

APWU DEAF & HARD OF HEARING Newsletter

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APWU Deaf & Hard of Hearing Task Force

Central Region

Larry Trayner
3970 Roosevelt
Dearborn Hgts, MI 48125
NALTRAY@aol.com

Eastern Region

Marcie Ryan
3496 Caloosa Way
Woodbridge, VA 22193
HeavenCat1@aol.com

Northeast Region

Vacant

Southern Region

Mike Clifton
6505 Muckleroy Street
Houston, TX 77076
mclifton50@hotmail.com

Western Region

Patsy Orlando
5961 West Commonwealth Ave
Chandler, AZ 85226
MoeOrlando@aol.com

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LETTER FROM THE SPOKESPERSON

Hello Union Brothers and Sisters of the Eastern Region:

This is the first newsletter since the installation of new Task Force representatives at the APWU 10th National Deaf and Hard of Hearing Conference in Reno, Nevada. I first would like to say thank you to all the members that have wished me well and offered encouragement in my new position as your Eastern Region Task Force representative. Many thanks for your vote and confidence in allowing me to serve the proud members of the Eastern Region. I am humbled by the confidence and faith you have entrusted to me and intend to be worthy of your decision. I will continue to do the job you have elected me to do to the best of my ability.

Thanks to all of you who exercised your voting rights in the election process of our APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing representatives. I also wish to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the other candidates fortunate enough to have been selected by the membership to serve as Task Force representatives, Larry Trayner, Central Region and Patsy Orlando, Western Region as well as Mike Clifton, Southern Region (unopposed). I am excited about our prospects for the future and pledge to do my best to keep this Task Force moving forward.

I would like to thank all the candidates for their effort and time spent in running a campaign. Those who took the time and expense to involve themselves in the election process and fell short, you have already demonstrated by your willingness to run for office that you are a valued leader. Please stay active; we need your leadership and solidarity.

I want to thank Hugh Fung (former Central Region), Ron Harbeson (former Eastern Region), Howard Schlang (former Northeast Region) and Val Zimmer (former Western Region) for their service to our APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing. We must now come together for the betterment of our brothers and sisters and focus on the challenges ahead.

I would like to update you with what Task Force has been doing since the conference.

On November 17, 2005, the former Northeast Region representative, Howard Schlang and myself were assigned by the APWU National Headquarters to attend the APWU/USPS Meeting to test the "Notifying Phone System" for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on enterprise Resource Management System (eRMS) at the USPS Headquarters. *(Con't on page 2)*



Marcie Ryan

2005-2009 Task Force Representatives



Mike Clifton, Patsy Orlando, Marcie Ryan and Larry Trayner

APWU, AFL-CIO
1330 L STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20005
202-842-4215
WWW.APWU.ORG

President

William Burrus

Executive Vice-President

C.J. "Cliff" Guffey

Secretary-Treasurer

Terry R. Stapleton

Regional Coordinators

Central Region
Sharyn M. Stone

Eastern Region
James M. Burke

Northeast Region
Elizabeth Powell

Southern Region
William E. Sullivan

Western Region
Omar M. Gonzalez

All Articles are written by the Task Force Representatives, unless otherwise noted. Opinions and views are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the APWU position on matters. Members are welcome to submit articles and pictures to the Editor of the Task Force Newsletter for future considerations.

Newsletter Co-Editors

Marcie Ryan
Larry Trayner

LETTER FROM THE SPOKESPERSON

(Con't from page 1)

On January 9, 2006, I was asked to attend a Labor/Management Meeting on proposed modifications to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing call-in reporting procedures for Deaf and Hard of Hearing workers not reporting to work at the APWU Headquarters. This was a follow-up meeting on enterprise Resource Management System (eRMS). The former Northeast Region Task Force representative, Howard Schlang (who resigned from his position as of February 3, 2006), was assigned to attend but he couldn't make it.

Please convey to the Task Force any concerns as they arise from Deaf and Hard of Hearing postal employees on the call-in procedures. They should document their concerns in detail, beginning with their employee I.D. #, a detailed description of the problem(s) experienced when they placed the call, the time, what they were requesting, who the person they were speaking with, as well as the confirmation number, if applicable, the place of work (Post Office, City and State). Please advise them to e-mail this information to my attention, Marcie Ryan (HeavenCat1@aol.com) with a copy to Judy Beard (jbeard@apwu.org). This will enable us to keep a detailed file with which to address these concerns.

On March 5-8, 2006, Task Force members Larry Trayner of Central Region, Mike Clifton of Southern Region, Patsy Orlando of Western Region and I had our first Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force meeting at the APWU Headquarters in Washington, D.C. We discussed many different issues.

On March 27, 2006, I was appointed to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee to serve during the 2006 National negotiations of our Collective Bargaining Agreement along with 12 other members.

On April 6, 2006, The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and Cornell University co-hosted a forum entitled: "21st Century Solidarity: Promoting a Living Wage and Civil Rights for all Workers." Since the APWU Headquarters has been asked to participate in the discussion, they invited the Central Region representative, Larry Trayner to be the APWU representative on the panel. The panel included leaders from the labor movement who spoke about their experiences and visions for collaboration with disability groups on issues of common concern (e.g. wage issues, civil rights issues, health care and other benefits issues, globalization, etc.). I was asked to attend as a participant.

On May 20, 2006, the Southern Region representative, Mike Clifton was sent to Portland, Oregon to attend and represent the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force at the Celebration of Life memorial service for Robert L. "Bob" Tunstall. Bob had retired in 2004 from the APWU National as Secretary-Treasurer and liaison for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force.

On June 29-30, 2006, the Rank and File Advisory Bargaining Committee had its first meeting at the APWU Headquarters in Washington, D.C. There was discussion on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Deaf and Hard of Hearing which was approved by the committee to be administered in the proposal for contract negotiations. Hopefully there will be some changes and improvements in the contract.

On August 12, 2006, Task Force members Larry Trayner, Mike Clifton and I conducted a presentation at the Clerk Craft Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Our Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, Judy Beard introduced us and we began our presentation with a video on Deaf & Hard of Hearing Accommodations in the United States Postal Service, Collective Bargaining Agreement
(Con't on page 3)



Rank & File Bargaining Advisory Committees

LETTER FROM THE SPOKESPERSON

(Con't from page 2)

[language applicable to Deaf & Hard of Hearing and enterprise Resource Management Systems (eRMS) call-in procedures]. During the presentation Clerk Craft Director, Jim McCarthy introduced APWU National Executive Board, President William Burrus, Executive Vice President C.J. "Cliff" Guffey, Secretary-Treasurer Terry R. Stapleton and Director, Industrial Relations Greg Bell, who addressed the delegates. Unfortunately, due to the limited amount of time we were provided to give our presentation, I did not get the opportunity to talk about the eRMS.

On August 14-18, 2006, Task Force members Larry Trayner, Mike Clifton, Patsy Orlando and I attended the APWU 18th Biennial National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

On August 19, 2006, I attended the post convention workshops in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I went to the Editor's Training workshop in the morning and to the Excessing workshop in the afternoon.

On August 28, 2006, the Rank and File Advisory Bargaining Committee had their second meeting at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Washington, D.C.

On August 29, 2006, negotiations for a new national agreement between the Postal Service and its largest bargaining unit – the American Postal Workers Union – began at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Washington, D.C. The APWU and USPS also established a schedule for future meetings. The Rank and File Advisory Bargaining Committee and the National Executive Board were observers throughout the proceedings.

Yours in Union Solidarity,

Marcie Ryan

APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force
Representative, Eastern Region and Spokesperson



Larry Trayner, American Idol Singer Vonzell Solomon and Marcie Ryan at the Convention.

CENTRAL REGION REPORT

By Larry Trayner, Central Region Representative



Larry Trayner

I do not know if I have ever told you HOW and WHY I became involved in THE UNION and Task Force, so let me tell you WHY.

After transferring to become a Deaf Specialist, I witnessed management treat the Deaf/HH unfairly. It enriched my experience, while at the same time, making me feel disappointed, saddened, and frightened as to what the future might hold for the Deaf/HH membership's rights, job and working conditions.

I had choice to make when I became involved. Should I fight for the dignity, and respect for the membership (union) or against it (figure it out)?

DISABILITY DOESN'T STOP ME. DISCRIMINATION CAN.

MOBILIZE

Unions must create vehicles so that people with all levels of disabilities, can work together as brothers and sisters in the struggle for workplace democracy and economic justice. Bring us into every facet of union activities so our voices are heard to!

ORGANIZE

Work is more advantages for us when we belong to a Union, who is this referring to? Unions??? Unions need to ensure their organizing strategies include tactics aimed specifically to working individuals with disabilities. Union can show us that they are on our side by including the Deaf/HH perspective in certification, drives and open, conspicuous participation in campaigns on public policy.

REPRESENT

Get us to the bargaining table. Issues of accessibility and accommodation are bare-bones fundamentals for working people with disabilities. Union have a legal responsibility to raise them with our employers.

EDUCATE

Make it a priority to integrate Deaf/HH rights perspective into all aspects of Union education. Executive, Task Force, Bargaining teams and members our rights at work and our public policy demands need to be understood. Working people with Deaf/HH need components and materials targeted to our needs and goals in the union education system.

That's why I decided choosing to be a representative my Union Deaf/HH Brothers and Sisters.

Before I close, I want to give a special recognition to our Sister Marcie Ryan for being chosen to, not only become our Spokesperson, but also being appointed by the National Executive Board to serve on the Rank and File Committee. Let us all give our best regards to her.

Until next newsletter...

CONVENTION REPORT

By Marcie Ryan

The American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO 18th Biennial National Convention was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on August 14-18, 2006. Prior to the Convention there were pre-convention activities held during the weekend featuring the four APWU craft conferences that were held on 12th and 13th. The Clerk Division meeting started with greetings from our National Clerk Division Director, James McCarthy, other Clerk officers and Clerk NBAs as well as greetings from President William Burrus and his Executive Board members. The Clerk Division meeting was attended by Task Force representatives Larry Trayner, Mike Clifton and I. The Task Force members gave a presentation at the Clerk Division meeting on August 12th. While all the crafts focused on issues specific to the next round of negotiations, Clerk Division delegates discussed the threat to jobs posed by automation and jurisdictional disputes (RI-399), as well as upgrades. Three other deaf and hard of hearing delegates were also in attendance at the pre-convention activities.

On Sunday night, we had entertainment from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. provided by country western singer Crystal Gayle and American Idol singer Vonzell Solomon. Following the entertainment there was an Ice Breaker held from 9:30 p.m. until 12:00 a.m.

Task Force representative, Patsy Orlando and eight other deaf and hard of hearing were also in attendance at the National Convention including two guests. Four were from the Eastern Region, three from the Central Region, three from the Southern Region and four from the Western Region.

The convention was hosted by the Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union, Philadelphia Area Local and Philadelphia BMC Local.

On Monday, August 14, we had General Session from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Call to Order and the Welcome Address was given by Convention Chairperson, Fran Friel of the Lehigh Valley Area Local, PA

Invocation conducted by Father John Pidgeon of the Epiphany of Our Lord Church

Presentation of Colors presented by Philadelphia Bulk Mail Center Color Guard

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Bernie Ogozalek, President, Lehigh Valley Area Local, PA

National Anthem sang by Regina Sanders, member of Philadelphia Area Local, PA

On behalf of the 3 host locals, Vince Tarducci, President, Philadelphia BMC Local, PA welcomed the delegates

APWU Auxiliary and Executive Board were introduced by Secretary-Treasurer Terry Stapleton

Legislative Guests were introduced by President William Burrus

Celebration "100 Years of Progress" (video)

Former Officers were introduced by President William Burrus

International Guests were introduced by President William Burrus

President William Burrus was introduced by Executive Vice President Cliff Guffey

President William Burrus' State of the Union address

Roll Call of Officers

*Rules Committee

*Credentials Committee

*Finance Committee

*Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Emmie Brown of Philadelphia, PA and I went to POWER Caucus after the general session. (Con't on Page 5)

In the evening, we had National & Host Local, Welcome Night. But some of us attended the Philadelphia Area Local Hospitality and Welcome Night. We were invited by Emmie Brown who is a member of Philadelphia Area Local.

On Tuesday, August 15, we had General Session from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Announcements

Invocation conducted by Reverend Reginald C. Johnson, Sr. of the Zion Hill Baptist Church

(Con't on Page 5)

CONVENTION REPORT

(Con't from page 4)

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Harmon Elliott, President, Philadelphia Area Local, PA

Gulf Coast Hurricane video

*Credentials Committee

*Labor-Management Committee

Announcements

In the evening, we had Baseball Night (Phillies vs. Mets) and COPA "Patriot Night".

On Wednesday, August 16, we had General Session from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Announcements

Invocation conducted by Father John McNamee of the Saint Malachy Catholic Church

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Mike Stephenson, President, Lancaster Area Local, PA

*Credentials Committee

*Constitution Committee

*Report on Resolutions referred to the National Executive Board

In the evening, we had Casino Night which consisted of an Atlantic City Trip. But some of us were invited to a dinner party at one of the interpreter's house in New Jersey. It was a relaxing evening and a wonderful exhibit of hospitality.

On Thursday, August 17, we had General Session from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Announcements

Invocation conducted by Rabbi Nancy Fuchs Kreimer of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Gina Meade, President, Keystone Area Local, PA

*Credentials Committee

*Appeals Committee

*Organization Committee

*Legislative Committee

*Human Relations Committee

*Health Plan Committee

Announcements

On solidarity day all of the delegates wore our APWU T-shirts. The delegates protested consolidation and nationwide deterioration in postal service by having a rally at one of the post offices. Nearly 3,000 blue T-shirt-clad APWU union members sent a strong and unified message to the Postal Service, as they surrounded what used to be the Philadelphia Processing & Distribution Center protesting failing service and mismanaged network realignment programs. Our chant during the rally was "Save Our Service".

In the evening, we had the Parade of States.

On Friday, August 18, we had General Session from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Announcements

Invocation conducted by Minister Jameela Bynum of the Sharon Hill Baptist Church

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Chuck Pugar, President, Pittsburgh Area Local, PA

(Con't on Page 6)

CONVENTION REPORT

(Con't from Page 5)

*Credentials Committee

*Clerk Craft Committee

*Maintenance Craft Committee

*Motor Vehicle Service Craft Committee

*Support Services

*Formal Resolutions Committee

*Safety & Health Committee

Closing Ceremony

The APWU provided reasonable accommodations at the National Convention with 4 large screens for real time captions on the convention floor and 4-6 interpreters daily.

For your information, I've included a brief summary of 3 submitted resolutions.

A Brief Summary of Resolutions are as Follows: (Resolved)

Data/Emergency Pagers: That American Postal Workers Union negotiates to have United States Postal Service incorporate Wireless Pagers for Deaf & Hard of Hearing employees for emergency alerts and other safety issues. (Concurrence)

Direct Line Video Phone to Video Phone for eRMS: The Postal Service implement a direct National Video Phone (VP) line to management personnel who are fluent and trained with the use of Sign Language and Deaf Sensitivity to take eRMS calls, and be it further. The Postal Service upgrade accommodations for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on an annual basis as new technology is developed. (Concurrence)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force and Convention Delegates: That the five (5) Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force committee members, upon meeting their Local's Constitutional requirement to be a delegate for the National Convention, shall be paid all necessary expenses to attend the APWU National Convention from their own National Budget. (Nonoccurrence)

I had the opportunity to enhance my craft knowledge by attending post-convention workshops held on 19th. In the morning I took the workshop on Editor's Training and in the afternoon I took the workshop on Excessing in the Clerk Craft. There were also three other deaf and hard of hearing delegates in attendance at the post-convention workshops.



**Christopher Anaya Sr—Fresno Area Local,
Fresno, California**



What do you think of the National Convention?

First time attended, wow, very impressive, too many delegates.

Impressive— Henry Lowe, Singer Interpreter is doing great job as well as I feel I am hearing.

Number of Deaf/HH is not enough. I need more in the future.

Surprise! 4 screen with closed captions, Interpreters, Everything provides my needs.

I was very nervous when I went to the microphone to get point of information and I did make it! I was proud of myself.

Overall, very enjoyed with deaf groups.

**Emmie Brown—Philadelphia Area Local,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**



What do you think of this convention.

First day—Feel, wow, lots of people, lots of debates. Excited see Deaf/HH delegates but disappointed not enough numbers. Proud to day. Interpreters were working so hard.

Surprise!

The delegates were processing too fast and efficient.

Overall enjoyed, Interesting received Pins, very challenge. So much different than deaf culture.



SOUTHERN REGION REPORT

Things you should know or remember:

In an effort protect bargaining unit work. File a grievance when you witness the Postmasters/Station Managers or other supervisors perform the bargaining unit work including:

- Distribute letters or flat bundles to the carrier case, clearing and help carrier-accountable mail
- Second notice filing or perform the Customer Service Window
- Collect and dump undeliverable bulk rate business mail (UBBM)

President Burrus has agreed to help document violations by sending APWU state/local officers to the small post offices to see how much the bargaining unit work that are performed by the management.

In order to protect our job positions, report any contract violation, any work violated by the management, we ask you to contact your union officers as soon as possible.

As another APWU National Convention is coming close in August 2006 (next month). Those of you who have the resolution that has been approved and signed by your Local or State Presidents but have not send it to the Convention Resolution Committee. You can contact your APWU /Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force Region Representative. We can make an effort to submit them to the Resolution Screening Committee to bring the resolutions on the convention floor. Please contact us as soon as possible. It is never too late, never hurt to try.

Those members who still don't know about our friend passed away last May 12, 2006. I mourn the recent passing of our former liaison officer for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force Committee, Bob Tunstall. He was also a retired Secretary-Treasurer. Those of you who know Bob as well as I did would probably agree that he was an easy going fellow and liked to joke or tease his friends. I'll miss him very much and remembered our time together during APWU events.

COPA

It's important to continue to contribute COPA donating to protect our job rights. President Burrus has announced that the seating at the convention again will be decided by how close each state is to its COPA goal. Meaning that the state with the highest COPA goal get the "Front Tables" at the National Convention close to the stage floor. Your support will be the determination which table the Deaf/Hard of Hearing group will get. More number of the Deaf and Hard of hearing members at the convention, the better it will be!

Lastly, I want you the South Region Deaf/Hard of Hearing members to know that I didn't forget you all brothers and sisters – Thank you for re-elect me to the Task Force Committee and believe in me. Of course, I will continue need your support and feed backs in the future.

Yours in Solidarity

Mike Clifton



WESTERN REGION REPORT

Greetings, Fellow APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing Members!

Thank you to Western Region delegates that have been kind enough to elect me as your Western Region Deaf-Hard of Hearing Representative.

Since October of 2005 I have worked very closely with the Task Force. We met in March this year in Washington, D.C. and have discussed new issues for our Deaf-Hard of Hearing brothers and sisters. We have also discussed yet another upcoming seminar for APWU Deaf-Hard of Hearing and I will keep you posted on the exact date of this seminar. Also discussed was a resolution to be submitted to the National Convention. Hopefully, the delegates will pass two important resolutions: first, to automatically send five Deaf-Hard of Hearing Task Force members to the Convention, and second, to have data/emergency pagers available in all Post Offices. The last issue is to be hopeful with updating MOU in regards to negotiating the contract.

CERTIFIED INTERPRETER LICENSURE: Please be aware that new laws will take effect in autumn of 2007 for most states. Licenses shall be issued to all community interpreters who submit an application, and meet all requirements including being certified by a national organization. Only licensed interpreters may practice within the states after autumn of 2007. The only exceptions shall be interpreters who interpret in religious or educational settings.

WINDOW CLERK: I would like to highly advise that in the future, when a Deaf or Hard of Hearing employee bids for the job and do the written test that he or she is provided an interpreter AND a note-taker so as to avoid any misinterpretations.

ELECTIONS: Please be sure that you allow yourselves time to go and VOTE for the legislative candidates of your choice whom you feel will protect you and your job. Make a note to VOTE in the primary elections being sometime of the month of September of 2006. As well as general elections on November 7, 2006.

I would like to highly praise the diligent job that Marcie Ryan, Eastern Regional Task Force, has done for us as our Spokesperson. Her ability has been over the top, and I would like to thank her for a job well done. Kudos to you, Marcie!

I will be sending out a new article after I return from the National Convention being held in Philadelphia, Pa. this August

Sincerely,

Patsy John Orlando

APWU Deaf/ Hard of Hearing Task Force

Representative, Western Region



TO:	APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing Members	DATE:	October 19, 2006
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Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Hello **apwu** Deaf and Hard of Hearing Members!

Have you ever tried calling into work to request an unscheduled leave but, because of the long series of questions you had to answer, it took you a long time just to obtain the confirmation number? It has been reported to the APWU Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force that some of these calls have exceeded 30 minutes. If this has happened or happens to you, please let us know.

Also, please convey to the Task Force any concerns about the call-in procedures, whenever they arise. Your concern should be documented in detail, beginning with your employee ID #, a detailed description of the problems you experienced when the call was placed, the time of the incident, what you were requesting, the name of the person you talked to, as well as the confirmation number, and the name and address of your place of work. This will enable us to keep a detailed file with which to address these concerns.

Please email this information to the attention of the Task Force members, whose information is listed at the very end of this letter.

It is the APWU's position that these calls take too long. We, the Task Force, would like to shorten them. In addition, we believe that the questions are often phrased in a way that is misunderstood by the caller. Remember, you have 14 days to file a grievance when you feel your rights have been violated under the collective bargaining agreement. Quoted from the Collective Bargaining Agreement, "*Any employee who 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*". Also remember, that in order to file a grievance, you are required to contact your local shop steward.

Yours in Union Solidarity,

APWU Deaf & Hard of Hearing Task Force

Central Region – Larry Trayner

NALTRAY@aol.com

Eastern Region – Marcie Ryan

HeavenCat1@aol.com

Southern Region – Mike Clifton

mclifton50@hotmail.com

Western Region – Patsy Orlando

MoeOrlando@aol.com

« Those who are from the Northeast Region, please contact Marcie Ryan. «

