. These new "RULES" were implemented by the Bush Administration days before President Obama took office. And



because of these changes the APWU FMLA forms have been updated to provide additional information for medical certification requirements. Remember, if your medical certification is incomplete or has insufficient information the Postal Service will inform you of *See Page 3*

MACON LOCAL 1340 MINUTES

stewards are as follows: President Kim Mallory stated a new machine would take the place of the UFSM 1000 and AFSM 100 and will DPS the flats. It's called the Flat Sequencing System (FSS). Vice President Desiree O'Bryant discussed the Mystery Shopper's program. Window clerks cannot be disciplined from this program. Legislative director Tammy Fuller mentioned about the HR-22, which financially aids USPS employees in need. One can go online to learn more about HR-22. Clerk craft director Harold Tukes explained about choice vacation. Clerks always have to request a choice vacation slip from their supervisors. The supervisor must post the second posting for the second half of the year no later than May 31, 2009.

Editor Gwen Potts introduced a person who is helping her with some new ideas on the Inkwell. Dominick Ruggero replied he created a website where one can go online to read the Inkwell. There also will be slideshows photos, videos and information about the Local and National Union. The link to the Macon 1340 site can be accessed by going

to apwu.org and clicking on "Links" on the top of the APWU homepage. Then click on "APWU State and Local Links". From there scroll down to Georgia, and click on Macon Local 1340. Kim asked for any discussion on old business. There wasn't any response.

New Business: Kim discussed the future of the USPS, such as bid jobs, downsizing or adding more clerks on all three tours, early retirement, attendance, lay-off clause, the contract, and FMLA. Kim mentioned about the Summer State Seminar in Athens, Ga. in June. Harold made a motion to pay all the expenses for any and all eligible officers, stewards, and members in good standing to attend the Summer State Seminar in Athens. Desiree seconded it. Motion passed. Union members, who all eligible to attend, must be a Union dues paying member in good standing, and must have attended five Union meetings in the past year. The Union will pay for their registration fee. The member must cover all other expenses such as hotel fees and food.

Kim stated we would form a committee for the LMOU update in September 2009. Thanks to Chet and Kim for providing the refreshments at our May's meeting! Congratulations go to the following door prize winners at our meeting. The lucky winners were LaSonya Bryant, Mark Fields, Al Bryant, Sheresa Hill, and Yuwanda Parks. It pays to attend and WIN.

Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, 6-14-09 at 2:00 p.m. at the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. June 14th is also Flag Day. Show your patriotism and fly your flag. The executive board will convene at 1:00 p.m. Desiree made a motion to adjourn. Sallie seconded it. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted to Gwen Potts, Editor on Friday, 5-29-09.

I would like to wish all Fathers, especially my Father, Mr. Don Ruble a very Happy Father's Day on Sunday, June 21, 2009.

**Submitted by Secretary-Treasurer
Chet Ruble**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

members that have grievances need to see their stewards first. If your steward has questions, then they need to call me.

At our next month's meeting we will be discussing issues on attendance and overtime.

The Executive Board is looking forward to our upcoming State Convention being held in Athens, Ga. June 11-13, 2009.

We will be electing new state officers at this convention.

I would like to wish all fathers a "Happy Father's Day!!"

Looking forward to seeing you at next month's meeting.

Remember, character is everything!!

Respectfully yours,

Kim Mallory, President.



Macon Local 1340 Now Online

The Macon Local 1340 now has a website. It will feature topics relating to the Union Local, the National APWU, and other items of interest. There are photos, slideshows, videos, and useful website links. It will also have the monthly Union Inkwel Newsletter. So you can now view it online and also print it out.

To visit the site go to:

www.apwu.org/links/local-links.htm Scroll Down to Georgia, Macon Local 1340

or

Go to www.apwu.org click on "Links" on top of page, and then click on "APWU State and Local Links"

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

what additional information is necessary. Along with informing you of this, they will probably attach a Department of Labor Form WH-380E/WH-380F. You do not have to complete a new form but should use the same form to add required information or you can add the information on a separate sheet of paper.

Recently I experienced one of our members having a memory lapse. He did not remember that his letter of warning was reduced to an official discussion, of which he received a copy of the settlement. Kim and I make

sure that once a grievance is settled at Step 2, a copy of the settlement is given to our members. Once it is in your hands please keep up with it. We can always search through the files to find it but the reason that you (our members) receive copies of your settlement is so that you are informed of your settlement on paper, not by word of mouth. We want to make sure that YOU are in the know about your case.

On June 11-13, 2009 I will be attending The Georgia State Convention, along with our executive board and stewards, in

Athens, GA., and on June 14, I look forward to seeing everyone at our monthly union meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Desiree O'Bryant.



Let's Do It for George

APWU Members Urged to Join Marrow Donor Program

To help save the life of an APWU member with a serious illness, postal workers and their families are being asked to volunteer to become bone marrow donors.

Mail Processor George Goetschal, a member of the Terre Haute (IN) Area Local, is a 34-year USPS veteran who was diagnosed with cancer last September. George needs a marrow transplant, but the odds of finding a match are extremely low. Family testing, a local donor drive, and a search of the National Marrow Donor Program Registry (NMDPR) have proven unsuccessful.

But George's postal family still offers hope. Among the hundreds of thousands of APWU members and postal employees, one of us could be his match — and the only person able to save George's life. Don't miss out on the opportunity to give the gift of life. Do It For George.

To help make it happen, the APWU has partnered with the USPS and the National Marrow Donor Program to host a nationwide marrow registry drive for George, from April 1 through June 30.

The more people who register, the better chance that George — and thousands of others — have of finding a suitable donor.

Anyone who is in good health and between the ages of 18 and 60 can

register with the nationwide program. The NMDP registration process is easy and absolutely painless — in most cases, you simply provide a “cheek cell sample.”



Typically, there is a “tissue typing fee” (at an average cost of \$52) associated with the marrow donor program, but this drive is being funded through the Postal Service's “Delivering the Gift of Life Campaign,” so there is no cost to take part.

All postal employees, their spouses and dependents between the ages of 18 and 60 years old, who have not previously joined the NMDP Registry and who meet the medical eligibility guidelines, can participate. Check out the FAQs at www.marrow.org to learn whether you are already registered with NMDP.

Contact your designated USPS District Coordinator to show your interest in becoming a potential donor. If your postal district is not listed, contact APWU Human Relations Department Director Sue Carney at (202) 842-4270, or

send an e-mail to marrowcampaign@usps.gov.

According to the marrow donor program, healthcare professionals help more than 6,000 men, women, and children search the NMDP Registry each day. If it turns out that you are a suitable match for a patient, you may be asked to donate bone marrow or circulating blood cells. It doesn't happen often, but when it does, you can be a life-saver.

“Bone marrow donation is a surgical procedure done under general or regional anesthesia, so the donor experiences no pain during the collection process,” the NMDP Web site explains. It takes some time and there may be minor discomfort, but it can save a life.

George is hopeful that a donor will be found. When he first learned about his cancer he was terrified, he said, but after a short time, his fears were assuaged by his good friends — at work, at church and in the small town where he lives. “Prayer and friendship are the only things you have to keep you going,” he says. “I am blessed. Now it's ‘wait and see.’”

APWU-represented employees who turn out to be a life-saving match for George (or another person in need) will be eligible receive up to seven days of paid administrative leave to cover qualification and donation.

George's situation is urgent, so please don't delay.

-reprinted from APWU website-



Burrus Testifies on Capitol Hill: To Survive USPS must change Strategy

In testimony before a House panel May 20, APWU President William Burrus told lawmakers that if the Postal Service is to survive, it must re-examine its overall strategy.

APWU President William Burrus testified on Capitol Hill, May 20, 2009.

He emphasized that there is an urgent need to pass H.R. 22 which would allow the USPS to pay its share of contributions for annuitants' health benefits out of a retirees fund rather than from its operating budget. "But adjusting the payment method of retiree healthcare benefits is just one option the Postal Service is pursuing, and it is only a short-term fix to stave off imminent collapse; it will not address the long-term challenges," he said.

The union president also condemned many of the USPS' cost-cutting efforts. "Actions such as plant consolidations, employee reassignments in large numbers, [and] reduced retail hours are having a detrimental effect on service, and in many cases generate little or no savings," he said during a hearing held by the House Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia.

The cost-cutting initiatives are undermined by the Postal Service's

flawed rate strategy, Burrus testified, which slashes revenue from major mailers without reducing USPS expenses.

Underscoring the severity of the USPS' financial crisis, several lawmakers at the hearing, including subcommittee Chairman Stephen Lynch (D-MA), indicated that Congress may have to consider allowing the Postal Service to reduce the number of delivery days from six per week to five.

Burrus rejected the suggestion, calling it "an act of desperation" that would "hasten the demise of



President William Burrus Testified on Capitol Hill

the Postal Service." Private companies would step in to provide service on the sixth day, he said, accelerating the diversion of mail from the Postal Service.

Congress is unlikely to approve such a proposal, Burrus said, but because it is so dramatic, entertaining it "sucks all the oxygen out of the discussion."

Strenuous Opposition

Speaking specifically about the postal network, Burrus noted that "since the release of its original Transformation Plan in April 2002, the Postal Service has ignored

demands by legislators and workers for details about where, when, and how consolidation would take place."

Many of the consolidation announcements "generated strenuous opposition from workers and affected communities," he testified, noting that "in 2006 and 2007, 37 of the 50 consolidations were terminated, placed on hold, or reversed."

The Postal Service also "was the subject of severe criticism by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) for the lack of

transparency in its planning efforts, and for failing to allow for sufficient input from workers, citizens, and public officials," Burrus said.

A GAO report concluded that "Inconsistency in data calculations also impacts the ability of USPS to accurately determine the expected cost savings," and noted that "the USPS Inspector General found discrepancies in the projected cost savings...

resulting in savings that may have been significantly overstated," Burrus pointed out.

Concerns Persist

"Despite USPS assurances to the contrary, citizens, community leaders, small-business owners, and postal workers are concerned that a 'realigned' mail processing network will reduce service and delay delivery of the mail," the union president said.

"The danger is clear: If service to small businesses and individual citizens is permitted to decline, it could lead to *See Page 6*

the demise of the institution. Regrettably, the Postal Service has consistently failed to share an overview of its network realignment plans.”

A basic flaw in the Postal Service network realignment strategy is that it considers only the facilities under its direct control, Burrus said, and ignores the broader mail-processing and delivery universe that includes private facilities. In doing so, the Postal Service ignores savings that could be achieved by reducing outsourcing and worksharing-discount.

The Postal Service asserts that it is attempting to cut costs, Burrus observed. “Despite the shortcomings I have outlined, I want to emphasize that the APWU does not oppose cost reductions or improved efficiency,” he said. The record shows, for example, that the union has supported the USPS automation program, he noted, “even though it had a profound effect on the number of APWU jobs — because we believed it was necessary for the long-term survival of the Postal Service.”

Rate Strategy Subverts Efforts

The APWU president told lawmakers that the USPS cost-

cutting efforts are “subverted by its postage rate strategy, which dramatically reduces revenue from major mailers without a corresponding reduction in service.”

“The USPS business model is based on the erroneous premise that discounts for large mailers increase volume. However, a review of the effects of three decades of rate manipulation reveals that discounts have failed to boost first-class volume.”

During the Capitol Hill hearing, Burrus presented data that demonstrate that “despite disproportionate increases in postage discounts, volume has been unaffected.”

“The misguided rate strategy has undermined the principle of universal service at uniform rates,” Burrus testified, “and tests the limits of the law. Under the guise of transferring postal work to the large mailers and rewarding them with discounts derived from ‘costs avoided,’ the uniform-rate standard has been eroded.”

The only mailers who pay the “published” first-class rates are individual citizens and small businesses, Burrus said. “Passing H.R. 22 will provide the Postal Service immediate relief; but the long-term solution to the crisis is

to end the policy of subsidizing large mailers at the expense of American citizens and the USPS.”

Other witnesses at the hearing included John Hegarty, president of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union; Dale Goff, president of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States; William P. Galligan, USPS Senior Vice President for Operations; John Waller, director of the Office of Compliance and Accountability of the Postal Regulatory Commission, and representatives of the mailing industry.

APWU Web News Article #060-09, May 20, 2009



God Bless America

Happy
Father's
Day



Father's Day, June 21st 2009

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