

# Razorback Scheme

American Postal Workers Union • Northwest Arkansas Area Local

July 2021

## From the President

### The Roller-Coaster Ride called “The Postal Service” by Ike Mills

Hello Brothers and Sisters:

Well, I have always enjoyed going to amusement parks and riding the roller coasters, but this roller coaster that the Postal Service has us all on is a whole different animal. This whole new realignment of the organization is crazy. I'll definitely be glad when it all gets completed so we know who we are working for and who our chain of command is.

We have had a lot of changes in our Local over the last six months also; so bear with us while we all get settled into the positions and get this moving in the right direction.

We have had a change in how management deals with holiday schedules that has the potential of affecting all of us. Article 11.6.C of the contract states: “An employee scheduled to work on a holiday who does not work shall not receive holiday pay, unless such absence is based on an extreme emergency situation and is excused by the Employer.”

So, we have taken the position that if an employee calls in on a holiday that they were scheduled to work and are in an FMLA status for this call-in, then you need to request steward time with your supervisor and we will file a grievance on your behalf. If you were not in an FMLA status for the absence then there isn't much we can do because of the contractual and ELM language that management has to support their position.

If you have any questions concerning this issue, please let me know and we can discuss it.

Thanks to you all for the help you give to our Union and if you're not a member yet there is room for you all to join and get involved with the process. There are many ways for you to be involved and active in the Union; you don't have to be a steward or officer unless you want to. We can be more successful if we all do this struggle together. We are all looking forward to seeing you all in the future success of our Local.



**Last Month's  
Local Meeting  
was on  
Sunday,  
June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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 (2) 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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Tour One Alternate ..... Enrique Sanchez  
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Tour Two P&DC..... Jená Booker  
Tour Two Alternate..... Ike Mills  
Tour Three ..... Kaylynn Mills  
Tour Three Alternate..... Vacant  
Springdale Steward ..... Vacant  
Siloam Springs Steward ..... Darrell Barnes  
Maintenance..... Phil Morgan  
Maintenance Alternate ..... Axel Ambrocio

Safety Representative..... Nancy Sramek  
Webmaster ..... Jake Lamkins

#### NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, July 11, 2021 – 1:00 pm  
Foghorn's, 1100 48<sup>th</sup> Place, Springdale AR  
NW Arkansas Area 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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## Introducing New Maintenance Steward Phil Morgan

It was suggested that I submit an introduction for the newsletter since I am returning as the Maintenance Steward. It is below:

Hello Union Brothers and Sisters: I am Phil Morgan your returning Maintenance Steward for the Fayetteville, Arkansas Plant. I served a few years as your Maintenance Steward.

Before that I also served as the Maintenance Steward and the Motor Vehicle Craft Director at the Des Moines Iowa NDC at local 7027. I just wanted to let everyone I will do my best for the Maintenance Department and for our Local Union.

My contact email is: [unionmail@gmail.com](mailto:unionmail@gmail.com)

Thank You.



**UNION MEETING!**

Sun., July. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m.

**Foghorn's Restaurant**  
1100 48<sup>th</sup> Place, Springdale  
(Take Exit 72 off I-49, turn east 1 block to 48<sup>th</sup>  
St signal light, turn L to Foghorn's.)

**NOTE: Nominations for Vice-President will be taken.  
You could win \$150 door prize!**

# Being a Steward may be the most unappreciated job!

By Darrell "Barney" Barnes, Siloam Springs Steward

This is Barney again and guess what? It seems that the UNION contract and a (slightly) stubborn steward, with help from many UNION Officers, NBAs, and the Good Lord Above have actually managed to save my job as BMC (temporarily) and the Full-Time Regular Custodian position as well. (Yes, miracles do happen.) From what I'm told they will revert the BMC position here when I leave/retire. But that is a grievance for another day.

Congrats to Axel on being elected Financial Secretary of our Local. (Or should that be "condolences"?) I really believe he will do us a great job.

People, I've only been a steward for a relatively few years and, to be honest, I didn't really want the job when I took it. **If it isn't THE most frustrating, irritating and generally unappreciated job, then it definitely ranks very high on the list.** I have been chewed out by management, as well as fellow members, for both standing up for the contract and our people, and for supposedly NOT standing up for the contract and our people (?)

**"I have been chewed out by management, as well as fellow members, for both standing up for the contract and our people, and for supposedly NOT standing up for the contract and our people."**

I can guarantee that I'm not the only steward who has been chewed on. If you are a steward and your being chewed on, welcome to the club. But don't let it get to you.

Keep doing your job to the best of your ability and always ask for help when you need it. Personally, I have had to ask for help for things I just didn't know the answer to more times than I can count. And they always help, or at least try to even if they didn't know the answer either. Management works together against the UNION.

We have got to help each other, not against Management, against **"Mis-Management"**.

The USPS had its greatest period of growth and stability after unions became strong in this country. Now that the lies, etc. have managed to take away some of the union's strength, a lot of people won't even protect their jobs by joining. The USPS is actually shrinking in size, trust and the ability to do the job right. They try to blame it on "the internet" or "reduced mail volume" but you are out there. You know it is actually **"Mis-Management"**.

The UNION isn't here to fight Management, no matter what you've heard. We are here to fight the "Mis-Management" that threatens ALL OUR JOBS. I still have my BMC job and so does our FTR Custodian...because of the UNION contract and because taking away either position was both financially and fiscally the wrong thing to do for the Post Office. (**"Mis-Management"**)

**"The UNION isn't here to fight Management, no matter what you've heard."**

Folks, take it from an old one-eyed fat man. Join the union. Learn the contract. Make our Post Office the great workplace it should be.

P.S. My thanks to all of you who work to get me and everyone else our mail, quickly, no matter where it's coming from.

Thanks again, Barney

# We've been through a rough time!

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– by Nancy Sramek, Safety Representative –

Most of us probably have more negative thoughts than positive about the Covid-19 Pandemic. Among the negative may be the loss of a loved one, not being able to spend time with loved ones, loss of freedoms, having had the virus or wearing a mask at work. Others may have suffered depression, isolation and desperation because of a job loss. We as postal workers were lucky we didn't have to lose our jobs since we are essential workers. But many of you were stressed for working so much because of the pandemic.

Positive results were the stimulus money most people received. It allowed some to pay off debt, maybe put more aside for retirement or just to survive.

Also, many people were able to spend more time with family and even go outside and ride bikes together. Hopefully, that may be an activity they will enjoy even after this pandemic is over.

Granted, we each have our own unique experiences we lived during this pandemic. Hopefully, all we have been through, good or bad, will make us more empathetic towards others as well as make us grateful for what we have.

In closing, whatever feelings we have during this rough time the mere fact that we lived through the hard time will make us stronger human beings and that is always a positive thing!

Take care and stay safe.

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## Do your routes to the best of your ability

– by Andrew Heyd –

Two years ago this office performed an in-depth *Line-H* as it pertains to custodial routes and staffing. An agreement was reached between management and the union. Of the six aspects to the agreement, one in particular needs to be re-addressed.

*'Custodians will follow maintenance directive dated June 4, 2019 signed by Maintenance Manager D. Tisdale'*. This directive instructs maintenance employees (custodians) to place the actual time it takes to complete a route. Yes, that is already stated on the route sheet, but so often custodians will close out the route placing a reduced time so they can have no by-passed routes on their sheet. They may even put reduced times so as to avoid overtime. This is akin to falsifying documents. If you don't complete the job or don't do the job — don't close the route.

The issue of routes not being completed or performed was recently mentioned at a Union meeting. Without going into specific detail, it's safe to say, employees are starting to notice what work is being performed by the custodians.

It's simple — **Do your routes to the best of your ability in whatever amount of time it takes you.** To do otherwise, to falsify your sheets may not only result in the loss of a custodial job - it might be your custodial job (or just you) that gets eliminated.

Thank you. Andrew Heyd