



Postal Chatter

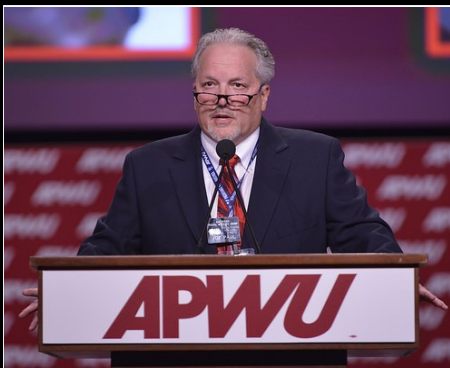
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Joe Paul—2016 National Convention

From the Desk of the President October 2017

I want to thank each of you for being a member of the American Postal Workers Union and our Central Florida Area Local. As a large local, we stay very busy. Our membership is close to 1,100 members and spans three P&DCs and approximately 100 Associate Offices, Stations, and Branches.

I was proud to be selected by your national officers to represent the APWU again as part of the Clerk Craft Committee at the 2017 All Craft's Conference this past month. I want to give you a few highlights that were brought up during this Conference. Our Collective Bargaining Agreement expires in September 2018. During our upcoming negotiations, we expect the USPS to go after our COLA, no-layoff clause, union representation, the 50-mile limit on excessing, and an attempt to shrink the workforce even further in Function 1 (Mail Processing), in Function 4 (Customer Service), and Function 7 (Bulk Mail). We also expect the USPS to blame the decrease in letter and flat volume on the Internet as being a driving force in these reductions.

Some of the things we will endeavor to strengthen and secure for the union are: the COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment), no-layoff clause, no more than a 50-mile limit on excessing, strong conversion language under Article 37.3.A.1, decrease the PSE percentages while looking to convert them to career, striving to have an all career workforce, better health insurance with lower costs, reduction of sub-contracting everywhere, including Maintenance and PVS (MVS), enhancing and improving the expansion of USPS's services, improvement for part-time flexibles (PTFs) with a better work-hour guarantee and at least one day off per week, and reducing the time it takes for new workers to move to the higher salary levels so our members can advance to the higher rate of pay.

As you can see, our union has a lot to accomplish, which is why we need everyone to be an APWU member. This year we have increased our membership by approximately 50 members, and by over 100 in the last two years. We are always looking to add to our Central Florida Area Local's family. Conversions to career status is one of our chief priorities, and once the excessing events cease, the conversions of Part-Time Flexibles (PTFs) and Postal Support Employees (PSEs) should be picking up.

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Officers for 2016-2018

President - Joe Paul
jpaulapwu@gmail.com

Vice President - Robert "Bob" McSorley
cfalvp@gmail.com

Secretary Treasurer - Peter Fournier

Maintenance Craft Director - Benjamin Love

Clerk Craft Director - Wanda Wroten
Assistant Clerk Craft Dir. - Victor Sanchez

Motor Vehicle Craft Director - Gilbert Vega
Assistant MVS Craft Director - Ron Hester

Director of Safety & Health - Stephen Nelson

Trustees are Kathy Vazquez, Orlando Morris, Frank Marra

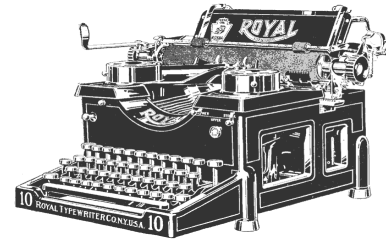
Contact Numbers

Union Hall: 407-854-6396

Fax Machine: 407-854-6399

CFAL Website

CFAL1462.org



Message from the Editor...

Any members who would like to contribute articles for possible inclusion in the next issue of the Chatter are encouraged to do so. To submit your article via email please contact the Editor at bloveapwu@gmail.com. If you prefer to submit it in writing you can mail them to the Local Union Office.

All submissions will be reviewed and may be edited before inclusion in the Chatter. Please ensure that you include your full name with your submission so that we can credit the author. Anonymous submissions will not be printed for legal reasons.



Benjamin Love

Editor
bloveapwu@gmail.com

The Postal Chatter is the official publication of the Central Florida Area Local. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CFAL, its officers or its members. It is the policy of the Local to promote the "Freedom of Speech" but it reserves the right to refuse to print any article deemed improper, libelous or unfit for publication. The CFAL also reserves the right to edit any article submitted to fit the format of the letter. All persons wishing to submit an article for print in the Chatter may do so by send the article to the Union Hall, attention CFAL Chatter. All members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles, opinions or other news items of interest. The Chatter will not print birthdays, marriage, death, or other personal notices unless submitted by the party do to legal reasons. The Chatter is subject to errors such as spelling, grammatical or other

We are currently tracking PSE work-hours and all available hours to demonstrate full-time duty assignments throughout our local to secure opportunities for all of our members to be able to bid on desirable duty assignments. Safeguarding quality futures for our members and their families is paramount!

This past year we have successfully fought several Removals, 7 and 14 Day Suspensions, Article 16.7's (Emergency Placements), Letters of Demand (LOD), and many Letters of Warning and other elements of discipline. We currently have eight Officers and approximately 34 Stewards/Alternates throughout our Local. I would love to have an APWU Steward or Alternate Steward located in each office. I have conducted five Steward classes in the past 15 months and am always eager to educate the new members. If you are interested in learning to assist your fellow brothers and sisters as a Steward or Alternate Steward, please send me an e-mail indicating your interest.

We are always updating the APWU Bulletin Boards with fresh and up-to-date information. I keep an extensive e-mail distribution list that I use to update our members with relevant information surrounding the various issues/concerns from all over our local, as well as sending out a weekly video. Keeping you informed is one of the most important things we can do. If you would like to be added to my distribution lists, simply send an e-mail to JPaulAPWU@gmail.com. I do not share any of your contact information and always send emails in a blind copy format to protect your privacy.

Below are a few of our goals that we are always working on:

- Establishing new career jobs
- Working to convert non-career employees (PSEs) to career status, as well as conversions of Part-Time Flexibles (PTF) to full time
- Providing an ongoing training program for Officers, Stewards, and Alternate Stewards where we have already conducted 5 Steward's classes in the last 15 months
- Continuing to keep our membership informed on issues around the local through email distribution lists and weekly videos
- Keeping our local fiscally responsible
- Constantly fighting the one-person staffing on the DBCS machines
- Fighting the sub-contracting issues predominantly in the Maintenance and Motor Vehicle crafts
- Keeping our members who file grievances apprised of the status of their cases at every step
- Recruiting non-members to join with US so that WE can continue to be a strong local
- I have also negotiated a **no-cost to you** \$4,000.00 Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy from American Income Life Insurance Company for our Central Florida Area Local members.

ALWAYS request your Steward when you are having an Investigative Interview and **NEVER** go in alone with the Postal Inspectors or the OIG! In closing, remember to always speak to a non-member and explain to them why they should become a member of the very organization that fights for every aspect of their livelihood. Organizing our workplace should be one of the most important goals of the APWU. We are under constant attack and we need everyone to help in the battle for our futures! Once again, thank you all for being loyal members of our Central Florida Area Local and I am proud to be your President!

In Solidarity,





News From The Vice-President

By: Robert 'Bob' McSorley

I want to remind everyone that the only way to start the grievance process is to discuss the issue with your immediate supervisor initially. We are proud of the steps that we have taken to open the lines of communication more today, in our administration, than in the past. We regularly publish our contact information, and are available for members to discuss daily issues, but it is quite common for President Paul and I to remind the employees that they must first request a Steward from their immediate supervisor. The call to us, although we welcome your calls, does not satisfy the obligation in Article 15 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement as the union being notified. In fact, there are many supervisors that tell the employee to call the union themselves when they have an issue. This is improper, since the employee(s) must first speak to their immediate supervisor, and if they are not satisfied, then he/she requests a Steward and mgmt. must contact the union so that a Steward can be provided. If this is occurring in your office we need to know. It is incumbent upon the Postal Service to make the effort to notify the union representative of such a request. It does not negate the responsibility of the grievant to discuss the issue with the supervisor at the time of the request for a Steward however. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract) reads in Article 15. (a), *"Any employee that feels aggrieved must discuss the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor within fourteen (14) days of the date on which the employee or the union first learned, or may reasonably have been expected to have learned of its cause."*

Another item that is very important to our members is that if you are ever asked to meet with management, there are things that you must consider. All bargaining unit employees are covered by the Weingarten Rights. Weingarten Rights provide our bargaining unit employees the right to have union representation present during interviews or procedures that could lead to discipline, termination, or for any items that may affect your personal working conditions. If any employees are presented with this scenario, whereas management says that they want to speak with you in private, or give you an Investigative Interview (commonly referred to as an II), you should ask, *"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative or Steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."* This is very important because if management tries to discipline or discharge an employee by using information that they obtained from you during an interview, after your requesting union representation, and representation was not provided, the Postal Service will have a lot of explaining to do at arbitration. The union is confident that we normally prevail in these types of cases. The OIG (Office of the Inspector General) is a different story as they are seasoned law enforcement officials and are very familiar what they can and can't get away with. If you are called into an office to be interviewed by the OIG, you will find that there are usually two of them (a lot of times they play good cop, bad cop). They will try to convince you that they are your friends and you do not need union representation. This cannot be any further from the truth! The OIG is there for only one reason, and that is to investigate and solve an issue, and if you are in their cross hairs then you must think about protecting yourself and your future and request a Steward.

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As an APWU represented employee you have rights, and you must use them. They will also ask you to sign a waiver of your rights to representation. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD AN EMPLOYEE EVER WAIVE YOUR RIGHTS TO REPRESENTATION.** An OIG investigation can be triggered by many things such as; if a manager or supervisor suspects wrongdoings of an employee, or in instances that have nothing to do with our employees. The OIG investigations have a rather large scope of responsibilities, but if and when they want to speak with you, you **MUST** request a Steward. A Steward doesn't have to be provided unless you ask for one so **ALWAYS** do so! The Central Florida Area Local represents employees in multiple OIG investigations each year. It is imperative that employees request a Steward. I must reiterate, the OIG is not your friend!

If I were to ask the question, *"What is the meaning of Success"*, I would probably receive many varied answers. One person may say, *"I believe I am a success if I am able to put my kids through college"*, or *"To bring up my kids as successful law abiding contributing members of society."* There are many different subjective reasons that each of us have. We equate success to a thought or idea that we have in our own minds as a gateway to accomplishment. Now we can ask ourselves, how much of these successes or future goals can we relate to the lifestyle that we have achieved by being an APWU represented employee. I think each of us can come to the same conclusion. It would be difficult to achieve the successes that each of us has experienced without the American Postal Workers Union. In today's economy it is unlikely that USPS employees would continue to receive the pay and benefits that we enjoy without the American Postal Workers Union. Our ability as workers to collectively bargain has given us the security that most businesses in our country do not enjoy. We have approximately 1075 union members in the Central Florida Area Local #1462 of the American Postal Workers Union, and approximately 300 non-members. This is a huge gap. We are approximately 78% organized. This means that there are 22% of the employees receiving APWU benefits for not contributing anything to continue our fight, both locally and nationally, for all of our futures. I could write a book covering the reasons that employees use to justify why they are not members of the only organization that fights for their livelihoods. Some examples I have heard in the past are, *"A previous President or Steward somehow did them wrong"*, *"I do not believe in unions"*, *"My money is so tight I cannot afford it."* The fact is that no one can afford not to join the union! Having 22% of non-members seriously affects our negotiating power. President Paul and I are constantly striving to share the reasons and explain the benefits of being union members to non-members; in fact, we are in the middle of a mailing campaign to reach out to non-members and we are asking for your assistance as well. We have sent a pre-stamped return envelope, a union sign-up form for them to fill out and send back, and a personalized letter to each non-member explaining the benefits we enjoy as members of the APWU. Approximately 1 out of 5 Clerks, Maintenance, and MVS (Motor Vehicle) employees are non-members. We are asking you to reach out to these people and ask them if they are a member, and try to educate them that we need everyone to band together to show solidarity going forward. The Postal Service is going to make strenuous efforts to take away, or significantly reduce the benefits that we've enjoyed for many years this upcoming negotiation period, and we need the strength of all of us to protect the livelihoods that we have come to enjoy. Once it's done we will be in an unfortunate place where we will not be able to un-ring the proverbial bell.

In Unity,

Bob McSorley



Dollars and Sense

By Peter Fournier, Secretary Treasurer

First off, I want to thank everybody for taking the time to read this chatter. I hope everyone weathered the hurricanes okay. If you are like me, you probably had some trees and limbs go down and lost some roof shingles. Unfortunately, I need a new roof and should be getting one in November. For those of you with loved ones in Puerto Rico, hope everything works out for the best.

I recently came back from the Secretary Treasurer's training at the All Craft Conference. The class was taught by Roosevelt Stewart of the APWU. Roosevelt discussed some best practices for locals to use regarding the management of their finances. Some suggestions included a local travel policy and establishing a budget committee, so if anyone is interested in being involved with the budget committee, please contact Joe Paul.

Now let's get to the financials of the local. When we took over the local in January of 2016, the balances of our accounts were as follows. The four Chase accounts totaled \$71,868. The total of our Priority Credit Union account was 31,780. This brought the cash on hand for the local to approximately \$103,648. The local currently has \$186,582 in its four Chase accounts. The total of the Priority Credit Union Account is currently \$10,069; bringing our current cash on hand for all accounts to \$196,651. We are over \$90K above what we were when the current administration took over. Pretty impressive for only 22 months of work. We currently owe only \$86,817 on the mortgage for the union building, very impressive.

Joe Paul continues to increase the membership by signing up new members. He recently sent out a packet to non-members stressing the importance of joining and becoming a member. There have been other members who have signed up non-members; and to all of you I say thank you. Every time we increase our membership, we increase our income, and that is always a good thing. We have also gotten salary increases by virtue of the COLAs, and even though the amounts have been small, every bit helps. The APWU can't control the amount of the COLA, but they make sure we get them.

In Solidarity,

Peter Fournier

Secretary Treasurer
Central Florida Area Local





LOOSE SCREWS

By: Benjamin Love, Maintenance Craft Director

Once again, our Maintenance Craft is coming under attack from all sides. Headquarters and Area are directing local Management to play with the staffing packages in an obvious attempt to cut jobs, local Management are subcontracting out everything they can on the building side because they are already short staffed and local Operations Management do everything they can to make sure we do not get a Maintenance Window on our machines. As overwhelming as that sounds we are not alone!

I recently came back from the 2017 All Craft Conference and this same scenario is playing out across the entire Nation. In fact, we are faring better than most of the Local's I spoke with, but we still have a lot of work to do. That's right I said WE have a lot of work to do. Because no matter how dedicated nor how knowledgeable your Local Officers are, we cannot protect the Maintenance Craft alone. Now more than ever before it is important that you correctly fill out your Route Sheets documenting what you do each day. If you are in a facility that does not issue Route Sheets you need to request a Steward. Every Maintenance Craft Employee should be given a Route Sheet at the beginning of their day detailing what work is to be done. As projects/repairs are added throughout the day we need you to make sure that you write them down and submit to Management so that there is an accurate record of the work performed. I know this might not seem that important, but this documentation is sometimes the only proof we have to justify creating and/or keeping a Maintenance Position.

Another very important thing that you can do to protect Your Craft is to ensure that you are working within your level. If you are a Maintenance Mechanic level 7 then you should not be signing off routes listed as a higher minimum skill level. The same goes for Mail Processing Equipment Mechanics level 9. I'm not saying that you aren't able to do the work. I know we have some very knowledgeable employees in Maintenance and most are capable of working well above their grade. If you continue to do this though, you are hurting your fellow employees and hurting your Craft. Management is on a crusade to eliminate higher level Positions and by you working above your level you are helping them accomplish their goals faster!

Subcontracting is another weapon Management is using to chip away at the Maintenance Craft. Instead of using our employees on overtime which would help show the lack of staffing, Management is regularly subcontracting jobs out and in many cases paying much more than it would have cost to perform the work in house. We as a local are challenging all this subcontracting but we need our Membership to continue to write statements when they see contractors on site performing work. The grievance procedure is slow, and I know it's easy to get frustrated waiting on answers, but we need to continue to be vigilant and write witness statements to support our cases. No matter how slow the grievance procedure is, it is still our best way to combat Management giving our work away. Eventually it Will catch up to them!

Your Maintenance Stewards are reviewing staffing packages and challenging Management's attempts to Revert any current jobs. We are also fighting to prove that MORE Maintenance jobs are needed. Please continue to support your Craft by helping with the things I've mentioned above. Together we can Protect Our Jobs!

In Solidarity,

Benjamin Love



Clerk Craft Director Report

By: Wanda Wroten

I was lucky enough to attend the All Crafts Conference at the beginning of October this year and there was information provided that will assist with grievances, and possibly help stop violations of Article 1.6 violations where management is performing Clerk craft work, improper 204B usage, PSEs in EAS positions, DBCS staffing, and FMLA qualified protective leave.

There are some issues that are a continuing problem at both the Orlando PDC and Seminole PDC such as:

Orlando PDC- (i) overtime rotation, as well as being called at home for overtime, (ii) one man staffing on automation machines, (iii) management performing bargaining unit Clerk work, (iv) violations of the employee's Principal Assignment Area (PAA) has consistently been an issue in both PDCs, (v) attendance discipline;

Seminole PDC- (i) overtime rotation, (ii) management performing bargaining unit Clerk work, (iii) violations of the employee's Principal Assignment Area (PAA), (iv) expeditors not being utilized on all sides of the PDC, (v) Mail Handlers performing Clerk work, and (vi) attendance discipline.

When it comes to one man staffing on the automation machines, it is the APWU's position that two Clerks are scheduled regardless of the run or mail volume. If a Clerk comes in to begin tour and sees only their name on the schedule, that Clerk needs inquire with their supervisor who their partner is today, and why isn't a second person scheduled. Take note word for word what the supervisors response is and ask to see your Steward to submit a statement as to what took place. Make sure to submit a filled-out PS form 1767 (Safety Hazzard) referencing the understaffing of the machine. The same would apply if two Clerks begin tour and are assigned to the same machine, but later one Clerk is removed. The same procedure as stated above would apply whereas you should inquire as to why and where the Clerks partner was moved to, and again, take notice what management stated as the reason.

Management performing bargaining unit Clerk work and Mail Handlers crossing craft is a problem. It is a must that you civilly address the supervisor for them to cease and desist performing Clerk work, or the Mail Handlers performing Clerk craft work, and request that a Clerk take over those duties. Make note in detail of what work is being performed, and the time limits and intervals (not just performed Clerk duties for 3 or 6 hours), the supervisor's or Mail Handler's name and any response given, and at what time a Clerk was provided. Whether it is gate-keeping, automation duties, scan where you band, etc., always ask to see your Steward and file the statement. When management moves a Clerk out of their PAA to another area, due to having the skills and abilities, it should be by juniority, and moving them back to their PAA by seniority.

Overtime rotation- Management is supposed to be keeping the overtime rotation daily, and if a Clerk feels they are being bypassed on overtime that day, the Clerk has the right to inquire with the supervisor if there is overtime, and to see the rotation list where management started and stopped the day prior, and the list for the day in question, and the same if calling SDO (off day) overtime. If management isn't notating on the rotation list, or calling the overtime in the proper order, request to see the Steward in order to help solve the problem.

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At the Seminole PDC there are some Clerks that have some training as expediting. Any Clerks or Expeditors, that aren't normally assigned to the area that is supervised by Wanda Lewis, can submit a Buck slip (Item 0-13) requesting training for that side of the building, and she will supposedly make sure that Clerk receive the training. SDO Lewis claims she will not work anyone without the proper training due having to be in SOX compliance. If any Clerk submits a request (do it in duplicate) for training and isn't allowed for some reason, request to see the Steward so we can address the scenario.

FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act)- Any career or non-career employees may qualify for protected leave if they meet the eligibility requirements at the time the leave starts; that is, they must have been employed by the Postal Service for an accumulated total of 12 months over the past 7 years (including any prior career or non-career service), and have worked a minimum of 1250 hours (including any prior career or non-career service) during the 12 month period immediately preceding the date the leave begins. The 1250 work hours includes overtime, but excludes any paid or unpaid absence. The only exceptions are Military Leave and periods of Back Pay. (JCIM 2017 Article 10, page 18 Work Hour Requirement)

PSE Clerks – I have come across some discipline cases where the PSE Clerk who has been on a scheduled 8 hour a day work week, may be under the impression that they were guaranteed 4 hours, and had at times filled out a PS Form 3971 and left after 5 hours, and at various times after working only 4 hours in the day. If management has been scheduling the PSE for 8 hours a day each week, the only time the PSE goes home prior to that 8 hours is if management instructs them to go home, otherwise the PSE is required to work as scheduled.

JCIM Article 7.1.B.8, page 39; Postal Support Employee term limit-PSE Clerks have no daily or weekly work hour guarantees, except that any PSE who is scheduled to work and reports shall be guaranteed two (2) hours of work or pay. PSE's are able to enroll in the FEHB (Health Plans) as of day one. For the first year you would be paying the full premium, in the second round of their subsequent 360-day term of service, PSE's are able to enroll in the AP-WU Consumer Driven Health Plan in which the USPS pays 75% of the premiums. Open enrollment for the health plans will be from Monday, November 13, 2017 and ends Monday, December 11, 2017.

I hope some of this information has been helpful to our members.

Wanda Wroten

Clerk Craft Director, CFAL 1462



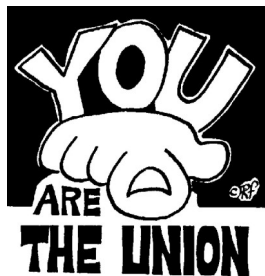
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The next Union Meeting is Thursday
November 9, 2017 at 7pm. The
Union hall is located at 10501 S Orange Ave,
Suite 117, Orlando, FL 32824. Please mark your
calendars and attend. It is your Union.

Let your voice be heard!!!