

# Aurora News

Official Newsletter of  
Aurora Colorado Local, APWU

September 2003

## President's Report

By Rick Borsick

Thanks to everyone for refusing to bid on the two PM Carrier bar assignments, one each at Tower Station and the Main Office. This is what management has in store for us for the future they are going to post as many vacancies and repost other duty assignments as Sales, Service and Distribution Associate. In most cases these postings will be in violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and will therefore be grieved. The reason the jobs are being posted in this manner is because District Manager Ellis Burgoyne has determined that "every clerk job at every station in the country should be window/distribution". This was the comment he made to clerks at the Town Hall meeting a few weeks ago when many of us who attended complained about the slow service customers receive in Aurora Postal lobbies. The failure to properly staff the windows and provide the 5 minutes or less service standard has been an issue that the Aurora Local has brought to management for the past 15 years. Now, management is reacting to the issue as an opportunity to repost everyone's job. I hope every member recognizes that voicing our concerns about the lack of proper staffing at the Town Hall meeting resulted in management responding that we all need to work harder. Keep this in mind the next time management questions you about your job and please join the

local in boycotting any future Town Hall meetings.

The problem with adding window duties to every job is that management has withheld (and reverted) Sales and Service Associate assignments; therefore, when a mail processing assignment is posted with window duties added there is an automatic violation of Article 12 of the CBA. In addition management has increased the number of casuals at the same time resulting in further contract violations. Worst of all, management is aware that they are in violation. These actions have only served to further deteriorate the local labor relation's climate.

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### ***COPA and the President's Commission on the Post Office***

The Presidential Commission on the Post Office has released its findings. The commission suggests that a three-member Postal Regulatory Board appointed by the President will decide if

our wages, health benefits and retirement benefits are to high. If this board makes that determination they will unilaterally adjust our wages and benefits regardless of what we have negotiated. In addition the commission suggests maintaining the less than cost discounts enjoyed by the big mailers, increased work sharing and a process for closing postal facilities that circumvents congressional and community involvement. These measures if adopted by Congress will have a drastic negative affect on the rural and "low activity" Post Offices and a disaster for small businesses. One way to combat the President's Commission on the Post Office is to contribute to the APWU's Committee on Political Action - COPA. Many of you locally have contributed to this cause and it is greatly appreciated. A COPA drive is underway locally and we are asking that each and every member contribute. With corporate America, the business mailers, the USPS and the Bush appointed commission against us we face an uphill battle. The challenge is going to involve every member. The Local will be asking you to give to our Committee on Political Action. You will be called on to write your Congressman and Senators. Committees will be formed to enable us to reach out to churches, other unions, neighborhood associations and other political entities to form a coalition. We have to get the word out and let the public know that the Post Office will be changed forever if the Presidential Commission has its way. This is a time for unity in our Local. This is a time for us to do all we can to defeat any adverse actions taken against us by the commission.

## Dan's Tool Box

By Dan Van Minnen

Over the next few issues I will be writing about the recommendations that were made by the President's Postal Commission (PPC) and the

stance that is being taken by the APWU at the national level. I welcome any input that you as members have and if there are questions or concerns please write in. As you should know by now this commission is out to change not only our way of life as Postal workers but also the service that this great institution has provided to American communities for over 225 years. First, the Commission's recommendations are suggesting a variety of changes to the universal service that we provide; (the way that mail is delivered at almost each level). Secondly, are broadened changes in the way

that our Collective Bargaining Agreements are processed, (our CBA hard fought for rights that we are in jeopardy of losing). Finally, the structure of the Postal Service as a business model, (this will include sweeping changes at every level of our organization). These recommendations were submitted to Congress on July 31, 2003 and will now under go debate and through the legislative process to become law. The Laws that are currently on the books such

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# CPWU 2003 State Convention

By *Dan Van Minnen*

The State Convention for Colorado Postal Workers was hosted in Durango from May 16th through 18th. Local members present were Rick Borsick, Bob Burton, Tom Sullivan, Maureen Collard and Dan Van Minnen. The main subject of discussion was the APWU strategy in getting the word out about President Bush's Postal Commission. As you may or may not know the Bush Postal Commission is performing a study that will recommend changes that will lead toward privatization of

the Postal Service and that study goes to Congress at the end of July. The Commission is comprised of nine members, 8 of which are Republican. The Commission is looking at a Corporate consolidation of the Postal Service and that means a reduction of plants and jobs. Don't let terms like work sharing, job excessing, contracting out or privatization go without a debate. Our jobs are at stake and if you don't believe that then maybe you should ask yourself why the Bush administration has suddenly proposed a change in the rules that govern 1.8 million Federal jobs. These new rules call for contracting out work to minimize costs where this could not be done before due to union labor. All in all it could effect over half the federal jobs in our government alone.

Rob Strunk the national Assistant Clerk Craft Director informed the attendees of this information and asked us to go back to our locals and ask for your help. How do ask? Well, you can start by writing letters to your state and Federal law makers, you can make your

neighbors and local businesses aware that universal service, six day delivery and collective bargaining are all at risk The Postal Service is under attack and we can be replaced if this Commission has its way. Companies like UPS, Airborne and Fedex will be able to mail our mail but the real question is for how much? We can only assume that the days of 37 cent letters will be in the past and will bring back fond memories as to the reasonable price for the service. The final word of advise from Mr. Strunk was to find out about C.O.P.A., the Committee on Political Action, from your local and to recognize its importance and support it.

All in all it was a successful Convention, Tim Mannion, Western Area Local President did a wonderful job with Step 1 and Step 2 grievance procedures and discipline remedies. The APWU Auxiliary collected \$2,285.00 for COPA on behalf of the CPWU State Delegates, way to go State Delegates! We left knowing that there is a fight ahead, we must unite and fight for our rights to keep what we have earned through Collective Bargaining.

## Aurora News

PO Box 471234  
Aurora, CO 80047

Aurora News is the official newsletter of the Aurora, Colorado Local APWU.

We welcome original articles, stories and artwork from our local union members and their families. All opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the editor, local officers of the Aurora, Colorado Local APWU or the publisher. The editor reserves the right to determine whether material submitted for this publication shall be printed and will edit if needed for space. Libelous statements or personal attacks will not be printed. Deadline for submitting material to the editor is the 7th of the month. All material must be signed, however, anonymity may be requested.

### OFFICERS

President - **Rick Borsick**  
Vice-President - **Bob Burton**  
Secretary-Treasurer - **Tom Sullivan**  
Editor - **Dan Van Minnen**

### STEWARDS

Altura - **Bob Burton**  
Buckingham - **Vacant**  
Fletcher - **Shelly Alvarado**  
Gateway - **Vacant**  
Hoffman Heights - **Vacant**  
Main Office - **Rick Borsick**  
Tower - **Vacant**  
Maintenance Dept. - **Vacant**

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month (with the exception of the months of July and August) at the Local office located at -

**1010 South Joliet Street  
Aurora, CO 80012.**

Do your part and attend a meeting convenient for you. Get involved brothers and sisters,

**Separated we will Fail but  
In Unity we will Prevail!**

### Dan's Tool Box from page 1

as the Fair Labor Standards Act, (FLSA) of 1934, the Weingarter ruling which protects your right to union representation and other issues such as time and a half pay and premium pay. All protected laws and benefits of organized labor forces in this country. These are the things that are under attack by President Bush and the Republican controlled Congress if the PPC gets it way. This is a clear message that they are against not only you and I as Postal workers but the American working family unit in this country. It's all about Big Business and their ability to skim profits. Profits those big corporations want to make by either cutting services or through the reduction of a competitive workforce. Yes I say that we are competitive and you and I know that we do it better each and everyday.

The recommendations that were submitted can be found in detail at [www.APWU.org](http://www.APWU.org). They include changes in COLLECTIVE BAGAINING specifically our compensation being set by a board appointed by the President. A reduction in HEALTH AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS to include compensation benefits, for both current and future employees. Work sharing discounts that will exceed current Postal costs. Plant Closings and the closing of smaller Post Offices nationwide without citizen involvement. The establishing of a regulatory board with broad authority to set policies that normally should be set by Congress or the Board of Governors. President Burriss has stated that "The APWU strongly opposes all of these recommendations and will fight them with all measures that are at our disposal".

Make no mistake about it we are in a fight for our survival. This is a time to be united brothers and sisters and let our voice be heard! Keep your eyes posted on the Local bulletin boards for information about contacting your local representatives. We have sample letters available if you need help writing a letter. We are collecting for the Campaign on Political Action, (C.O.P.A.). This is another way of having your voice heard. You might say so what, this won't ever happen to me! So I'll tell you that if you would like to see 20% to 33% less of a paycheck with no Collective Bargaining rights than so be it. If you would like to see overtime go to a sort of comp time agreement at less than a premium rate made between you and management than so be it. If you want to pay more of your hard-earned dollars for your own health benefits then so be it. Just sit there and do nothing. You might say I pay my dues and that is enough! So let me say that is not enough! Our neighbors don't even have a clue as to the Commission's intent on destroying the service that all Postal Workers provide them and have done so for over 225 years. I hope that you are able to tell them about increased rates and the drastic deterioration of service that will become realized if this Commission gets its way! It is not too late, get involved and do your part; our survival depends on it. Oh and non-members if you are reading -- you are enjoying the hard fought for benefits that we as members have been paying for with our dues and the CBA. Why don't you guys attempt to do your share by joining the APWU so we can at least fight the greatest battle of our careers in unity? I guess we could all be greeters at WAL-MART for about \$8.50/hour if the Commission gets its way. Then you would not have to worry about me asking you to join a union -- because you won't have one.

# Sign-up a Non-Member. Your future depends on it!

Over the past several years, downsizing of the postal workforce has had a major impact on the level of membership within the APWU. Gone are the days that a new employee would be hired to fill the vacancy of the retiring employee and the massive hiring of the 1980's and 90's for new automation jobs. This decline in membership is felt at both the local and national levels. Since 1999 our local has lost over 250 members mostly due to normal attrition. The strength of our membership can only increase by either merging with other APWU locals within our state or by signing up our non-members. That's where your help is needed and vital to our continued success as a labor union. Your current standard of living and improvement of your standard of living all depend solely on the strength of our union. Don't kid yourself and think that there is another group or that management will work to improve your

standard of living. It's the APWU and only the APWU, who has and who will continue to fight for the rights and benefits of postal workers. There is no doubt that every member knows who are non-members of our local. Their names are posted on the bulletin boards and there is an incentive of \$100 for signing them up and making union ever freely talk to these non-members without asking them to pay their fair share and support the union. If anyone thinks that postal workers would be getting the same pay, benefits, and working conditions without a union contract, you're kidding yourself.

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All of our benefits, working conditions, and pay are the direct result of a strong labor union. Non-members add nothing to our collective strength they weaken our ability to continue to improve our standard of living. They are free loaders who ride on your backs. They reap the benefits and contribute nothing. Non-members always have a reason for not joining. They don't like a union officer, they don't like a steward, they don't have the money, etc. If that's the case do these same individuals renounce their citizenship because they don't like the President of the United States or their Senator? Since these non-members have no interest or belief in the protection of our collective bargaining agreement maybe these employees should be the first ones excessed out of their jobs and out of their facilities. The only reason any member should ever talk to a non-member is to demand they become a union member and make us stronger. How can anyone consider someone a friend when they refuse to help you by supporting the only organization that continues to improve your standard of Living? Think about it. Get involved and sign up a non-member today.

- REPRINTED FROM *THE OUTLOOK*

## VOE Bounty Drive

By Rick Borsick

Thanks to all of you that submitted your "Voice of the Employee" surveys and collected the bounty. My guess is that we received more surveys from the Clerk and Maintenance crafts

than management has had returned to them. The reason I say that I guess is because the Union does not know how many surveys are passed out. The campaign began when the members attending the General Membership Meeting in April voted unanimously to pay each member \$5.00 if they turned their survey in to the Local. The idea was raised at the meeting as one of several ways of dealing with management other than through the grievance / arbitration process. Although Labor Relations are good and improvements have been made, core issues remain unresolved. Management has been slow in com-

plying and implementing agreements. Tower Station for example has continually violated a spreading of the mail issue that was resolved in March 2002. The ongoing violation continues in spite of the Postmasters assurance that he would take care of the problem. There is a laundry list of issues but the "Five Bucks" program is an alternative to the devices we've used in the past that have given us less than satisfactory results. Let management know that your Union is your representative and by participating in our "Five Bucks" program your Voice will be Heard!

## ELECTION INFORMATION

**TO:** APWU Members  
**FROM:** The Election Committee

Nominations are now being accepted for the offices of **President, Vice President** and **Secretary/Treasurer** of our Local. Any member in good standing may be nominated for office. All nominations must be turned in by the September 9th, 2003 meeting. They can be mailed to PO BOX 471234 Aurora, CO 80047 or nominations will be accepted at the meeting.

No other nominations will be accepted after this date. After nominations have been made then ballots will be distributed to your listed address with the Local. If you have moved since the last election it may be wise to update your address with the Local.

By October 13, 2003 and in accordance with our Local Constitution and election rules, a ballot will be mailed to all members in good standing. Your ballot should be received at your home within a few days after that date. All members will receive one ballot and they must be marked with a [X] or a [V] in the box next to the candidate of your choice. There will be NO write-in candidates. If by some

chance you do not receive a ballot you can contact **Dan Van Minnen at 720-480-0461** or **Dvanminnen@aol.com** and a ballot will be issued to you within the next two business days.

All ballots must be returned in accordance with the balloting instructions that will be enclosed within. Returned ballots will be verified in accordance with election rules and must be received no later than 5PM November 7th, 2003. All verified ballots will be counted by the election committee with the results announced at the November 11th, 2003 meeting to be held at 1010 South Joliet Street, #201 Aurora, CO 80012.

# September 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Union Meeting	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

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