

Preparation for Contract Negotiations

Rank & File Bargaining Panel Meets

“This will not be a giveback contract,” APWU President Burrus told members of the union’s Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee at their first meeting on June 16. “Negotiations may be difficult,” he said, “but it is our job to find a way around the obstacles we face.” Contract negotiations are scheduled to begin on Sept. 1; the current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires Nov. 20.

Burrus stressed the significant role the committee will play in contract negotiations. “The union negotiating team will rely upon your views as we bargain.”

In accordance with the APWU Constitution and By-laws, any tentative agreement between the union and management must be approved by a majority of the committee before it can be submitted to members for a ratification vote. Each member of the union’s National Executive Board names one person to the committee; a 14th member, appointed by the president, is a representative from the APWU Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force.

The union president also remarked on the significance of bargaining. “What more could we ask for than the opportunity to speak for ourselves through contract negotiations?” Burrus asked. “The right to bargain for improvements in wages and working conditions is not a birthright. It is the result of union activity,” he said.



Seated, left to right, are Danny Pride, Cleveland Area Local; Carolyn Pierce, Broward County (FL) Area Local; Committee Chair Clarice Torrence, New York Metro Area Local; and Gwen Ivey, Philadelphia Area Local. Standing are Chuck Pugar, Pittsburgh Metro Area Local; John Driver, Greater Los Angeles Area Local; Mike McDonald, Massachusetts APWU; Robert Johnson, Greater CT Area Local; Larry Miller, 480-481 (MI) Area Local; Bob Dempsey, Boston Metro Area Local; Debra McDaniel, Mail Equipment Shop Local (DC); MacLawrence Ford, Indianapolis Area Local; Marcie Ryan, Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force; and Koquise Nolan, Oklahoma City Area Local.

“Many in our society do not enjoy that right.”

Director of Industrial Relations Greg Bell explained the negotiation process with the committee, and reviewed some of the union’s tentative proposals.

“We expect management to make many concessionary demands,” Bell said. “But we must fight to improve the wages and working conditions of postal employees.”

APWU Fights to Save Saturday Service

APWU members have launched an aggressive campaign to *Save Saturday Service* – and the fight is approaching an important milestone. A resolution supporting six-day mail delivery continues to gain momentum in the U.S. House of Representatives. House Res. 173 says “the U.S. Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its six-day mail delivery service.”

H. Res. 173 currently has 217 cosponsors – a total of 218 votes are needed to adopt the “sense of the House resolution,” introduced in February 2009 by Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO). Although adoption of the measure would not create new law, it would send a strong signal that lawmakers oppose the elimination of Saturday delivery.

“I encourage APWU members to contact their U.S. Representatives and ask them to *Save Saturday Service*,” APWU President William Burrus said. “If they are already co-sponsors, thank them. If they have not yet

signed on, please encourage them to do so.” APWU members have actively protested the Postal Service’s plans.

The union has prepared a flyer to help locals alert the public about the dangers of ending Saturday delivery, a fact sheet that sets the record straight about the Postal Service’s financial predicament, and other material. Members are encouraged to visit the *Saving Saturday Service* pages at www.apwu.org for these materials and for updated information on the union’s fight to save Saturday delivery.

“The APWU opposes the proposal to eliminate Saturday mail delivery, and we intend to use all of our resources in a nationwide program of opposition,” said Burrus. “We ask our members and their families to continue the fight to *Save Saturday Service*.”

