

The Union Inkwell



Meeting: Sunday May 17, 2009

Georgia Music Hall of Fame

Executive Board 1:00 p.m.

General Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Macon Local 1340 Minutes

General Meeting: April 18, 2009, 2:00 p.m.

Georgia Music Hall of Fame

President Kim Mallory opened the meeting with a roll call of officers. Secretary Chet Ruble read the minutes for the March 2009 meeting. Sallie Bush 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 O'Bryant seconded it. Motion passed.

New Members in the Month of April: There were three new members in the month of April. Kim signed up clerks Ruth Newton and John Taylor. James Mathis signed up maintenance clerk Maria Leonard. Harold made a motion to accept our newest members in the Macon Area Local 1340. Jim Workman seconded it. Motion passed. Welcome aboard Ruth, John, and Maria. Chet mentioned that we currently have 267 union dues paying members with nine members who aren't paying dues due to extended illness, *See Page 2*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First, I would like to wish all mothers a Happy Blessed Mother's Day and to all a Happy Memorial Day.

The Executive Board will be attending our State Convention in Athens, Ga on June 11 - 13, 2009. We will be electing new state officers at this convention. I will let you know who the candidates are as soon as I get that information.

I am still looking for qualified stewards for Tour 3 Main Office and Tour 1 Main Office and Holt Annex. Everyone should already know the qualifications for being a steward.

I appreciate the great attendance at last month's meeting. I hope the information provided will educate you on your modified job offer.

If you have any questions on the information given out, please come to this month's meeting to get your questions answered.

I hope everyone is utilizing the new APWU *See Page 3*

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We had a very informative union meeting, with so many of our members in attendance. Our discussion centered around limited duty employees covered under the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP). We discussed how the Federal Employees' Compensation Act provides injured



employees with continuation of pay (COP) for the period of the disability up to a maximum of 45 calendar days for a traumatic job-related injury. And when to fill out a Form CA-1 or Form CA-2 and what forms to fill out if there is a recurrence of the same injury. There was also a wealth of printed *See Page 3*

MACON LOCAL 1340 MINUTES

military leave, etc. Kim stated if a union member signs up a non-member that person will receive a \$25.00 gift card. The new member will receive their choice of a cap, tee shirt, or apron.

Old Business: Reports from our officers and stewards are as follows: Kim replied we would skip all reports from our officers and stewards due to the discussion of Post Office issues. 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; possible four day work week, wages, early retirement, attendance, lay-off clause, the contract, JCIM, OWCP, and FMLA.

Thanks to Chet and Kim for providing the refreshments at our April meeting!

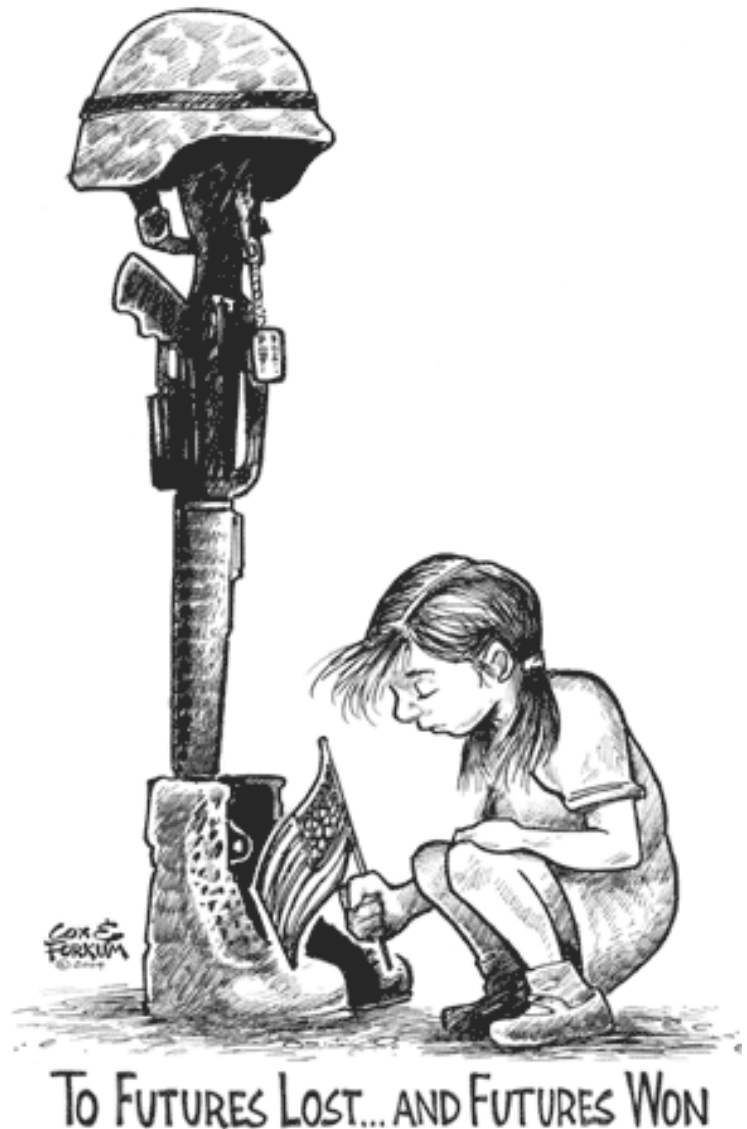
Congratulations go to the following door prize winners at our meeting. The lucky winners were Don Maddox, Wendell Howell, Jeff Miller, Steve Wade, and Audie Farley. It pays to attend and WIN.

Our next meeting will be held on **Sunday, 5-17-09 at 2:00 pm at the Georgia Music Hall of Fame.** The executive board will convene at 1:00 pm. Harold made a motion to adjourn. Gwen Potts seconded it. Meeting adjourned. Submitted to Gwen Potts, Editor on Thursday, 5-7-09.

I would like to wish all Mothers, especially my Mother, Mrs. Eloise Ruble a very happy Mother's Day on Sunday, May 10, 2009.

Submitted by Secretary-Treasurer.

Chet Ruble



MEMORIAL DAY 2009

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

FMLA forms. They are much easier and shorter to fill out.

Remember, the Department of Labor approved this form, so anyone can use it. We have copies in the Union room. Don't hesitate to ask your steward for one. We have the forms for yourself and family members.

I will gladly assist anyone with his or her FMLA paperwork.

Every year we seem to have problems with choice vacation. Please understand, I didn't make the rules on how choice vacation is given. This year will be LMOU negotiations. I will select a committee for these negotiations. So, I hope you are a member in good standing.

Also remember, it is not Management's job to give you a 1547. It is your responsibility to

request a choice vacation form. It is also your responsibility to submit it by the deadlines listed in our LMOU.

Management's only responsibilities are to make sure the 1547's are available and to make sure the choice vacation selections are posted by the deadlines listed in the LMOU.

If some of you would attend Union meetings, you wouldn't be asking the same questions every time it is time to submit choice vacation.

I know some members don't like the rules of choice vacation, but we will abide by the LMOU.

We also seem to be having problems with members understanding the grievance procedure. You must request a steward. Discussing issues/grievances on the workroom floor is improper.

Your steward will file a grievance once you have made them aware of a violation or if you need to know if a violation is being committed. Do not assume your steward is filing a grievance if you have not addressed them with the issue.

I'm still preaching to the choir, "you must come to work"!!!

Don't be a part of the down sizing of the Postal Service.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting!!

Remember knowledge is power!!

Respectfully yours,

Kim Mallory, President.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

material for our limited duty employees.

And on the national front, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has placed on the Senate calendar legislation that would give retirement credit for unused sick leave to postal and federal employees enrolled in the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS). And also this bill covers automatically the enrollment of newly hired federal employees in the Thrift Savings Plan and gives the establishment of a "qualified Roth contribution" option for TSP. I am very

hopeful that this bill will pass the Senate. So let's be on the lookout to see how our senators vote on this bill.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting which will be held on Sunday, May 17, 2009.

Desiree O 'Bryant.



**Support Growing for H.R. 22
Union Asks Members to
Contact Congress**

***APWU Web News Article
#042-09, April 6, 2009***

Legislation that would provide the Postal Service temporary relief from a crushing financial crisis is gaining wide support in Congress.

More than half of the members of the House of Representatives have signed on as co-sponsors of HR 22, which would modify a provision of the 2006 postal "reform" law that drains the Postal Service of billions of dollars per year and has contributed to a financial crisis so severe that it threatens the viability of the nation's 235-year-old postal system.

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act requires the USPS to spend more than \$5 billion per year from 2006 through 2016 to pre-fund retiree

healthcare benefits. No other federal agency is subject to this requirement.

"The most important thing Congress can do is to pass H.R. 22," APWU President William Burrus told legislators in testimony before the House Federal Workforce, Post Office, and District of Columbia Subcommittee on March 25. Absent this relief, he added, it is unlikely that the Postal Service can survive in its present form.

The bill, introduced on Jan. 6 by Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL) and Rep. John McHugh (R-NY), has 252 co-sponsors. It would allow the USPS to pay for healthcare benefits for current retirees from its Retiree Health Benefit Fund instead of its operating budget, and would save the Postal Service an average of \$3.5 billion per year over the next eight years.

"I urge all APWU members to contact their Congressional

representatives to seek additional support for this crucial legislation," Burrus said.

H.R. 22 has taken on added urgency as a result of the nation's economic downturn, which has caused a sharp drop in mail volume and USPS revenue. In Fiscal Year 2008, mail volume declined by 9 billion pieces, the largest single one-year drop in history, and the USPS suffered a net loss of \$2.8 billion — despite cutting costs by \$2 billion. Meanwhile, postal executives continue to slash work hours and services to customers, and scores of facility "consolidations" are in the works.

According to Postmaster General John E. Potter, with continued losses, the USPS would be unable to pay its bills later this year — an outcome that would have a devastating effect on postal workers and consumers, as well as the nation's fragile economy.

**APWU Urges Locals with
DBCS Machines to File
OSHA Complaints**

(03/30/09) The APWU has sent a letter to local presidents in regard to ergonomic issues related to Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) operations. The purpose of this letter is to explain the attached information and the APWU's intent to have multiple OSHA complaints simultaneously filed by locals with DBCS machines, nationwide. APWU has made many attempts to discuss and correct known ergonomic risks and hazards associated with the operations of the DBCS machines. Although we have

had some success, the Postal Service continues to refuse to discuss identified ergonomic risks and hazards.

On October 22-25, 2007, OSHA conducted an assessment of the DBCS operations as part of an Ergonomics Work Group (EWG) verification review that was required under the now expired Ergonomic Strategic Partnership Agreement. OSHA's verification review documented that ergonomic risk associated with the DBCS operations are still present and some of their findings are similar to the findings of two prior NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluations. The Postal Service has refused every attempt by

APWU to discuss the ergonomic risks and hazards presented in OSHA's report. APWU has developed the enclosed OSHA complaint package which locals are being asked to file with their OSHA area offices. Instructions on completing an OSHA-7 form are attached. Additionally, you can find your OSHA area office at www.osha.gov/html/RAmap.html.

As stated earlier, it is the APWU's intent to have multiple OSHA Complaints filed in locations throughout the country at the same time. To accomplish this, we are asking that every local file the OSHA Complaint *See Page 5*

with the completed OSHA-7, the week of April 5, 2009. Locals should file individual OSHA complaints for each facility with a DBCS within the installation.

Following submission of the complaint, OSHA should schedule an inspection of the DBCS operations; you and/or your

designee may participate fully in this inspection. OSHA should not provide any advanced notice of this inspection. OSHA may hold an opening and closing conference to outline the purpose of and the findings from their inspection. Please notify Corey Thompson, APWU Safety & Health Specialist

at (202 842-4273 or email, cthompson@apwu.org) about OSHA's visit.

PRESIDENTS VIEWPOINT

A Tribute to APWU Members

(This article was first published in the July/August 2002 issue of The American Postal Worker magazine.)

It is often said that one is not appreciated until it is too late, so on behalf of all the officers, I want to thank you for being an active member of the American Postal Workers Union.

Postal employees are not required to join the union, so your affiliation shows that you believe being an APWU member is important, and for that we are thankful. You could have benefited from the union's activities without joining the union, as some of your co-workers have done, but you chose to do your part to improve the lives of postal employees.

You recognize that all of the benefits of postal employment, including protection against layoffs and cost-of-living adjustments, are the result of our union's negotiating victories. These and many other

benefits are the direct result of the union activities that make your workplace more responsive to your personal needs and expectations.

Through your continued involvement you have expressed a trust in the union's



effectiveness and in the collective commitment of your union brothers and sisters. While many, many improvements in working conditions still need to be made, your decision to continue your membership shows you understand that none of our gains could have happened without each individual

member's commitment. For that, we, your APWU brothers and sisters, thank you for doing your part by being a member.

When we survey the non-members in our bargaining unit, many of them express frustration over lingering problems at work. Many non-members mistakenly believe that officers and stewards, by virtue of their status as union officials, have the authority to right a wrong or to stop a management decision. When an officer or steward is unable to swiftly impose his or her will on management, the non-member sees ineffectiveness or even apathy, and they use that perception to justify dropping out.

The truth, of course, is that most officers and stewards are very dedicated to the union and constantly fight for employees' rights. Often their efforts are not recognized or appreciated. When they are unable to correct an injustice, their only recourse is to file a grievance, which may take years to resolve. Your continued membership gives some indication that you understand that management's intransigence is *See Page 6*

to blame for our dissatisfactions, not the union officials who represent you.

Your membership is a testament to your understanding that our strength is our unity and that without your support for the union, there would be no voice for postal workers.

As you know, our union has accomplished much. Though pay increases are normally less than 2 percent per year, postal workers' salaries have actually increased 4 percent to 5 percent each year as a result of union negotiated cost-of-living increases, and postal workers' incomes have doubled over the past 20 years. In addition to negotiating salary increases, the union has won many grievance decisions and reached many

settlements that year after year result in employees receiving thousands of dollars in compensation that they would have otherwise been denied. I could site many other accomplishments, but the union's success in these areas alone are compelling enough reasons to join.

You understand the union and you have chosen to be a member. Whether you serve as an official or as a dues-paying supporter, your brothers and sisters and I thank you for your commitment. Without your participation in the union, all postal workers would be treated like casual employees, with minimum pay and no rights.

Though we may not say it often enough, we appreciate your commitment and support. Every

member should know that our failure to say thank you more often is not a sign that we take your support for granted. We know that without you, the member, there is no American Postal Workers Union. Thank you for being you, and for making APWU the very best union in the world.



About the Maintenance Division

The Maintenance Craft is a diverse and complex division of the APWU. In addition to the four national officers who work at the union's headquarters in Washington, DC, representation is provided by nine Maintenance National Business Agents (NBAs) and three all-craft NBAs.

The Maintenance Division is comprised of approximately 45,000 employees, covering all pay grades - from 1 to 12 - and more than 50 different position descriptions. It covers a wide variety of duties, including general office work, cleaning, mechanical, electronic, carpenter, painter, electrician and plumber. Staffing is divided into five general areas: Building Services (custodial); Field

Maintenance; Administrative; Building Equipment (physical building and environment); and Mechanized (all postal equipment).

There are fewer than 800 part-time regulars, with the remainder of the employees being full-time regulars.



© wondercliparts.com



THANK YOU

A.P.W.U. Macon Local 1340
P.O. Box 5131
Macon, Georgia
31208-5131

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone (478) 746-8333

Fax (478) 746-8333

E-Mail: editor@yahoo.com



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NUMBER 350
MACON GEORGIA