

December 2015 – January 2016

## From the President

### Ike Mills

Well, I guess the first thing to do is wish you and your families a very blessed Holiday season. I know how hard you all have worked this year and want to thank you all for your efforts and hard work. You all have done us as APWU members proud and made the enterprise we work for look like the professional business we are.

Then, I want to congratulate all of the recently converted PSEs and the three that will be converted on December 26<sup>th</sup>. That will bring the total PSE conversions to 32 since the implementation of the *Filling Residual Vacancy MOU*.

Again, if any of you guys have questions at all, please get ahold of one of your stewards or officers. We are more than glad to help you out.

Then, I would like to welcome the newest members from the Siloam Springs Post Office into our Local. We want you all to feel like you are a part of our family. If any of you need anything, please contact one of us and let us help you however we can. Our family has grown a lot this year, so if we all help each other out and do the best we can for our Union we can accomplish great things. I can't wait to see what the future brings for the Fayetteville Local.



**Last Meeting at Jim's Razorback Pizza.** It was exactly 30 years + 5 days ago when the Local first met here on November 10, 1985. Frank Fickle was President.

**Seated, L to R:** Anna Lee, Tina Delay, Sonya Kirsch, and Cheryl Wing. **Standing, L to R:** Brandon Cummings, Cris Martinez, "Barney" Barnes, Linda Christy, Lindsay Dawes, Tony Crowsey, Chris Mantia, Ike Mills, Nancy Sramek, Charlie Hoag, and Loren Adams. Meeting was Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>.

The *RAZORBACK SCHEME* is the official voice of the Northwest Arkansas Area Local of the APWU – AFL-CIO. However, opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the APWU, Local, officials or Editor. Articles, artwork, cartoons and/or other material are solicited from member readers who wish to share their views. Although freedom of the press is recognized, contributors are exhorted not to submit derogatory material about any fellow union member or to submit any false or unsubstantiated allegation concerning management or any other individual inside or outside this organization. All letters must be signed (if hard-copied) or emailed via an identifiable, recognized screen name and are requested to have been received by the Editor ten (10) days prior to the announced publication date. Names will be withheld upon request. Send submissions to *RAZORBACK SCHEME*, P.O. Box 654, Fayetteville AR 72702; or email to Editor's screen name listed below or on website. Submissions may be returned upon request.

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 Financial Secretary....Tina Delay  
 Recording Secretary.....Rebecca Marks  
 Editor-Publisher.....Loren Adams

**STEWARDS – ALTERNATES**

Chief Steward.....Ike Mills  
 Tour One.....Ike Mills  
 Tour Two Customer Service.....Cheryl Wing  
 Tour Two P&DC..... Andrew Heyd  
 Tour Two Alternate.....Vinny Dachille  
 Tour Three.....Matt Alston  
 Tour Three Alternate.....Vinny Dachille  
 Rogers Steward.....vacant  
 Springdale Steward..... Cris Martinez  
 Siloam Springs Steward...TBA soon  
 Maintenance.....Phil Morgan  
 Maintenance Alternate....Tony Crowsey  
 Safety Representative.....Nancy Sramek  
 Webmaster.....Jake Lamkins

**NEXT UNION MEETING:**

Sunday, Jan. 10, 2016 – 1:00 pm  
 Denny's, 4861 W. Sunset, Springdale AR  
 APWU Fayetteville Local – 2300 S City Lake Rd  
 P.O. Box 654 – Fayetteville AR 72702  
 Phone: (479) 571-1006 – fax: (479) 442-7131

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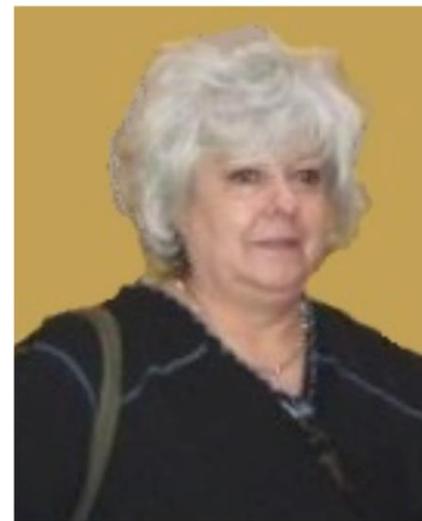


**One of the ideas for Northwest Arkansas Area Local's new emblem.**

**Please come to meeting January 10<sup>th</sup> to choose from 10.**

**The Virginia Hickman Memorial Scholarship**

This special scholarship was approved unanimously by members at the August 2015 meeting in honor of Gini Hickman. Qualified sons, daughters, or grandchildren of local members may apply beginning in April 2016, and the \$500 scholarship will be awarded before August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. (Please see description and rules, Article 13 of the Constitution, found at the local's website.)



The application form will be published & posted on all bulletin boards, in the newsletter, and on the website. Please spread the news – this is available for graduating seniors of members in-good-standing. Gini would be pleased. Thank you.

**Go to Constitution at Website:**

<http://fayettevilleapwu.tripod.com/ConstitutionBylaws2015.pdf>



Winner of Ugliest Christmas Sweater Contest at Christmas Bowling Party December 5<sup>th</sup>: **Kevin Lake.**

Nearly 100 attended, the most since 1996.

## You're Invited!

### FIRST UNION MEETING of 2016

Sunday, January 10, 2016 – 1:00 p.m.

*(If inclement weather, 1 week later)*

**Denny's Restaurant, 4861 W. Sunset, Springdale**

Just off Exit 72 of I-49

**You could win \$50 Door Prize!**

**Soft Drinks & Snacks on-the-house**

You may also order from menu.



### TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- ✓ Updated Contract Information
- ✓ Mergers
- ✓ Officers & Stewards' Reports
- ✓ Grievance(s) Status
- ✓ Conversions
- ✓ News From Headquarters

## IT HURTS TO CHANGE DELIVERY STANDARDS & CLOSE PLANTS

– by Andrew Heyd, Steward, Tour 2 P&DC

I'd like to wish all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. This sure is some nice weather we're having. I hope all have finished their Christmas and Holiday greeting cards before enjoying the weather. If not, my advice to you is put them up on the shelf for next year – but if you're quick, you might still have an opportunity to get your New Year's greeting cards in the mail and to their destination before the actual start of the new year. This is just a little personal advice based on my recent experience.

On October 27<sup>th</sup> I mailed a Halloween card to my sister in Spring, Texas. She received it November 4<sup>th</sup>. I also sent an RSVP to her on November 13<sup>th</sup> concerning a wedding invitation. Glad I also sent her a text, since she didn't receive it till December 2<sup>nd</sup>. A friend of the family mailed a card from Covington, Louisiana, on Nov 19<sup>th</sup> and it was received in Jasper, Arkansas on December 4<sup>th</sup>. And lastly, I was very happy to receive the Priority envelope from Postmaster General Megan J. Brennan (pertaining to Veterans Day) on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The envelope had no postmark, but the letter was drafted on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Since Veterans Day was November 11<sup>th</sup>, I would say the 17<sup>th</sup> was a little late.

I know the Postal Service is working diligently to get the mail delivered promptly, but with the change in delivery standards coupled with the closing of so many processing facilities – this fine institution is suffering. Perhaps this was the intent of Congress to justify privatizing the Postal Service – imposing the prefunding directive and closing facilities to cripple the Postal Service is a disservice to the American people.

From what I understand, there is a movement in Congress to change the delivery standards back to what they were prior to 2012. Hopefully, this will gain momentum and pass prior to October of 2016. If not, one can only hope that an election isn't lost due to Congress' failure to recognize and correct its mistake.

As a final note: I'd like to thank all the postal employees for their time and dedication during these holidays. Many are working 6 days a week and/or working 10 to 12 hours – with some working in excess of 12 hours a day. It's that kind of dedication and that kind of service that make me proud to be a postal employee.

# THE POSTAL VORTEX

## – How to Get Along at the Post Office –

– by Loren Adams, Editor

Congratulations! You've finally landed a good job – probably after a long search. Been there, done that. If it wasn't for the postal job, I couldn't have retired with security and dignity.

So, now that you've "arrived", how do you keep it?

A mail-handler friend once described the oft conflicted, dysfunctional atmosphere at the Post Office as such: "THE POSTAL VORTEX".

It seems – well-adjusted, good-natured folk are okay the minute before walking through the door, but instantly after crossing the threshold (the "vortex") they turn into rabid, raging malcontents. Sweet little kittens outside / wild untamed animals inside. That visual stuck with me.

But there's no reason postal life should involve a dark magical transformation based on just "walking through the door".

There are 7 basic things you can do to improve your life at the Post Office while maintaining it.

1. **Show pride in your work.** Educate yourself how best to complete your work. You're not after brownie-points, but rather that sense of self-accomplishment. Determine to excel at your work. Mediocrity puts your job in jeopardy. Excellence is the best insurance policy.
2. **Set goals for yourself.** Whether it's learning zip codes or dispatch schedules – learn all you can to make your job go smoother. The more you know, the more you grow.
3. **Determine to get along with everyone.** That requires showing dignity and respect to co-workers and supervisors alike. Smiling helps! If you meet others with a smile and thoughtful words, Karma will reward you. "*A kind answer turneth away wrath.*" Be self-reliant while at the same time determined to work with others. The combination of personal responsibility and teamwork is the magic formula.
4. **Be helpful.** Keep on the move to get the mail out. The mailstream can only flow if everybody does their part. Don't wait on Suzy or Sam. If constantly looking over your shoulder to see what others are doing (or not), you lose focus. And your attitude sours. Postal workers have only become "disgruntled" because they succumbed to the blame game – always faulting others for whatever ails.
5. **Follow instructions.** One of the top rules is: "Follow orders, grieve later if you think the order conflicts with the Contract." There is time later for filing, but meanwhile, you've got a job to do. Don't talk back to your supervisor either. Leave that up to the grievance process, because you don't want to put your job in jeopardy by insubordination. The reason you have union representation is to go to bat for you. There's no excuse for getting in hot water unnecessarily, especially in a union-shop.



6. **Keep conversations light.** The universal rule is "Don't talk about religion or politics". These two most often lead to heated conflict. But so are other subjects. Avoid deeply personal conversations like your health, sexuality, relationship problems, or finances. Gossip is another killer. Remember the game "Post Office"? It was a word-game where one story was whispered in the first person's ear and then passed along to where finally the ninth or tenth person's "interpretation" was something totally different. Gossip – whether true or false – is hurtful and destructive. These exclusions limit your choices somewhat, but so what? Your goal is a healthy work climate.
7. **Dress for success.** This includes personal hygiene. One of the best ways to show dignity and respect in the workplace is simple: **Take a bath or shower!** About 20 years ago, a clerk was sent home because he hadn't showered in weeks. Can you imagine? We could smell him coming in the plant. The "Postal Vortex" took on a whole new dimension. Someone who comes to work unwashed is a person who holds no respect for others, much less for himself/herself. And daubing on gallons of cologne is no solution. The cover-up is worse than the crime. Co-workers get sick from not only foul smells, but toxic perfumes. Dress appropriately. Wear work clothes that fit and don't expose too much skin. The Postal Service has a dress code that is reasonable and must be honored.

Now, I've laid out the 7 basics. Some may ask, "What have these got to do with the Union?" Well, if you want represented properly, you need to take these baby steps. Officers can and will represent you to the best of their abilities and contractual knowledge, but if you don't follow these basic common sense principles, they can only go so far. It's up to you.

**- The 2015 CHRISTMAS BOWLING PARTY -**  
**Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> - Fast Lane, Lowell**



**Cheryl Wing led the Party Committee**

