

APWU NEWS

Bulletin

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO



WILLIAM BURRUS, President MYKE REID, Editor

Thank You, Bill

APWU members and friends celebrated the 53-year career of President William Burrus and his contributions to the union at a tribute dinner Aug. 24.

“You have been my friends, my comrades in arms, and most importantly, my family,” Burrus remarked at the end of the program. “Our goal has been to improve the lives of postal employees, and we have been successful beyond our wildest dreams.

“Over the past 40 years, we have done good things together,” he said.

Burrus described the changes that have occurred since he first started his postal career in Cleveland, Ohio.

“We began this journey with limited rights, anemic wages, and no right to contest managerial decisions. There is no constitutional right to file grievances,” he said. “But we had a dream – that postal employees one day would enjoy the full benefits of democracy in their place of employment.”

Burrus noted that his career spanned many important postal events, including



APWU President William Burrus will retire at the end of his term in November.



Koquise Nolan, president of the Oklahoma City Area Local, serenades President Burrus.

some prior to the establishment of the APWU.

“We engaged in marches, letter-writing, picketing, and other forms of protest to convince others and ourselves that we were deserving of change. It came suddenly! A strike, legislation, and a merger of five unions, and suddenly we had arrived.

“We had the opportunity to have a voice in our future and we did,” he said.

Burrus’ presidency was praised by former St. Louis Congressman Bill Clay, Sr.; former AFL-CIO president John Sweeney; APWU Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell; and former APWU Retirees Director Douglas C. Holbrook.

“Bill has been an anchor of stability in the struggle for workers’ dignity, and a pillar of strength in the matters of union

rights,” Clay said. “Postal workers live better, more productive lives because of his efforts.”

Secretary-Treasurer Powell and Omar Gonzalez, Western Region Coordinator, read a letter to Burrus from President Barack Obama.

“I commend you and all the members of the APWU for the work you do every day to help more families gain access to the American dream,” Obama wrote.

Burrus concluded the tribute dinner by thanking the members for their help along the way.

“The world has rotated many times since I assumed a leadership position ...and the timing was compatible with my skills and drive,” he said. “It was through your counsel and support than I was able to spend my time improving the lives of postal employees and I leave knowing that as a team, we made a difference.”

Convention Rejects Dues Increase

Leaves Intact Procedure for Filling Officer Vacancies

Delegates to the National Convention rejected two controversial constitutional amendments on Aug. 25.

Convention participants refused to increase union dues, and declined to change the procedure for filling vacancies in the union's officer structure. Changes to the union's Constitution and Bylaws must be approved by a two-thirds majority.

After lengthy debate, a proposal to raise dues by \$3 per pay period failed. "I have said on a number of occasions that we have sufficient resources," APWU President William Burrus said before the vote. "I ask that you defeat this resolution."

The Constitution Committee, which screened constitutional proposals, also urged delegates to oppose a dues increase.

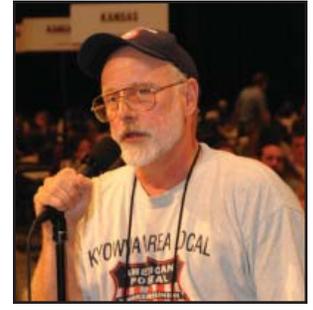
Proposals to raise dues were submitted by more than a dozen locals, and were



Don Foley



Chuck Pugar
Committee Chair



Dave Daniels

supported by several national officers. "The simple fact is representation is not cheap," said Don Foley, Maintenance Division NBA for the Central Region. "Representation costs money."

But several opponents of a dues increase suggested that locals that are struggling financially should reduce their expenses or increase dues locally. "If you need a local increase, take it to your membership," said Dave Daniels, president of the KYOWVA

Area Local.

The next order of business was discussion of a resolution that would have changed the procedure for replacing union officers when they leave their positions in mid-term. Delegates rejected the proposal.

The convention voted in favor of a resolution to increase the national union's contribution to the Postal Press Association, an organization that supports local and state editors.

International Labor Leaders Discuss Postal Challenges



Corporations are attempting to take over postal systems and a wide range of public services, warned Ramon Antonio Baldassini, general secretary of Argentina's federation of postal and telecommunications workers.

Union leaders from across the globe held a forum on Monday evening to discuss the economic and social trends that pose challenges for postal workers worldwide. Panelists recounted how the shift to privatized postal systems in New Zealand, Argentina, and Europe has hurt workers and consumers, and discussed strategies for fighting back against postal "liberalization" policies.

In Europe, privatization has meant lower wages, service cuts, and higher postal rates, said Ingeborg Saetre, vice president of the Norwegian Union of Postal and Communication Workers. To fight back effectively, she said, "we have to win the media" through aggressive outreach campaigns.

"We have to get the support of the public, agreed Dennis Lemelin, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

Rolando: ‘The NALC Can Count On the Support of the APWU’

The APWU and the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) share a common history of struggle, and work “side by side every day” to fight for better working conditions for postal employees, NALC President Fredric Rolando told APWU convention delegates on Aug. 24.

The NALC and the APWU must work together during a time of “tremendous struggle for the Postal Service,” he said. The two unions must demand that Congress relieve the USPS of the onerous mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits, and must defeat USPS plans to eliminate six-day delivery.

“Every day the Letter Carriers know that they can count on the support of the APWU as we fight the Postal Service’s misguided plan to eliminate Saturday delivery,” the NALC president said.

The NALC president said that postal workers must stop the USPS from making a massive strategic blunder by cutting Saturday collections and deliveries. He praised the APWU for its march through the streets of downtown Detroit on Aug. 23 to Save Saturday Service, and expressed confidence in the unions’ efforts to derail the Postal Service’s proposal.

“I’m convinced we will win the battle, and that postal employees have a very bright future,” he said.

Rolando also stressed the importance of voting in the upcoming congressional elections in November, and gave delegates an assignment – he urged them to contact their U.S. representatives and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 5746, a bill to restore financial stability to the Postal Service.

“Nothing will do more to enhance our job security than taking five minutes to do that simple task,” Rolando said.

The NALC president said that the unions have made “real progress on the legislative front,” and that the Obama administration and many members of Congress support six-day delivery.

Rolando told the assembly that both the APWU and the NALC will take more creative approaches to contract negotiations in order to “preserve the Postal Service and good, middle class jobs.”

If the Postal Service comes to the



NALC President Fredric Rolando

bargaining table with the intent to “gut our jobs and benefits, they will have a bloody fight on their hands because we can and we will resist any such demands,” Rolando said, a pledge that drew cheers and whistles from the delegation.

Rolando concluded his speech by commending APWU President Burrus for his many years of “dedicated service to the trade union movement.”

“You will be deeply missed for your skill and relentless passion to advance the cause of all postal employees in America,” he told Burrus.

APWU COPA Raffle Winner #1



Steve Albanese, Assistant Legislative and Political Director, presents Marjorie Carter of the Dayton Ohio Area Local with 100,000 American Express points. Carter was selected in the first COPA drawing on Aug. 25. Delegates can purchase raffle tickets at the COPA booth in the exhibit hall.

Video Highlights

Convention highlights are broadcast in hotels:

*Courtyard by Marriott - Ch. 18
Greektown Casino Hotel - Ch. 2
Hilton Garden - Ch. 38
Marriott at the Ren. Cen. - Ch. 76
MotorCity Hotel & Casino - Ch. 4
Westin Book - Ch. 9*

Delegates Discuss Maintenance Issues At '2010 Foley-Robbins Conference'

On Aug. 21 and 22, Maintenance Division delegates gathered at pre-convention workshops to discuss subcontracting, workplace safety, and job training, in preparation for contract negotiations.

"As a division, we are anticipating tough negotiations," said Steve Raymer, Maintenance Division Director. Raymer said the USPS is likely to come to the bargaining table with ill-conceived attacks on members of the division.

"We are more than adequately prepared to represent maintenance employees and

increase work opportunities," he said.

The delegates engaged in spirited debates on topics ranging from Article 12 excessing to the dues structure of the union.

On Saturday, national officers reported on maintenance craft issues, and attendees received a CD containing updated training material to take home to share with other members.

Sunday was devoted to an "open forum" discussion of resolutions, and a briefing on the elimination of positions in the craft.

Raymer said the division



Maintenance Division Director Steve Raymer

seeks expanded opportunities for all positions within the craft by enhancing and protecting bargaining unit work.

Raymer designated the division meetings the "2010

Foley-Robbins Maintenance Conference," named for National Business Agents Don Foley (Central Region) and Charlie Robbins (Southern Region) who will retire in November.

Support Services Members Commit to Organize the Unorganized

At a pre-convention conference on Aug. 22, Bill Manley, Support Services Division Director, stressed the importance of organizing.

"We need to let everyone at the convention know that our duty is to organize

the unorganized," Manley said. "By doing so, we are protecting the benefits and wages of our workers."

Support Services is comprised of a diverse group, including computer analysts, call center operators,

accounting specialists, and nurses. At the conference, delegates discussed their contracts, excessing, and communication with management.

The Postal Service is increasingly relying on subcontractors to perform bargaining unit work in the division, Manley noted.

Jeff Kyle, a private sector truck driver, said he is thankful to be a part of the APWU and to be covered by a contract.

"We deal with other highway carriers who are not covered by a union, and management "makes up the rules as they go along," Kyle said.



Support Services Director Bill Manley leads delegates in a discussion of issues affecting the craft.

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Credentials Committee

As presented by Chairperson Geneva Greenlee of the Indiana APWU, the preliminary report of the APWU Credentials Committee for Wednesday, Aug. 25, is as follows:

The 20th Biennial Convention's 2,389 delegates represent 356 locals, 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Also in attendance are 84 national officers and five Retirees Department delegates.