



American Postal Workers Union • Northwest Arkansas Area Local

November 2023

From the President — Ike Mills

CHOICE VACATION PICKS

Hello Brothers and Sisters: Well, to start this article off, I would like to cover a subject that irritates me greatly. There is some scum that is sending out emails asking that you all help me out by sending financial support for some reason or another. Please let me promise you if I want you to donate to anyone or anything, I will personally come to you face-to-face and make that request, I will never do it through a text or email. So, if you receive any of this garbage, delete it and never respond to them.

“There is some scum that is sending out emails asking that you all help me out by sending financial support for some reason or another.”

The second thing I would like to mention is that Choice Vacation picks for the Fayetteville bid cluster are right around the corner; so, keep an eye on the bulletin boards so you know what day your vacation selection schedule is.

For the other offices – look at your LMOU and learn about the process and get your vacations scheduled.

The last item I would like to talk about is the **Delivering for America Plan**. I have seen several emails now that are affecting several different parts of the country concerning impact statements and Article 12 excessing. Now is the time to open up the *Collective Bargaining Agreement* and educate yourself on how this could affect you and what your rights are. Yes, we will be there to do that for you as we always have; but a well-educated membership is much stronger than one or two. There are major changes and impacts headed our way, and we must do everything we can to fight this battle together.

We had a very good turnout at the **All-Craft Conference**; so, I am excited and confident that your Union leadership gets the magnitude of the battle coming our way. With the increased participation at our Local meetings, I know many of you have an understanding; but for those of you not participating at all, where are you in this battle? And for all of you non-members that are doing absolutely nothing to help or support our efforts, I ask you **“Why not?”** I do not understand how you can ask **“What has the Union done for me?”** Now is the time to join the Union and get active in any way you can to help protect your jobs and your family’s way of life. I look forward to welcoming all of you into our Union family.

“To be free, the workers must have choice. To have choice they must retain in their own hands the right to determine under what conditions they will work.”

— Samuel Gompers, founder of AFL, 1886

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.

OFFICERS

President Royce D. "Ike" Mills
 Vice-President Kaylynn Mills
 Financial Secretary Axel Ambrocio
 Recording Secretary Cheryl Wing
 Editor-Publisher Loren Adams

STEWARDS – ALTERNATES

Chief Steward Ike Mills
 Associate Offices Steward Kaylynn Mills
 Tour One Taylor Ingram
 Tour One Alternate Leta Ferguson
 Tour Two Customer Service Raisa Mateo
 Tour Two P&DC Kaylynn Mills
 Tour Two Alternate (Plant) Raisa Mateo
 Tour Three Adam Knapp
 Tour Three Alternate Mirannda Brewer
 Maintenance Phil Morgan
 Maintenance Alternate Greg Greene

Springdale Steward Shelden Harrop
 Rogers Steward Matt Carroll
 Siloam Springs Steward Darrell Barnes

Safety Representative Leta Ferguson
 Webmaster Pam Beck

NEXT UNION MEETING:

Sunday, January 7, 2024 – 1:00 pm
 Foghorn's, 1100 48th 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

Websites:

NEW LOCAL WEBSITE! <https://nwaal667apwu.org>

National APWU website:

www.apwu.org

E-Mail:

President: roycedmills@att.net
 Financial Secretary: axel.ambrocio@gmail.com
 Maintenance: unionmail@gmail.com

Editor: LAdams727@aol.com

Associate Offices: Fayetteville, Rogers, Springdale, Siloam Springs, Elkins, Huntsville, Lowell, Prairie Grove, West Fork, Avoca, Combs, Elm Springs, Goshen, Hindsville, Kingston, Pettigrew, St. Paul, Wesley, Witter

All-Craft Conference 2023

By Raisa M. Mateo

Tour 2 Steward, Customer Service

The convention in Las Vegas was spectacular! I was able to learn much more about the union's preparation processes, how to detail and how to improve the quality of our work and on future major changes at the U.S. Postal Service. During my visit, I was able to take different classes on representing member, JCIM and CBA. But the most interesting thing I learned was how to fill out the Step 2 as part of the process. I know myself how to apply Step 1s, but it is very important for me to continue to know and learn more about these processes to perform better and help my co-workers. I understand that there will always be questions, but I must remember that our Union (APWU) is like a big family where we are more united than non-union shops; and that is our unique strength. For everything there is always a solution, and there is nothing to be fearful about. We keep fighting. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent fellow workers every day.

Between 3 and 4,000 APWU members from all over the U.S. gathered at the All-Craft Conference in Vegas this year — which makes it one of the highest in attendance in several years. We don't have an exact count yet, but by the looks of the convention halls, it was almost a record. Six from the Local attended.

Great speakers included National APWU President Mark Dimondstein and National Clerk Craft Director Lamont Brooks. Classes were packed and information booths drew interest.



UNION MEETING!

Sun., Jan. 7th, 2024, 1 p.m.

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

You could win \$50+ door prizes!

I Have a Job to Support My Family Not a Family to Support My Job

By Barney Barnes, *Siloam Springs Steward*

Don't get me wrong, folks. I do count my job as important. Enough so that I'm 20-30 minutes early to work 99% of the time. It's just that my family comes first. **Always!** And as frustrating as family can be sometimes, family comes first.

Now, in my short 66 years of life, I've had a pretty good assortment of jobs... from paperboy (on a bicycle) to supervisor of roust-about crews in the Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas oilfields. Heck! Just in my 29 years at the Post Office, I've done Clerk, Mailhandler, Custodial and Building Maintenance work. For the most part, I've been lucky enough to have supervisors who understand the fact that I have a job to support my family, not a family to support my job. Hey! Some even agree with me.

However, we all get the "occasional" supervisor who has NO home life – and firmly believes that we shouldn't have one either. So, with that sad fact in mind, I want to remind everyone to stockpile as much Annual and Sick Leave as you can. Also, coming to work a little early so you for sure clock in on time is a vital part of **CYA (cover your anatomy)** [Yes, we called it something else when I was younger, but hopefully I have learned a few things over the years.]

The other thing I want to remind everyone about is **GET INVOLVED IN THE UNION**. Every other job I ever worked at as non-union. Absolutely, none of them paid as well or had near the benefits that we get here. And the **FACT** is — we only have them because the **UNION** fought for them. Management did not give us better pay or better benefits out of the goodness of their hearts. They were forced to by the **UNION**. That time off you have each week instead of always working 7-days a week, the **UNION** got that. The Sick Leave that you used for yourself or to take care of your child — the **UNION** got that. Involvement in the **UNION** is always a part of **CYA**. — Barney

Attendance at Local Meetings for the past 6 months has been exceptional. Keep it up! You learn more at meetings than anywhere else.



NEW LOCAL WEBSITE!

The Local first created a website 25 years ago – initiated and maintained by **Jake Lamkins** for ¼ century. Our appreciation to Jake for his enduring service.

Now the Local has a new webmaster, **Pam Beck**. She's designed & set up a new website for the Local. Congratulations, Pam!

The Local's Constitution, LMOUs for Fayetteville & Springdale, newsletters, contact info, announcements, and other documents are posted.

You may visit our new website at:

<https://nwaal667apwu.org>

Maintenance Craft Testing

By Axel Ambrocio
Financial Secretary

Every year from March 1st to 31st, career employees may submit a written request to be tested for Maintenance Craft eligibility ratings for Maintenance Mechanic Level 7 (MM), Mail Processing Equipment Mechanic Level 9 (MPE), Building Equipment Maintenance Level 10 (BEM), Electronics Technician Level 10 (ET). You can also request to be included in the Laborer Custodial Career In-Service Register. (Maintenance Employees can request an update any time or 6 months after the last update request)

Management shall provide an Employee Maintenance Position Selection (EMPS) form as found in the EL-304 to employees. Career employees will need to request and fill out the Routing Slip item 0-13, August 1976, with the In-service Application Data. You should send both forms to Employee Development, 4025 W Reno Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73125-9422, it will be recommended to use certified mail service.

Applicants should get an invitation to take the USPS 955 test and those that got an eligibility rating will be invited to take and structured interview to be placed in the “In-Service Register”, using the “pecking order” included on the 2022 Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM).

The 955 Test will measure knowledge in plumbing, electricity, electronics, hydraulics, pneumatics, basic mechanics, schematics, wiring diagrams, power tools and Spatial reasoning.

In-service registers be purged on April 1, every year; so, don’t forget to submit a written or emailed request by March 31 to the District HR MSS Coordinator.

All-Craft 2023

By Kaylynn Mills
Local Vice-President

Well, we finally can say we have another state meeting and All-Craft in the books! At state, our NBA Dan Skemp taught us all about PostPlan.

At All-Craft, we were all given the tools to be able to come back to our locals and fight maximization in accordance with Article 7.3.B.

The Island of Maui, Hawaii was devastated by wildfires, which, of course, affected fellow postal workers. As a whole body, the APWU delegates at All-Craft raised a total of \$13,000 in donations to help our Maui brothers and sisters. National office then kicked in and matched, bringing the total to \$26,000. Another local later donated \$1,000 and asked Sister Liz Powell (National APWU Secretary-Treasurer) to match — which she did. Liz then told Lamont Brooks, National Clerk Craft Director, to make things easy by rounding it up to \$30,000. Once again, our Union family proved we take care of each other.

Union Strong • All Day
Long! Solidarity, my brothers
& sisters! – Kaylynn



**MEMBERS at APWU
All-Craft Conference,
October 2-4, 2023, Las
Vegas**

**Left to Right: Kerry Hinton
(Arkansas State APWU
President), Raisa Mateo,
David Carter, Kaylynn Mills,
and Ike Mills.**

(Empty chair: Loren Adams)