



Razorback Scheme

American Postal Workers Union • Northwest Arkansas Area Local

February 19, 2026

From The President...

Ike (Royce) Mills

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Well, we all survived another peak season with the Postal Service and I want to thank you all for the amazing job that you did. This was my 33rd Christmas with the Post Office and I am glad that I don't have many more of them left to survive. Well I guess that the biggest thing to discuss is the upcoming State and Tri State Conventions coming up this April 8-11, 2026. Anyone interested in attending these events needs to show up at the March Local meeting and express their desire to go. The March meeting will be your last opportunity to sign up for this. The local is covering the registration fee for members.

I am being told that our employees are being told to clock off at 12 hours and to remain at work to complete unfinished tasks. I will make this as clear as I can, an employee should never work off of the clock for several reasons. First of all if you get injured working off the clock it could cause all kinds of problems for your benefits. Secondly you should be paid for all the hours you are being required to work; you should never work for free. Just because someone in management doesn't want to answer for why an employee is working more than 12 hours is not a reasonable reason to violate the contract. The problems we are seeing with staffing solely lies at Management's feet. It is because of their constant pressure on these Postmasters to revert and abolish jobs that we are in the position we are. Do not fall to their poor leadership and work off of the clock. If this is happening in your office please reach out to your Union Stewards and let us protect you from this abuse.

In Solidarity,
Ike Mills

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. Names will be withheld upon request. Send submissions to *RAZORBACK SCHEME*, P.O. Box 654, Fayetteville AR 72702; or email to: editor@nwaal667apwu.org

OFFICERS

President - Royce D. "Ike" Mills
Vice President - Kaylynn Mills
Secretary-Treasurer - Cheryl Wing
Editor-Publisher - Pam Beck

STEWARDS

Chief Steward Ike Mills
Associate Offices Steward Kaylynn Mills
Springdale Steward Cheryl Sharum
Siloam Springs Steward Darell Barnes

Fay. Customer Service Steward..... Marie Campbell
Alternate - Vacant

Fayetteville Plant:

Tour 1 Steward..... Jordan Kuriatnyk
Alternate..... Vacant
Tour 2 Steward..... Raisa Mateo
Alternate..... Leta Reyes-Vieyra
Tour 3 Steward..... Mirannda Brewer
Alternate..... Patrick Sewell
Maintenance Steward..... Jesse Carter
Alternate - Vacant

NW Arkansas Area Local
PO Box 654
Fayetteville, AR 72702
Ph. (479)571-1006

Website: <https://nwaal667apwu.org>

Focus On Safety

by Pamela Beck, Editor

“Safety cannot be an afterthought. Safety needs to be at the forefront of all our minds when we work in a dangerous, industrialized environment.” – APWU Industrial Relations Director – Charlie Cash

Safety should always be our first consideration in every scenario at work. Your life or that of a co-worker may depend upon it. Know your facility's safety rules and follow them. Keep your work areas clean and tidy. Clutter and trash can lead to accidents.

Rumor has it that postal management is offering safety incentives this year. The details are elusive, but apparently you can nominate any co-worker for a safety prize by documenting your observation of them following safety protocols or precautions. I don't know what the prizes may be, but even if it's only a \$10 gift card for fast food, that's something more than they had before. We can at least applaud management for using positive reinforcement. I am not sure if this applies to everyone or just our P&DC.

Some common issues you should always be on the lookout for:

Blocked fire extinguishers and blocked walkways – Don't ever think that a fire can't happen where you are. You work in a building with literally tons of paper. If you work at the P&DC, that paper is moving through automated equipment for several hours every day. If you have ever seen letters jam up in an auger on a machine, then you know that friction can turn that paper black (I have seen it actually produce smoke), the next stage is fire! Of course, the first line of defense is keeping your machine clear of jams, but in addition, make sure your fire extinguishers are always accessible. Make sure your walkways and exit doors are clear. This is required to comply with OSHA regulations and Fire Codes.

Pallets propped or leaning against a wall or other equipment – At first glance, this may seem counter-intuitive. A pallet flat on the floor is a tripping hazard, right? Maybe, but one propped against the wall is unstable and can fall or slide unexpectedly at any moment, causing a trip or worse. The rule is always: pallets flat on the floor or on a stack of pallets.

Trash or tripping hazards -- Always be alert for trash which may cause a trip or a slip. Plastic or metal bands can be especially dangerous if the loop is unbroken and it is large enough to slip a foot or ankle through. I happen to know from experience they can cause you to fall flat on your face.

Hazardous unrepaired equipment – Much of the metal equipment that we work with is in poor repair and can have jagged edges or protruding wires. If you notice anything that could be dangerous for the next person handling it, don't hesitate to tag it OUT OF ORDER. This is referred to as Red-tagging, but the actual tags are neon orange. If you don't know where they are kept, ASK! Fill out the tag properly, place it on the item, and turn in the stub to management. If the item is already filled with mail and you have no time to unload it, alert your supervisor. Remembering to check equipment closures BEFORE you fill it can save time and avoid a potentially dangerous situation. Dangerous equipment should never be loaded on trucks, and equipment that won't close properly is a danger ESPECIALLY on the truck and for the driver who has to unload it.

Overloading equipment – Overloading can make any piece of equipment dangerous. Our OTR's and APC's are designed to be filled to about ¾ full. Wires and pallets should not be too heavy to push or pull by hand. Overloading is not only potentially dangerous, it is showing a lack of courtesy to your co-workers. Even an employee at another facility whom you have never met IS your co-worker. If you are a worker loading equipment at the P&DC, you should be aware that the AO's and small offices generally have a higher percentage of female clerks, so overall, they will tend to be shorter with less upper body strength. This makes it much more challenging to move and unload equipment

that has been improperly loaded. In my first few months at the Postal Service, the idea was passed on to me, by a co-worker who had been around a while, that you should ALWAYS consider the next person handling the mail or equipment that you are loading and sending to them. Load it NEATLY when possible. Do what you can to make it easy to unload. BE THE KIND OF WORKER THAT YOU WANT TO WORK WITH!

Work ergonomically – Push, don't pull, whenever possible. Pulling heavy equipment puts a lot of strain on your shoulders. You may be young and strong today and it doesn't feel like a problem, but shoulder injuries can result from just that type of repetitive strain and it will take you completely by surprise when it finally gives out. When lifting, try to bend your knees and lift with your legs. If the item is too heavy, ask for help; don't be a 'tough guy'. Always be looking for ways to put less physical stress on your body; you want it to last you a long time.

Forklifts -- If you work around fork-lifts and tow motors, always try to be aware of where they are and where they are headed. Don't stroll in front of them or cut them off. Yes, it is their job to avoid hitting you, but don't make it more difficult for them. I know you can't read their minds either, but communication always helps.

Headphones/Earbuds -- If your workplace allows you to wear any type of headphones or earbuds, you should only be wearing one at a time, so that you can still hear what is going on around you; and you should only be wearing them when you are working in a semi-enclosed area; not in an area with moving motorized equipment or a lot of equipment being pushed. They don't **have** to allow you any earbuds at all, so try to use safely and responsibly; then you won't give them a reason to remove the privilege from everyone.

It pays to be safety-minded at all times. Please be aware that if you do have an accident or injury, consequences can be devastating. To begin with, you will very likely receive a letter of warning, citing 'failure to follow instructions' or 'working unsafely'. Your supervisor is not doing it to be malicious; it is a policy directive that comes from their superiors. In that case, you should always file a grievance. Your steward can usually get the warning reduced, or sometimes removed.

If you are injured on the job, you then have to deal with worker's compensation paperwork and insurance filing. That is a huge headache. The Postal Service will comply with their obligations **but will not be exactly helpful**. You will be completely responsible for handling your worker's comp. paperwork filing and getting treatment approved. Also, your union has no obligation to help you with worker's comp. It is completely outside of their area of responsibility, and they may be reluctant to even give advice, due to complications if they should inadvertently misinform you. If you miss work due to an injury, that will hurt you in regard to your benefits, such as vacation time, time credited toward retirement, and possibly sick leave. In addition, worker's comp. pay will never equal what you would have made by working.

Take responsibility to know your workplace's safety rules and emergency procedures. Familiarize yourself with OSHA regulations and your rights under OSHA and as a union member. You should always report any safety hazard that is recurring, and that you are unable to eliminate yourself, on PS Form 1767. You should give this form to your immediate supervisor, and they are supposed to return one copy to you by the end of your shift or first thing on your next tour. Management is notoriously lax about the handling of these forms, so if possible, make a photo-copy for yourself and for your union rep. before turning it in, because otherwise you will likely never see it again. Your union rep can follow up and make sure it is handled properly. It is illegal for management to retaliate or try to intimidate you in any way for reporting safety issues. Your union will always back you 100% when it comes to safety!

Our National APWU President, Jonathan Smith, made an address on safety to all members by livestream on YouTube, the evening of February 10. I encourage you to watch it, when you have time, if you did not catch it live. It will certainly impress upon you the importance of knowing your rights in an emergency situation.

OSHA - 800-321-6742

EDITOR'S NOTE:

If you would like to receive free email copies of the Razorback Scheme, please send your email request to the address below. Emails will not be used for any other purpose or sold or forwarded to any other organization. If you wish to receive a print copy to your residential address, you may request that as well. Please send all requests and your original art or articles for publication to:

EDITOR@NWAAL667APWU.ORG
OR - EDITOR, PO BOX 654,
FAYETTEVILLE, AR 72702

Please also check out the Local's official website at

NWAAL667APWU.ORG.

Find announcements of upcoming events, contact info for your steward and officers, as well as archived copies of The Razorback Scheme.

Problem: Stage Stuck



Union Solution:



Management Solution:



NEXT MEETING...

Join us at Gusano's Pizza in Rogers. 1pm on the following Sundays in Gusano's Skybox at 2603 Pleasant Grove Rd. #112. Off I-49 at Exit 81:

- March 8
- April 19
- May 17
- June 14
- July 12
- August 9
- September 13
- October 17
- November 8

**DO THE
RIGHT THING**



VOTE

Arkansas' 2026 Primary is March 3, 2026.

To check on your voter registration, look up early voting sites, and preview ballots, go to <https://www.voterview.ar-nova.org>

Dear reader,

Hey! Well we survived the first snow storm and first month and a half of 2026! Congrats! Let's kick off the rest of the year with some much needed team work to make our Union Stronger. Find your place in this family to help out. In the long run our unity is the most important thing! Come to State and Tri-state meeting in Springdale AR April 8-11, 2026. There will be a lot of really exciting training and a great way to network and get help from our sister states!

Sincerely,

Kaylynn (V.P.)

2026 CONVENTION SCHEDULE

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Arkansas Postal Workers Spring Business Meeting	April 8 - 9	Springdale Holiday Inn Convention Center
Tri-State Convention - Hosted by Arkansas Postal Workers Union	April 10 - 11	Springdale Holiday Inn Convention Center
APWU National Convention	August 14 - 20	Los Angeles, CA
Arkansas Postal Workers Fall Meeting	September 17 - 19	Jonesboro, AR