

APWU NEWS

Bulletin

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

CLIFF GUFFEY, President

MYKE REID, Editor

President Cliff Guffey:

‘We Must Win in November’

In his first State of the Union address, APWU President Cliff Guffey praised union members for their activism and said postal workers must win our battles in the political arena.

“When we called upon you, you stepped up,” he told delegates to the 21st National Convention.

The union president credited union members with derailing legislation – at least temporarily – that would devastate the Postal Service, and with stopping massive closures of post offices.

“If I told you three years ago that we were going to stop the Republican bill – H.R. 2309 – in a Republican-dominated House...we wouldn’t have believed it.

“You stopped it! The union stopped it! You did it,” he declared. “We did it!”

Three years ago, management threatened to close 8,000 stations and branches, he reminded union members. “But you stopped them.”

APWU members also influenced the debate in the Senate, Guffey said, so that the need to protect service standards got the attention it deserved.

“I’m just damn proud of you – every one of you,” he said. But the struggle is far from over, he pointed out, and the threat to the Postal Service and postal jobs remains. We’re going to have to win this politically,” he said.

And the fight to protect the Postal Service and postal jobs in part of a much larger struggle, Guffey said.

Thank Veterans – Give Them Jobs!

When he testifies on Capitol Hill, members of Congress frequently thank



APWU President Cliff Guffey.

him for his military service, the union president noted. But the thanks are hollow. “Thank the veterans by giving them jobs,” he said. “Bring home the jobs!” Bring work back to the post office, where so many veterans work, he said.

The U.S. must stop giving tax breaks to companies that take jobs overseas, Guffey said. “Give them tax breaks if they build a factory in this country.”

Many of the richest people in the country are no longer willing to pay their fair share, he said.

The founding fathers, who were among the richest in the 13 colonies, “pledged their lives, their sacred honor and their wealth” in the fight for independence, he pointed out. But most of today’s wealthiest citizens wouldn’t take such an oath. They are hoarding wealth, refusing to pay their fair share of taxes, and controlling an ever-greater portion of the economy, he said.

The richest 1 percent must pay higher taxes and the revenue must be used to

stimulate the economy and create jobs, Guffey insisted.

Stop Attacks on Public Workers

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, the 2006 law that is responsible for the Postal Service’s financial crisis, was designed “to destroy the Postal Service, destroy the unions, and destroy collective bargaining in the Postal Service,” he said. Postage and postal salaries have both tracked inflation since 1970, the union president pointed out. But the PAEA law prevents the USPS from raising rates above inflation, while forcing the agency to pay billions in unnecessary costs.

Despite these limitations, we have done well in contract negotiations, Guffey said. “And we’re going to continue to fight together, and we’re going to win.”

“We must go out together and win in November,” he warned, or we will suffer the same fate public workers in Wisconsin endured.

If we lose the elections, if there’s a Republican House, a Republican Senate and a Republican president, it won’t be a matter of years, it will be a matter of days before we lose our right to collective bargaining, he said.

We must stop the attacks on public workers, Guffey declared. “We can do it if we stand together, if we stay mobilized... We will stop it!

“We’ve got to work our hearts out to fight for the future of our country!”

Debbie Wasserman Schultz on H.R. 2309:

“We’re Not Going to Stand for It”

Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), chair of the Democratic National Committee, told delegates on the opening day of the convention that, “There are serious financial problems facing the post office, but every single one of these problems can be solved.

“We need real solutions to adapt to the changing needs of the American public. But my Republican colleagues would send a wrecking ball right through the entire agency.

H.R. 2309, the bill introduced by Rep. Darrel Issa (R-CA) “is an unconscionable attempt by Republicans not to save our nation’s Postal Service – but to dismantle it altogether,” she said.

“And we’re not going to stand for it!”

“Should the Issa bill pass, this fight will still be far from over,” said Wasserman-Schultz.

In April, the Senate passed its own postal reform legislation. While the Senate bill isn’t perfect, it could have been a lot worse if not for the efforts of the APWU, she pointed out.

“Your passion and your activism went a long way toward improving the Senate bill,” she told the delegates.

“President Obama is dedicated to a thriving Postal Service for generations to come,” she said. “And he will never allow anyone to take the right of collective bargaining away from you!

“Under President Obama, we’ve had 29 consecutive months of private-sector job growth. The president rescued the U.S. auto industry and saved more than 1 million jobs. Mitt Romney said we should have simply ‘let Detroit go bankrupt.’

“President Obama has expanded access to affordable education for all. He signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. And thanks to the Affordable Care Act, no American will ever again go bankrupt just because they get sick.”

“But we still have more to do. That’s why the president has a jobs plan that



Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Chair of the Democratic National Committee.

would put teachers, police officers, firefighters and construction workers back to work.

“And it’s why he’s urged Congress to take action to immediately stop a tax hike on 98 percent of Americans.

“Mitt Romney opposes this plan because it actually asks millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share. Mitt Romney and his running mate – Rep.

Paul Ryan – believe in an economy of the 1%, by the 1%, and for the 1%.

“The Ryan budget would raise taxes on middle-class workers to pay for tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires. It would end Medicare as we know it and increase seniors’ health care costs by thousands of dollars a year. Democrats reject this misguided agenda.

“I believe a child needs an education more than a millionaire needs a tax break. I believe that protecting Medicare for seniors is more important than protecting subsidies for oil companies. And I believe bringing jobs home to hardworking middle-class Americans is more important than protecting tax breaks for those who ship jobs overseas.

“This November, voters will make a choice that will determine what kind of country we’re going to become. We can choose an economy trickling from the top ... or we can build our economy from the middle class out.

“We can choose to let our country fall backward with Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan or we can choose President Barack Obama, and keep moving our nation forward for all hardworking Americans!”

Star Spangled Banner



Five APWU members – one from each APWU region – sang a stirring rendition of the national anthem on the convention’s opening day. Shown from left to right are: Koquise Nolan, of the Oklahoma City Area Local; Ross Baker, of the South Shore [MA] Area Local; Sherry McKnight, of the Baltimore Francis ‘Stu’ Filbey Area Local; Christopher Ribucan, of the Maui Area Local, and Sharyn Stone, Central Region Coordinator and member of the Indianapolis Area Local.

Delegates Pay Tribute to APWU Members and Loved Ones



Alex Sullivan, son of Aurora Local Shop Steward Tom Sullivan

APWU delegates honored fallen union members at an emotional memorial and prayer service on Aug. 19 sponsored by the Human Relations Department.

The theme was “A Time for Healing” and featured presentations by Director of Human Relations Sue Carney; Shelly Lucido, President of the Aurora, CO Local; and Tom Sullivan, an APWU shop steward from the Aurora Local whose son – Alex Sullivan – was killed in the July 20th shooting rampage in an Aurora theater.

Brother Sullivan shared stories about his son, who was an avid movie



Human Relations Director Sue Carney presided over a moving ceremony.

fan. He encouraged APWU members to “enjoy the things from your childhood that used to make you happy.” He also thanked APWU members for their thoughts and prayers. “Your cards and emails have given us strength to deal with this tragedy.”

Delegates also remembered our APWU brothers and sisters who gave their lives or lost family members and loved ones

serving our country in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“One thousand soldiers were killed and 10,000 have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan since our last convention,” Carney told the assembled delegates.

APWU members who passed away since the last convention were remembered, including a special tribute to Julie Bell, Executive Vice President of the Lorain



Tom Sullivan

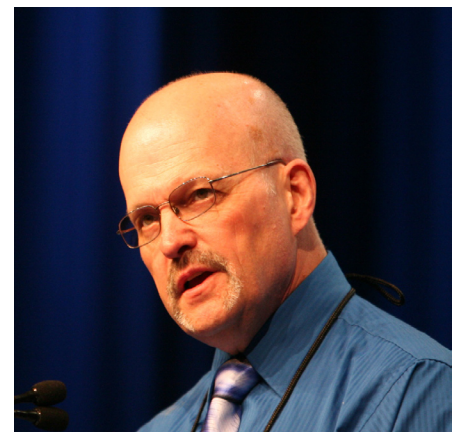
‘Financially Solid,’ Committee Reports

The APWU is financially solid, the Finance Committee reported to delegates on Aug. 20. Despite turbulent times, “the Union has weathered the financial storm that we reported on last convention,” the panel wrote.

Although membership has increased, plant consolidations loom, so the union cannot afford to grow complacent, committee members said. They provided a detailed written report to delegates after reviewing and verifying the union’s financial records.

Richard Haefner, the committee chair, also provided a supplemental report to delegates that offered a point-by-point rebuttal of unsubstantiated

County Area Local. Other APWU members remembered include John Sharkey, vice president of the Tennessee Postal Workers Union; Tim Beck, President of the Rockville Centre Local; Dwight Slaikou, president of the Waterloo Local; Bob Jarrell, president of the Greensboro BMC local; Tim Mannion, president of the Western Colorado Area Local; and Steny Yu, a member of the Detroit District Area Local killed on the job while attempting to extinguish an alleged fire.



**Richard W. Haefner
Finance Committee Chair**

allegations of financial improprieties that were posted on the Internet on July 30.

Pre-Convention Workshops Draw Enthusiastic Audiences

The APWU Research and Education Department presented 21 pre-convention workshops on a range of informative topics from legislative and political action to creating union publications on Aug. 17. Many of the workshops drew enthusiastic and attentive audiences.

The Non-Traditional Full-Time (NTFT) Duty Assignments workshop was among the most popular. Susan Wells of the Tulsa Area Local said, "I've taken this workshop before and I'm taking it again as a refresher to make sure Postal Service management carries out NTFT duty assignments properly in my area. The USPS has started posting jobs and they are currently not doing it properly. I want all the ammunition I need to fight improper actions taken by the Postal Service."

Tools for Creating Desirable Duty

Assignments in the Clerk Craft also captured the interests of many delegates.

Jesse Gobunquin of the Greater Seattle Area Local explained his interest. "In Seattle, we have NTFT duty positions becoming available and I want to be ready. I'm participating in the workshop today because it's much easier to learn how to create desirable duty assignments using the computer than trying to figure it out manually. I find it much easier to use the software provided by APWU.

Robin Seyl of the Twin Cities PDC Local attended the workshop on Union Publications – Reaching the Membership. "I learned about publishing newsletters, and I saw great newsletter samples. I also got to see great content and layout suggestions. Other APWU members shared information about what has worked well in their newslet-

ter and Web sites, and I plan to use this information to guide my own work. I also received some up-to-date guidance on the Hatch Act and its implications for the union publishing related to the upcoming elections.

Janeil Payne, president of the Salem Oregon Area Local, enjoyed the workshop on Protecting Clerk Craft Work in Smaller Offices. "We discussed situations with Postal Support Employees (PSEs) and how to get some converted to full time. We also discussed the need to file grievances to ensure that PSEs get paid at the correct pay rates. The workshop also covered the issue of tracking Postmaster hours due to contractual restrictions on postmasters doing bargaining work.



Research and Education Director Joyce Robinson, top left, organized 21 pre-convention workshops.

Video Highlights

Videos of convention highlights are being broadcast each day in hotel rooms:

*Westin Bonaventure (Channel 45);
The Sheraton (Channel 39); and
JW Marriott (Channel 71).*

APWU NEWS Bulletin
21st Biennial Convention
Bulletin No. 1
Aug. 20, 2012

Credentials Committee

As presented by Chairperson Geneva Greenlee of the Indiana APWU, the preliminary report of the APWU Credentials Committee for Monday, Aug. 20, is as follows:

The 21st Biennial Convention's 1,663 delegates represent 305 locals, 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Also in attendance are 83 national officers and five Retirees Department delegates.