



# PPA award recipients



Proudly displaying 2011 PPA Awards after the Awards Banquet at the PPA National Editors' Conference in Orlando, Florida are editors (seated from left to right) John Durben, *The Badger Bulletin*; Tonya Brooks, *Fort Worth Area Local Outpost*; Jean Jones, *Tour's End*; Cathy Hanson, *Minnesota Postal Worker* (representing Mike Mazurkiewicz); Carol Moschella, associate editor, *The Dispatcher*. Standing from left to right are editors: Andrew Stevenson, *Philadelphia Postal Worker*; Paul Felton, *480-481 Communicator*; Robert Dyer Jr., *Evergreen State Postal Worker*; PPA President Tony Carobine; Danny Sawicki, associate editor, *Detroit Postal Worker* (representing Christopher Ulmer); Lance Coles, *Iowa Postal Worker* (representing Mike Mann & Bruce Clark); Frank Antinone, *The Dispatcher*. (Michael Long photo)

The Postal Press Association Awards Program was established 44 years ago at the 1967 PPA Conference in Cleveland. Originally called the Biennial Award of Merit Program, it was established for the purpose of recognizing editors, and newsletter contributors for outstanding work in writing, editing, and publishing. The first awards were presented in 1968 in Minneapolis.

The chairperson of the awards

committee organized the entries according to the proper category and sent the entries to the other members of the Awards Committee. Committee members independently reviewed and rated each entry using a point system. The results were tabulated by the chairperson to determine the top eight entries in each category. An outside judge then made the final selections from the finalists in each category.

Members of the Awards Commit-

tee included the following editors: Jenny Gust, *Black Swamp Outrider*, *Ohio Postal Worker*, Toledo, Ohio (Chairperson); Michelle Burgess, *Heartbeat*, Peoria, Illinois; Mike Reece, *Six-Bits*, Salt Lake City, Utah; Valerie Schropp, *Redwood Empire Area Local News*, Petaluma, California; Moni Lisenbe, *Lone Star Postal News*, Fort Worth, Texas.

The outside judge was Mary Echols, Publications Specialist, In-

ternational Brotherhood of Boilermakers. Commenting on her experience as the outside judge, Sister Echols said "I truly appreciated the honor of serving as judge for this competition. You have so many talented and creative publications within your organization. I enjoyed reading all the entries and learned quite a bit about the APWU in the process."

See page 3 for a complete list of award recipients.

## BEST NON-POSTAL LABOR STORY (First Place)

# A union story

By Beth Morrison, Editor  
*The Advocate*  
Great Falls, Montana

Phil waited alone in the break room up in the rafters of the old building. His paperwork sat in a file on the table. There was no need to look at it again before the meeting. He knew it all by heart. Four chairs sat around the scarred table. There was a small sink in the corner overflowing with dirty coffee cups. An ashtray sat on the table, overflowing with charred butts. He had smoked more than his one pack a day average and it was only noon.

He wasn't usually this anxious, but this had been a hellish period of time leading

up to this meeting. As the store manager of the Stroudsburg ACME Markets supermarket in Northeastern Pennsylvania for the past 20 years, Phil was no stranger to meetings with the Teamsters union. They represented the people who worked for him. Ordinarily, he loved his job and had good relationships with his employees. This just wasn't one of those days.

About a year ago, Jim P. transferred in from the Allentown store and worked as

Little did Phil know at that point, but that would be the nicest comment the DM would make during the inspection.

A week later the final inspection report arrived. When Phil opened it, he knew it wouldn't be good. What he didn't know is that it would be so vicious. The comments ranged from "Mr. Price obviously lets his employees walk all over him," to "Doesn't know how to motivate employees. He's too nice. He needs to learn how to use his

vice has to govern their own policies and procedures. When I and other union officials brought this to the attention of the postmaster, he didn't seem to care. He was going to do things how he wanted. As a direct result of not following the four pages of this procedure detailed in management's own handbook, the whole selection process became tainted.

When rules aren't followed, people get hurt. We have all seen that time and time

*"Kiddo, you're going to meet some people in your life who have no integrity and appalling bravado. Try not to let them roll right over you."*

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**Statement of purpose:** Published by the American Postal Workers Union National Postal Press Association, the *PPA Newsletter* is an educational tool designed to assist PPA members with the performance of their duties as communicators and to help promote the goals and objectives of the APWU.

**This publication is 100% union printer produced:**

**Union typeset, Union layout, Union printed.**



a cashier. Since he arrived, Phil has had nothing but problems with Jim, ranging from being late for work to laziness. A month ago, Jim progressed to womanizing, drinking on the job and stealing. Phil had no choice but to let Jim go.

The meeting with the Teamsters today was about that decision. Phil had everything documented, but when it came down to it, it would be his word against Jim's. Would the union representative believe him? He would soon find out.

A little while later, the door to the tiny room opened and in walked Jim with his union representative, Tom. Phil stood up and shook hands with Tom and also extended his hand to Jim. Jim declined the gesture. The three men sat down at the table and Tom started the meeting. He began by asking Phil to state his case and reasoning for firing Jim. Phil explained in detail the events leading up to Jim's termination. When Phil finished, he took a deep breath. It was out of his hands now. Damn, he needed a cigarette.

Tom turned to Jim and asked him to address the charges. Jim denied everything, sat back in his chair and said to Tom, "Now, it's time for you to do your job. Get me my job back."

Tom put the cap back on his pen, put his notebook back in his briefcase and snapped it shut. He stood up, looked Jim directly in the eye and said, "I'm sorry Jim, but Phil Price doesn't lie. There's nothing I can do for you."

Fast forward five years and Phil was anxiously waiting for another critical meeting to take place. The district manager was due to arrive shortly for an important store inspection. His employees had really pulled together and worked hard to put the store in prime shape for the inspection. He was proud of them. They were a good group.

When the district manager arrived, he simply said to Phil, "Let's begin." The first department they reviewed was the produce department. The DM looked around and walked over to a display of tomatoes. He picked up one, turned it around and promptly threw it on the floor at Phil's feet. He said, "There's a spot on that one."

position of power to intimidate and make his employees work harder."

The report included one final comment from the district manager. He wrote, "Phil, I know I put you through your paces during the inspection. I did that to demonstrate the kind of manager I expect you to be. I demand that all my managers do whatever it takes to get the job done, regardless of their personal feelings for their employees. If you demand more of your employees, they will give more."

The stories I have just told you are true. They are but a few of the stories that I heard many times as a child. You see, Phil Price was my father. It is from him that I got my strong belief in unions and he was never a union member. He was in management.

He would often say that he could trust and rely on his employees and the union that represented them far more than he could any of the upper managers he had to deal with. Shortly after that scathing store inspection, my dad decided that he needed to get away from the lack of integrity that was becoming more prevalent among upper management.

In the fall of 1980, he moved his family to southwestern Montana and bought his own little grocery store. He was happier than he had been in a long time. He had more time with his family and loved the area he now lived in. When times got tough, he would open his wallet and take out a copy of that last inspection report and look at it. That's all it would take to remind him of why he left.

I am sharing this all with you because this is the only way I know how to explain why I believe what I do and why I advocate for myself the way I do. Recently, a year-long battle over the awarding of the secretary position came to its conclusion. Believe me when I say that I knew just how it would turn out.

When I first applied for the position, I knew right away that the proper procedure wasn't being followed. Ironically, the procedure for selecting the Best Qualified candidate for this position isn't in our contract. It's in the USPS Handbook EL-312, one of the many handbooks the Postal Ser-

vice has to govern their own policies and procedures. When I and other union officials brought this to the attention of the postmaster, he didn't seem to care. He was going to do things how he wanted. As a direct result of not following the four pages of this procedure detailed in management's own handbook, the whole selection process became tainted.

The union won the grievance and the process had to be redone. Even so, I knew that I wouldn't be awarded the job. But, I personally had to see it through.

The second time around, it started out with the postmaster not following the proper procedures AGAIN. (No tests were given.) Then, the interview to end all interviews. I have never been asked so many personal questions in an interview in my life. Many of those questions, in my opinion, were inappropriate as well. Combine that with the statements he made to union officials regarding the grievance and me personally, I knew he wasn't going to be unbiased.

However, I do believe some justice has been served. I feel that I proved my point. Even though I wasn't awarded the job, it has now become public knowledge that he didn't do things correctly and his actions were questionable, to say the least. That's enough for me. I have been asked why I don't file another grievance or file a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. My answer to that is: I could do those things but I have much more important things in my life that need and deserve my time and attention right now.

You know, several years after my family moved to Montana, that same district manager showed up in my dad's store. He and his wife were visiting Yellowstone National Park and thought he'd take a detour and stop in and visit my dad. He walked in with a big smile and said, "Hey Phil! Long time, huh? I had to just stop in and see my favorite manager. While we're here, how about you show us around this little town?" My dad simply said, "Sorry. I'm busy."

After the man left, my dad told me about their brief conversation. He then said to me, "Kiddo, you're going to meet some people in your life who have no integrity and appalling bravado. Try not to let them roll right over you."

That's all I was trying to do...avoid getting rolled over.



# 2011 PPA awards presented

First place and honorable mention awards in 14 categories were presented on Saturday, August 13 during an awards banquet at the biennial PPA conference.

## Journalism Awards

**Best Editorial – First Place:** Shirley Jean Taylor, national business agent, *Unionizer*, Walnut Creek, California; **Honorable Mention:** Robert Dyer Jr., editor, *Evergreen State Postal Worker*, Bremerton, Washington.

**Best Feature Story – First Place:** Bob Hofer, legislative/human relations director, *Tour's End*, Gainesville, Florida; **Honorable Mention:** Mike Mazurkiewicz, contributing writer, *Postmark*, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

**Best Headline – First Place:** Joe Gordon, vice president, *480-481 Communicator*, Ferndale, Michigan; **Honorable Mention:** Bruce Clark, president, *Iowa Postal Worker*, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Best News Story – First Place:** Robert Dyer Jr., editor, *Evergreen State Postal Worker*, Bremerton, Washington; **Honorable Mention:** Frank Antinone, editor, *The Dispatcher*, Youngstown, Ohio.

**Best Cartoon – First Place:** Mike Mann, member, *Iowa Postal Worker*, Des Moines, Iowa; **Honorable Mention:** Steve Fostner, Northeast WI Area Local vice president/John E. Durben, editor, *The Badger Bulletin*, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

**Best Photograph – First Place:** Carol Moschella, associate editor, *The Dispatcher*, Youngstown, Ohio; **Honorable Mention:** Earl Davis, photographer, *Fort Worth Area Local Outpost*, Fort Worth, Texas.

**Best Non-Postal Labor Story – First Place:** Beth Morrison, editor, *The Advocate*, Great Falls, Montana; **Honorable Mention:** Jean Jones, editor, *Tour's End*, Gainesville, Florida.

**Best Community Service – First Place:** Jennifer Schweitzer, editor, *The Hi-Lites*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; **Honorable Mention:** Al Ross, legislative director, *Unionizer*, Walnut Creek, California.

**Best Creative Writing – First Place:** Mike Mazurkiewicz, contributing writer, *Postmark*, Saint Paul, Minnesota; **Honorable Mention:** Sara Brink, contributing writer, *Flash Report*, Madison, Wisconsin.

## Website Awards

(There were no eligible entries)

## Overall Excellence Awards

The three awards in the Overall Excellence Category are:

**Best Professional**, defined as a publication printed by a commercial printer from camera-ready copy prepared by the printer.

**Best Non-Professional (A)**, Publication printed by a commercial printer from camera-ready copy; prepared by the APWU editor.

**Best Non-Professional (B)**, Publication printed in-house by the APWU editor from camera-ready copy; prepared by the APWU editor.

**Best Professional – First Place:** John Durben, editor, *The Badger Bulletin*, Green Bay, Wisconsin; **Honorable Mention:** Paul Felton, editor, *480-481 Communicator*, Ferndale, Michigan.

**Best Non-Professional (A) – First Place:** Tonya Brooks, editor, *Fort Worth Area Local Outpost*, Fort Worth, Texas; **Honorable Mention:** Beth Morrison, editor, *The Advocate*, Great Falls, Montana.

**Best Non-Professional (B) – First Place:** Jacque Childs, editor, *Flash Report*, Madison, Wisconsin; **Honorable Mention:** Andrew Stevenson, editor, *Philadelphia Postal Worker*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## Hank Greenberg Award for Best New Editor

This award recognizes a new editor striving to produce a union publication that exemplifies dedication, sincerity and professionalism.

Named in honor of past PPA President Hank Greenberg, this award signifies the type of spirit, determination and leadership that Brother Greenberg displayed as president for over 17 years.

**First Place:** Christopher Ulmer, editor, *The Detroit Postal Worker*, Detroit, Michigan; **Honorable Mention:** Dana Slocum, editor, *Miami Postal Labor News*, Doral, Florida.

## BEST NEWS STORY (Honorable Mention)

*The Valley's local talent – Local 443 member Greg Brode's nephew . . .*

# Canfield High School's Dustin Brode sets new record for Ohio High School Track and Field in shot put

By Frank Antinone, Editor  
*The Dispatcher*  
Youngstown, Ohio

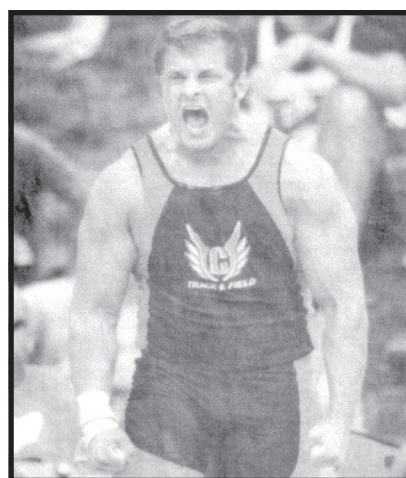
On Saturday June 5, 2010 at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium in Columbus, Ohio Local 443 member Greg Brode's nephew Dustin set a new record in the 103 year history of Ohio high school track and field in shot put.

Brode's throw went 71 feet, 7½ inches setting an all-division, all-meet, all-time record in Ohio. Until then, Brode had shared the all-time record with Jimmie Pacifico, a Vandalia Butler graduate who threw 71 feet 6¼ inches in 2007.

Head shot put official Jim Fox, the former Boardman High School Athletic Director, had to verify the distance with a special steel tape measure because the normal one is too stretchy. Fox looked at the tape measure and gave Dustin's father Gary the thumbs up.

Brode also finished second in the discus. "That's just an anomaly," said Brode, using the types of words that help explain why he's headed to the country's most prestigious school, Harvard University as a recruit.

This weekend's haul capped a wonderful career for Brode, who also won state indoor



titles in the shot put and weight throw in March just a week after claiming an indoor national title in the shot put. Brode was dissatisfied with all of those titles and spent the spring chasing Ohio history, finally catching up to it on the final day of his high school career.

The national record is 77 feet, set in 1979 by future San Francisco 49ers lineman Michael Carter. When asked if he was chasing Carter, Brode chuckled and said, "My goal is not that high. I just want to be the second best ever. That's like a 76. And I've got all summer to do it. My eyes are always looking forward. That's who I am, I guess."

## BEST FEATURE STORY (First Place)

# Who needs socialized health care? Do postal workers pay too much for it?

By Bob Hofer,  
Legislative/HR Director  
Tour's End  
Gainesville, Florida

The recent debate over health care reform has become very heated and contentious. More so than any single issue that I can remember since the Vietnam War. I mean, really! People screaming at each other, shoving and pushing, and coming to blows? Over something called health care reform? Why are people so adamant about their support or opposition for changes in the way Americans pay for and receive (or don't receive) health care? Conservatives have been told to go early, sit in front, and basically be disruptive, at the town hall meetings held by Congressional representatives during this August break.

### The opposition

On the one side, opponents say that socialized medicine doesn't work worth a damn, any place that it exists. Not in Canada, England, or anywhere else. People die waiting for chemotherapy. You have to endure long waits for relatively simple orthopedic surgery. And they don't want a government bureaucrat standing between them and their doctor.

### The supporters

On the other side, they say that thousands die because they don't have access to health care, because they can't afford the insurance, or because they have been denied coverage due to a pre-existing condition. Supporters also say that insurance company bureaucrats stand between you and your doctor now, dictating which tests and drugs they will pay for and which they will not, regardless of what your doctor thinks should be done. Actually, the insurance companies hire doctors (and pay them very well) to deny authorization for tests, procedures, and drugs. This is according to testimony given in Congressional hearings last year.

### Is our system working?

There is a lot more verbiage being thrown around, but I learned a long time ago, when trying to resolve disputes, it is best to simplify the situation down to its lowest common denominator, as in math.

What is the single most basic issue at hand? Is the health care system, as it now exists in America, doing an adequate job for the people? Are for-profit health insurance companies doing a good job, providing its participants with the best care possible?

We've known, for over a decade and a half, that Americans pay the highest rate for the same health care services of any country on earth. We've known for the same amount of time that we pay, on average, fifteen percent (15%) more for the same drugs than anywhere else. We were told that it's because we have the best health care in the world, although a recent survey by the World Health Organization ranked the USA thirty-seventh (37) among industrialized nations for overall health care. I know, the people who did the survey probably hate America.

### My experience

Last year, I had a kidney stone stuck between my kidney and bladder. My urologist scheduled me to have it smashed with sonic waves. Prior to the procedure, I was told that the surgery costs \$10,000, but because I had BCBS (Blue Cross Blue Shield), they could only charge \$5,000. I was then told that my part would be just over \$600, which compared to five or ten thousand dollars, wasn't that bad. So, when people start saying that socialized medicine would be so much worse than what we now have, it makes you nervous, because paying premiums, deductibles, co-pays, and extra out-of-pocket money for lab fees, procedures, and surgeries is what we are used to. It's part of life, like taxes. Right?

### We get counseling for free

My daughter-in-law told of a neighbor who is going through a divorce and is a stressed-out mess because of it. She doesn't have insurance, but decided to go see a psychologist anyway. A one-hour session cost her \$180. She absolutely cannot afford a second session. By the way, postal workers get up to six sessions, through EAP, without a charge.

### A simple question

So, getting back to the simple and basic question. Is having roughly 50 million people in this country without access to health care because they can't afford it or are de-

nied coverage for pre-existing conditions) something we can continue to tolerate? Or do we need to make a change?

Personally, I know that it is easier to control an upper respiratory infection (URI) before it becomes bronchitis. And bronchitis is much easier to control and treat than pneumonia which entails having to go to the ER to keep from dying.

### Choice helps the working poor

In Alachua County, every working resident who can't afford health insurance can get coverage through the Choices program. If you have a job, you apply for it, you get it. Then you can go see a doctor about your URI, go for an eye exam, or see a dentist and only pay \$10 co-pay. It was voted on and passed by the voters of Alachua County, who willingly raised their sales tax to benefit working families. The voters added a one-quarter of one-cent increase to the county's sales tax rate. One-fourth of a penny! That's all it costs to give health care access to all working residents of Alachua County (those who don't have employer-provided insurance). And that government-run healthcare program is running a growing surplus every year.

### It is a lot of money

Granted, to suddenly cover 50 million more people is going to cost this country a lot of money. Can we afford it? It has been es-

timated that the cost could go as high as 1.5 trillion dollars over ten years. That's a lot of money. Of course, giving (not loaning) 700 billion dollars to failing banks (in the TARP bailout) was a lot of money too.

### Let's compare the numbers

For-profit insurance companies use about 15% of their gross income for administrative costs, which includes doctors whose pay depends on how many tests and procedures they reject. And that doesn't include their profit margin. The government-run Medicare system uses less than 2% of their gross income for administrative costs. Another government-run health care system is the Veterans Administration, which has been getting excellent grades in recent years.

### We need change

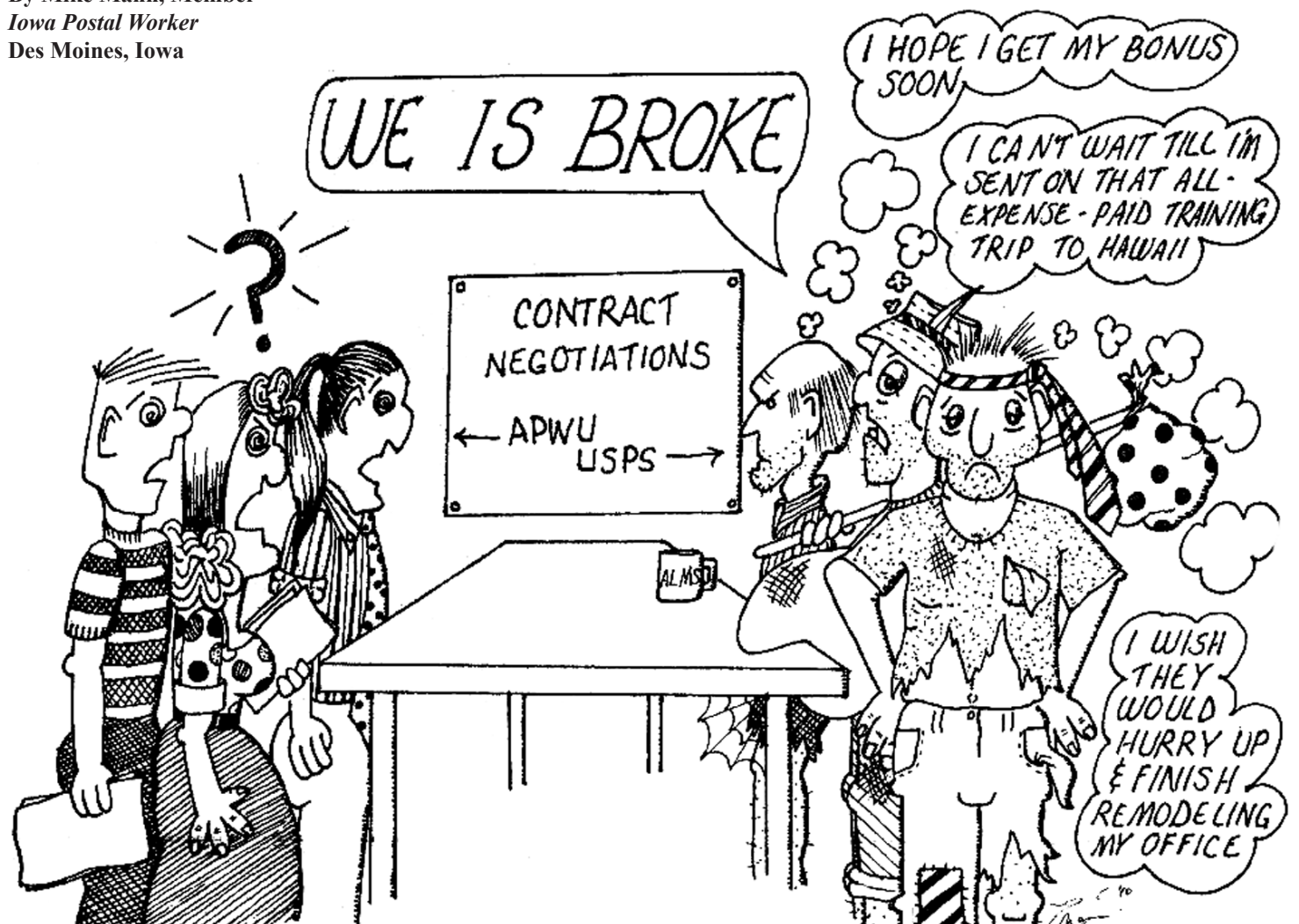
Yes, I think the way health care is run in this country needs to be changed. Don't you? If you do, please give Rep. Clifford Stearns a call at (202) 225-5744, and tell him to vote yes on HR 676.

### Do we pay too much or not enough?

Now, do postal workers pay too much for their health care insurance? The Postal Service pays 85% of our health care insurance premiums. That's 5% more than any other federal agency. There is talk about raising what we pay for our premiums, including making retirees pay more for theirs. We shall see.

## BEST CARTOON (First Place)

By Mike Mann, Member  
Iowa Postal Worker  
Des Moines, Iowa



## BEST NON-POSTAL LABOR STORY (*Honorable Mention*)

# Sweatshops and shipbreakers

By Jean Jones, Editor  
*Tour's End*  
Gainesville, Florida

How can Wal-Mart sell a fleece jacket for \$8.44? At the August 2009 Postal Press

to midnight five days a week, with two twenty-hour days to round out their week. Their wages had not been paid at all for six months, and if they fell behind in their production quotas, the workers were beaten, kicked, punched, and screamed at. After

sick leave. A typical response is to fire the injured worker, as happened to a 24-year old who lost several fingers in an accident, and is now maimed and unemployable. There is no disability check for these workers.

In Goungdong Province alone, it is estimated that 40,000 fingers are severed each

year doing this kind of work. The furniture company importing the slide rails showed more concern that the finish on the product was undamaged than that the people who made them were treated humanely.

On a visit to Bangladesh earlier this year, Kernaghan witnessed the business of shipbreaking. Huge cargo ships that have been retired are beached on the sand, then cut apart by people desperate for work. Mostly young men and boys perch on bamboo ladders inside the ships, using a blow-torch in one hand while hanging on for dear life with the other, wearing no safety equipment – no goggles, no hardhats, no gloves, no lights, and often, no shoes.

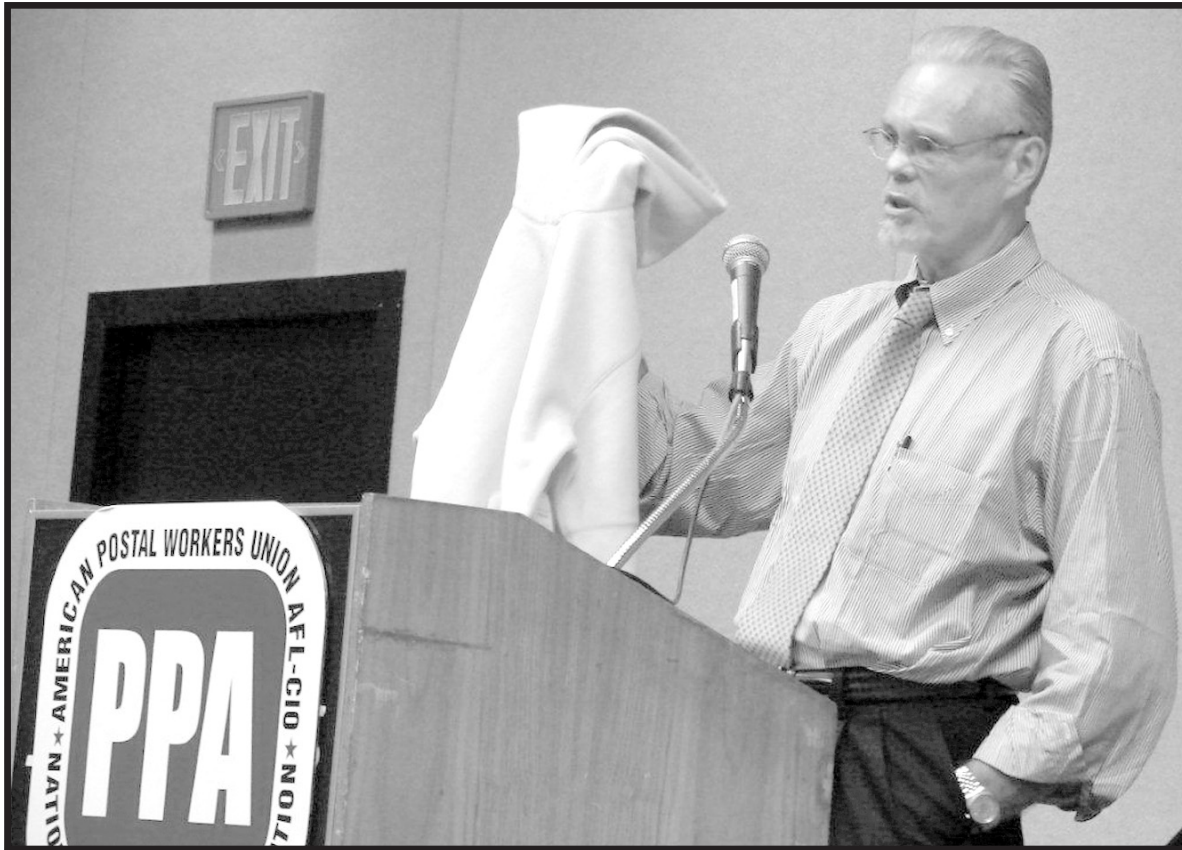
The youngest boys rip out the asbestos with their hands, then carry it outside to pile it on the beach. Kernaghan said, "If there is a hell on earth, this is it." These workers earn 10 - 17 cents per hour. There have been at least 1,000 of them killed on the job.

The world right now is sinking so fast that 5-year-olds take jobs that will kill them for 13 cents an hour. The National Labor Committee is basically three people, and basically bankrupt, but is working to stop these abuses wherever they find them. Kernaghan said that if you drag these people (who are abusing workers this way) into the light of day and embarrass them with publicity, they can be beaten.

There is a bill that will be re-introduced to Congress this year that can help change the world. It is called the "Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition Act," which, when passed, will amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to prohibit the import, export, and sale of sweatshop goods in the U.S. Please let your Congressional representatives know that you support this bill. This law will, for the first time ever, protect basic human rights in the workplaces where our imported goods are made, and provide the means to enforce it.

We allow corporations to have legally enforceable laws to protect their products and their copyrights, but no laws to protect the people who made those products.

If you would like to help Kernaghan continue this important work, please go to the National Labor Committee website at: [www.nlcnet.org](http://www.nlcnet.org). I know that he inspired me to donate and I hope you will also be inspired to do something.



Charles Kernaghan, National Labor Committee Director.

Association Conference, I learned how they do it from a speech given by National Labor Committee Director Charles Kernaghan. The jacket in the picture was made for Wal-Mart in the Western factory in Jordan. There are about 260 workers there, about 75% of them young women from Bangladesh, China, Nepal, and other countries where people see a job in Jordan as an opportunity to improve their lives.

In 2006, Kernaghan visited Jordan, posing as a tourist, where he met workers from the Western factory who were virtual slaves while they produced garments for stores such as Wal-Mart.

Promises of free housing, free food, and wages of \$250 a month lured these workers to Jordan, where their passports were taken away, the free housing was a windowless 10' X 10' room for eight, the free food was barely enough to avoid starvation, and their days off averaged out to one every 75 days. These workers were being tortured while working to death.

These people worked from 8 a.m.

four of the girls were raped by their managers, one of them was so humiliated that she hung herself when she went to the bathroom.

Kernaghan said that these were some of the worst working conditions he had ever seen, and he has visited many sweatshops. The garments produced in that factory were imported to the U.S. duty-free. Kernaghan and his colleagues did their homework, documenting the horrible treatment of these people, and eventually got the story published in the *NY Times*, embarrassing the owners and importers so that things would change. Now those same workers are at least being paid and are no longer being beaten and raped. Their passports have been returned so that they can leave their job if they wish.

In China, Kernaghan met with workers from a factory making slide rails for a furniture company in the U.S., working seventy-seven hours a week on dangerous machinery for miniscule wages. When workers are injured on the job, there is no health plan or



Garment workers roped together like cattle in Bangladesh. Photo courtesy of National Labor Committee.

## BEST HEADLINE (*First Place*)

By Joe Gordon, Vice President  
480-481 Communicator  
Ferndale, Michigan

# There's snow business like snow business

## BEST NEWS STORY (First Place)

# Amerithrax investigation

By Robert Dyer, Jr., Editor  
Evergreen State Postal Worker  
Bremerton, Washington

In September and October of 2001, five envelopes laced with Anthrax spores were mailed to Senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy and to Tom Brokaw.<sup>1</sup>

**In the aftermath that followed what has come to be known as Amerithrax, five**

labs at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland,<sup>5</sup> and the source for the anthrax that was used in the attack.<sup>\*[p.1]</sup> The report goes on to say that by the summer of 2008, the US Attorney's Office in the District of Columbia was planning to seek an indictment of Dr. Ivins for the crime; however, **the process was interrupted by his apparent suicide** – having overdosed on acetaminophens just prior to being prosecuted.<sup>\*[p.1 & 48]</sup>

man with profound mental health struggles – **which he struggled with throughout his life!**

We will further demonstrate that he was being subjected to increasing public criticism for his work – **as, a scientist who worked with Anthrax at the government's biodefense labs at Fort Detrick** – and that he was feeling abandoned in his life at the time, and that his life's work ap-

ciopathic with clear intentions." **How in the world could such an individual pass a security clearance and then gain access to anthrax spores working on biodefense projects?**

**No answer...**

How could our government **unknowingly employ** someone who might be capable of risking world war to preserve his own standing with his constituents and to ensure that his personal project is allowed to continue so that he gets the credit he deserves for his hard work?

**No answer...**

**And here is a question that is not even dealt with in the whole 92 page report:**

The letters were sent to Senators Tom Daschle, Patrick Leahy and newscaster Tom Brokaw? **Do these recipients have something in common as potential victims?**

### Leahy, Daschle & Brokaw

There is an old adage that basically states that a man can be judged by the quality of his enemies. It is also a good rule of thumb, when investigating a crime where several victims were targeted, to determine what the victims had in common. More often than not, any such connection would be the most likely basis for determining a motive.

**Senator Patrick Leahy has some interesting opponents, who might be described as enemies if you will. One does not have to read past the title of an article published in the *National Review*, *The 'Nastiest' Democrat: Senator Patrick Leahy, Republican nightmare*, to have a pretty good idea who his opponents might be.<sup>6</sup> The article describes Senator Leahy's antagonists right from the get-go stating, "By consensus – a consensus of Hill Republicans – Pat Leahy is the meanest, most partisan, most ruthless Democrat in the Senate. Ask a Republican about Leahy, and he'll shudder." In 2002, Senator Leahy voted against the resolution authorizing the use of military force against Iraq, and since then has continued to be a vocal opponent of the war.<sup>7</sup>**

**Senator Tom Daschle** was the Senate Majority Leader in 2001, and was elected to represent the majority Democratic Party in the Senate early in January of 2001. One need hardly mention the fact that the leader of the Democratic constituent in the Senate would not be thought of in the fondest of terms by a Republican. Just reading the title of an article by Jonathan Chait – *The Demonizing of Tom Daschle How Journalists follow the part line* – gives a hint at how Republicans treated and felt about him.<sup>8</sup> The article describes the Republican view stating that "**Daschle has upset comity between the parties. Daschle is spectacularly partisan.**" Citing the mood in the Bush White House the article stated, "**The orders came down from on high to start getting tougher [on Daschle],**" a White House official told the *Washington Times*. The article also stated that, "**The Bush administration, having decided that its campaign to charm Democrats was failing, decided to**

*"The death of our fellow postal workers and the others grieves us still, and the cost of the cleanup in the aftermath has touched every craft employee represented by the APWU as well."*

people died – two of which were postal workers from the Brentwood Post Office in Washington, DC that was closed for over a year for decontamination and has since been renamed the Joseph Curseen Jr. and Thomas Morris Jr. Processing and Distribution Center in their honor.

Seventeen others were also known to have been infected and sickened by the deadly spores – a 2004 study, however, has shown that the total number of harmed people should be raised to 68<sup>3</sup> – and the Postal Service not only spent over a year cleaning up at Brentwood, but also at dozens of other locations that were contaminated.<sup>2</sup>

The death of our fellow postal workers and the others grieves us still, and the cost of the cleanup in the aftermath has touched every craft employee represented by the APWU as well. The US Postal Service spent hundreds of millions on the cleanup,<sup>2</sup> impacting the budget and, ultimately, the wages of all the craft workers.

The wage package for the APWU contract was being arbitrated at that time, and Arbitrator Goldberg issued his decision on the economic portions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the APWU and the US Postal Service on December 18, 2001. In his report, Arbitrator Goldberg stated that he had to take into account the difficult economic situation in the USPS in fashioning appropriate raises for craft employees.<sup>4</sup>

### Department of Justice conclusions

As a fellow postal worker and human being, one would hope that the culprit(s) would be identified and prosecuted for such a horrendous crime.

Now, some nine years later, the Department of Justice has announced the "Amerithrax" investigation has been officially closed, and released a report of findings; however, **the report appears to sidestep some very serious issues, and the need for some questions to be asked publicly is what motivates this writer to do so here.**

The investigative summary states that by 2007, investigators had conclusively determined the anthrax was from a single spore-batch created and maintained by Dr. Bruce Ivins.<sup>\*[p.1]</sup> He was a scientist who worked at the government's biodefense

The bulk of the 92 page investigative summary outlines the evidence that was collectively used to come to the conclusion that Dr. Ivins was acting alone, he had a motive, and that he committed the dastardly deed. Nevertheless, some have noted that the evidence against Dr. Ivins was all circumstantial; however, there is a compelling and not insignificant body of facts that clearly demonstrate he had the opportunity to have committed the crime.

A great deal of time was spent in the investigative report supporting the summary of Dr. Ivins' motive as follows:

**Four pages of the report are allotted to outline this as the motive for the attack**<sup>\*[p. 38-41]</sup> along with another eight pages outlining Dr. Ivins', "mental health" issues as the basic motivation which caused him to commit this crime.<sup>\*[p. 41-48]</sup>

This is summarized on page 48 as follows:

**Dr. Ivins' suicide in late July 2008 was the result of his final downward slide into depression and other problems with which he struggled throughout his life. Dr. Ivins' profound mental health struggles provide both a context for his motives to commit the crime and an explanation of how he could commit such a horrific and tragic offense.**<sup>\*[p. 48]</sup>

His unexpected suicide, however, conveniently eliminated the worldwide public circus that a Grand Jury trial would have most certainly been in this case. Imagine the whole world watching as the FBI went through all the evidence, substantial but circumstantial, to seek a conviction of Dr. Ivins . . . **AND there would have been questions asked at that trial that the FBI and the Justice Department never addressed in their report,** and which might have placed a very different spin on Amerithrax.

### Amerithrax goes to Grand Jury

**Prosecutors opening statement:** Your honor, we will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant had the opportunity, the motive and the means to commit the dastardly deed now referred to as Amerithrax. We will demonstrate that the crime was **committed by a man who struggled with depression and other problems** – a

peared destined for failure **absent an unexpected event.**

With the coincidental but timely occurrence of the 9/11 attack on America and in an effort to find some sort of self-actualization, prevent facing the imminent failure of his mission – working with anthrax – and to escape public criticism, he went off the deep end and viciously mailed out anthrax laced letters containing messages to give the appearance of terrorist Muslims <sup>[read page 2-3 of the investigative summary]</sup> striking out at America and Israel, and he began mailing these deadly deliveries out on or about 9/17, during the week immediately following the 9/11 attack.

**This is an interesting description of the case, and is basically what the Justice Department report is asking America to believe.**

Perhaps Dr. Ivins did commit this crime, and perhaps he was working alone, and it was the desperate act of a mentally slipping gone-mad-scientist who would rather see a world conflict erupt than to watch his own pet project become obsolete and slip quietly into the night . . . but there are still some questions to be asked, and some of these questions have more to do with national security issues than they do with Dr. Ivins, **and some of them are questions that should have been addressed in the Justice Department report.**

### Q & A before the Grand Jury

How can a person who has "**depression and other problems with which he struggled throughout his life**" and has "**profound mental health struggles**" be allowed to work with anthrax at a biodefense lab at Fort Detrick?

**No answer...**

Does the United States conduct thorough security checks on individuals who work with such dangerous and sensitive biological agents, and if so, then how could a man "**struggling throughout his life**" with "**profound mental health struggles**" get into such a position undetected?

**No answer...**

On page 9 of the investigative report it states that the accused **had a history dating to his graduate days of homicidal threats, actions and plans** and that a prior psychiatrist called him "**homicidal and so**

# Investigation concluded after 8 years

change strategies and attack Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle as an obstructionist.”<sup>8</sup>

Tom Brokaw of NBC began co-anchoring NBC Nightly News from New York in April of 1982 and became the sole anchor in September of 1983.<sup>9</sup> On September 11, 2001 he joined Katie Couric and Matt Lauer, around 9:30 a.m., following the live attack on the South Tower of the World Trade Center, and continued until after midnight. Following the collapse of the second tower, Brokaw observed, “This is war. This is a declaration and an execution of an attack on the United States.”<sup>10 11</sup> and he continued coverage on the Trade Towers until midnight over the next two days. Brokaw conducted the first one-on-one American television interviews with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Vladimir Putin and was the only network anchor in Berlin when the Berlin Wall fell.<sup>9</sup> He was also the NBC White House correspondent covering the Watergate scandal.<sup>9</sup>

## Reasonable conclusions

Clearly it was a cover-up.

It is reasonable to conclude, as the Amerithrax report does, that the whole Amerithrax attack was designed to make us believe that radical Muslims had attacked America and that they had developed and weaponized a deadly anthrax strain, but in reality it was planned and propagated by someone other than Muslim terrorists with a hidden agenda.

## It was an inside job.

Amerithrax was planned and carried out by someone who had access to a strain of anthrax which was only used in the work done by Dr. Ivins and others at the biodefense labs at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland.

It was cleverly disguised to appear as another terrorist attack, coming on the heels of the 9/11.

It was calculated to target individuals, whose deaths would have shaken up the US Government, causing our highest ranking leaders in Washington, DC to scream for retaliation. The targets were two leading Democrats in office – one of which was considered the nastiest Democrat in the Senate – and the other was the Majority Speaker of the Senate, one of the most powerful Democrats in Washington, and a possible future presidential candidate. The other target was newscaster Tom Brokaw – a world renown journalist noted for his historical coverage of American war efforts around the globe, and who was covering the 9/11 attack at that time.

Amerithrax was designed to cause America to go to war.

## Unreasonable conclusions

It is difficult to believe that anyone would potentially subject the whole world to the possibility of war just to retain a pet project or stroke his ego.

It is difficult to believe that a sane person would murder prominent public figures to accomplish this.

It is unthinkable that such a person could ever be allowed by the US Government to have access to anthrax, let alone become the leading scientist in the field – with a history of mental issues, and who was even considered to be homicidal and sociopathic; however, based on the Justice Department summary, Dr. Ivins was alleged to be all of those things.

It is just not credible that the US Government could have been totally unaware of Dr. Ivins’ history of mental issues, given the wealth of information made public in the Amerithrax investigation report.

It is unthinkable that the US Government would have allowed it if they were aware of it.

It is unreasonable that “Based on the evidence set forth above, the investigation of the anthrax letter attacks of 2001 has been concluded.”<sup>12</sup> [p. 92 of the report]

## Amerithrax investigation closed?

Dr. Ivins may well have committed this horrendous crime, but he may or may not have been working alone. This would not be the first time that a suspected government cover-up has taken place in America, only to be obscured by the sudden death of the person who could have told the world what really happened.

One thing that is absolutely certain – the motive behind Amerithrax was to cause America to enter into a war based on the false premise that radical Muslims had attacked us, and that they had

access to deadly anthrax spores – one of the most feared biological weapons ever. This was the plan of the perpetrator(s) of Amerithrax.

This writer asks what seems like two reasonable and obvious questions at this point:

Should this be the conclusion of the Amerithrax investigation or should this be just the beginning of a much more constructive investigation – one that is aimed at the glaring national security deficiencies that Amerithrax has exposed?

Is it possible that Dr. Ivins was not working alone, but rather with or even for someone else?

1. Department of Justice; Anthrax Investigative Summary; 2/19/10
2. The Baltimore Sun; Cleanup of anthrax...; 12/18/02; Scott Shane
3. What is the True Number of Victims of the Postal Anthrax Attack of 2001?; T. C. Cymet and G. J. Kerkvliet, published in Journal of the American Osteopathic Association - Vol 104, No 11 - Nov 2004
4. APWU News Service Bulletin #2-02, 1/17/02; Arbitrator Explains Monetary Package
5. 2001 anthrax attacks; From Wikipedia
6. National Review; 7/9/01; The ‘Nastiest’, Democrat...; Jay Nordlinger
7. <http://leahy.senate.gov>; Iraq
8. <http://www.slate.com/?id=2060133>
9. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom\\_Brokaw#cite\\_note-9](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Brokaw#cite_note-9)
10. 9/11/01 World Trade Center part 12; YouTube
11. Post-gazette.com; Tuned in: This was reality TV at its most horrific

## BEST PHOTOGRAPH (Honorable Mention)

# Save Saturday mail service!

By Earl Davis, Photographer  
Fort Worth Area Local Outpost  
Fort Worth, Texas



## BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE (First Place)

# Shouldn't their mission be our mission too?

By Jennifer Schweitzer, Editor  
*The Hi-Lites*  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

While combing through last year's CFC booklet, I noticed a local organization that I have never heard of before. The name: The House of Peace. Before making a pledge, I looked it up on the Internet. According to what I read, Capuchins Brother Booker and Father Matthew opened The House of Peace doors in 1968. That would probably explain why I didn't know about this group since it was right around the time when I was born (right). I was impressed with what I read. I was moved by its Mission statement.

*"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. ..."*

Inspired by the above passage from the Book of Matthew, The House of Peace has been serving the needy in the heart of Milwaukee's Central City since 1968. During this time it has been a Beacon of Hope for thousands of individuals who were without food or clothing. It has been there to comfort those in despair and to offer help to those who had nowhere else to turn. From its beginnings, the House of Peace has remained faithful to its Mission Statement.

Even though our annual Health & Hygiene Drive was months away, I thought that this certainly was a charity who needed and more importantly deserved our local's help. Just a few days ago, I went to The House of Peace. I was barely out of the car when I saw two ladies walking away each carrying a bag of donated items. I did not have to open the door when another guest came to the entrance

the same time as I and held the door for me with a smile. Even though I came unannounced, I was given a tour.

Just a few yards from where I came in was an empty table. I wouldn't have looked twice at it but was told that it was called, "The Bread Table." As the name suggests, bread is donated and placed there for anyone to take. Unfortunately, (at that moment) no bread was available. But I still saw a man go past and smile.

The first room I was allowed to enter was called, "The Capuchin Clothes Closet." In order to come in, you must make an appointment first. On that particular day, there were approximately 45 slots filled. The Clothing center is open Monday - Friday (1:00 p.m. to 4 p.m.). The center is usually lacking in Men's clothing. However; everything was nicely arranged and guests were busy looking for something suitable to wear. I almost bumped into one lady who just looked at me and smiled. Kind of humbling to see people who (in my opinion) were desperate yet had a better outlook on life than most of us (including myself)!

We made our way to the food pantry. I always enjoy seeing how different organizations set up their donated non-perishable items. It probably stems from my childhood; as I loved to play grocery store in the basement and line up the shelves of canned food. I was not disappointed. Everything was neat and organized. However, not all the shelves were filled.

There was much to see on the tour. The House of Peace offers many of different services to those in need. But my main purpose was to view the area where health and hygiene items were stored. My immediate mission statement was to; after all, write an article to promote our local's Health & Hygiene Drive.

So after reading this brief article, it is time to get busy and start shopping! Now until the end of June, our local will be collecting the items listed below. Bring in your donations (large or small) to the Union Hall or Steward's Office. Can we all make this year our best year ever?

**Bar soap, tooth paste, deodorant, shampoo, shaving cream, disposable razors, body lotion, chap stick, mouth wash, feminine panty liners/pads, baby wipes, disposable diapers, face towels, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and petroleum jelly (Vaseline).**

This was the list given to me. However, there may be some items needed that you will not find on this list. I noticed that there were no hairbrushes on the shelves. So, whatever you can spare, The House of Peace can certainly use!

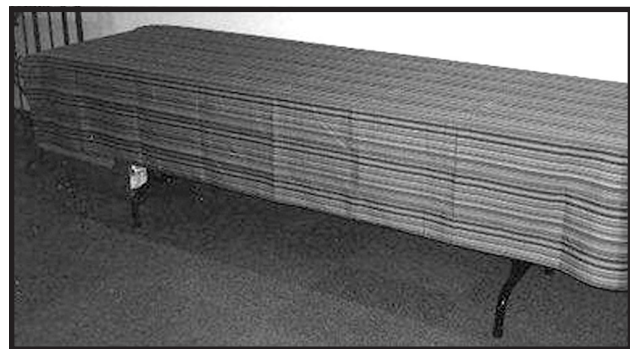
Thank you!



The top photo is donated items from ordinary citizens. The above photo comes from the Hunger Task Force.



With our donations, let's see if two sets of shelving can be set up! My tour guide is pictured below.



"The Bread Table."



Before sorting the donations AND the finished product!



## BEST HEADLINE (Honorable Mention)

By Bruce Clark, President  
*Iowa Postal Worker*  
Des Moines, Iowa

# Time to roll up our sleeves, and fight like hell!

## BEST EDITORIAL (Honorable Mention)

# Getting 'you' back into the union

By Robert Dyer, Jr., Editor  
Evergreen State Postal Worker  
Bremerton, Washington

Understanding the core reason for joining and supporting the union is crucial if we are to be successful in our mission. Even amongst union officers and stewards, sometimes it is easy to forget the central purpose of our union, and of all unions. **Some of our members have never really understood this at all.**

It is not just about money. If it was just about money, then all management would need to do is bribe its employees – but all the pizzas, hot dogs, free tools and other such tidbits that have been offered by management have not eliminated the need for a union.

The AFL-CIO offers some excellent training courses on unionism. The Seattle Local sent a group of officers to this training about 15 years ago. The first question that was asked in that training was, **"Why should we join and support a union?"**

Some of the people there could not answer the question. Like Charlie Brown in that wonderful Christmas classic, the instructor cried out to the class, **"What's it all about?"**

### Dignity and respect

The reason for joining and supporting a union is **to be treated with dignity and respect by the employer.**

An employer that respects its workers will pay them a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. An employer that respects its workers will not renege on promises. An employer that respects its workers will treat them with dignity, and will not discipline them without just cause.

Employers are, as Adam Smith noted, just plain greedy – so greedy, that they frequently avoid treating their employees with dignity and respect.

When workers come together to form a union, the purpose of that union is to collectively bargain on behalf of the employees and to enter into contract agreements which guarantee that employees will be treated with dignity and respect. Unions enforce these agreements.

### Your role in the union

Many employees, these days, do not really understand their role in the union, other than to pay dues. Paying dues makes one a member; however, it does not fulfill one's role in the union.

**It is difficult for many to understand the sacrifice that former unionists have made to achieve what workers enjoy today. Nowadays, very few employees make such sacrifices, and even fewer take any personal ownership for their responsibility as an employee and a union member.**

This has given rise to a peculiar relationship between the Postal Service and many of its employees – the employer may respect the union and its officers, but at the same time the employer does not respect its employees. This is the reason that we must get "you" back into the union.

Workers need to understand their role in the union, their relationship to their stewards, and their duty in the grievance process. Many postal employees do not, and this has given rise to some really unfair criticism of union representatives – by workers who have never taken any personal ownership for their own responsibility as an employee or a union member.

The contract clearly outlines employee responsibilities for grievances in Article 15 Section 2 which reads as follows:

*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 may reasonably have been ex-*

*pected to have learned of its cause.*

Notice this specific language – the employee **MUST** discuss the grievance **WITH** their supervisor. Must is a very strong word. Must does not mean maybe or perhaps. Must is something that **MUST** be done. The same section of the contract goes on to say that:

*The employee, if he or she desires, may be accompanied and represented by the employee's steward or union representative. The union also may initiate a grievance within 14 days of the date the union first became aware of (or reasonably should have become aware of) the facts giving rise to the grievance.*

Notice that the word used in these two sentences is **MAY**. The employee **MAY** request a steward, and the union also **MAY** file a grievance. There is a big difference between may and must.

If you are employed in the United States then you **MUST** file an income tax return; you **MAY** get a refund if you overpaid the government. If you drive up to an intersection where there is a yield or stop sign, then you **MUST** yield the right-of-way; you **MAY** get a ticket if you fail to do so.

Everyone understands the difference between must and may except, it seems, when it comes to filing grievances. Many employees have been really spoiled when it comes to union representation. This is due to the outstanding commitment and great success of our union stewards; however, when the stewards are doing all the grievance work at step one just because they **MAY**, this has given rise to the peculiar relationship between the Postal Service and many of its employees – management respects the union representatives, but not the employees.

**The union representatives are doing all the work at step one grievance meetings instead of the employees taking responsibility for what the contract clearly says THEY MUST do.**

This is why many supervisors will do things when there is no steward around that they would never do in front of the union's representatives.

### Earning respect

Respect is something that, ultimately, must be earned by every human being. Respect is earned when an individual takes responsibility for themselves; when this happens, then others see it and respect that individual.

**Union representatives that have laid it on the line for their fellow employees in grievance meetings for years deserve their respect – they have earned it.**

However, some employees do not properly respect the very union representatives that have selflessly been representing them for years by filing step one grievances – not because the contract says they **MUST**, but because they **MAY**. At the same time, these same employees have never done what the contract says **THEY MUST** do. They do not confront their supervisors at all, and neither do they request that their supervisor provide a union representative to accompany them to file a step one grievance. Instead, they simply go looking for a union steward instead.

### Showing respect

It is very disrespectful for employees to

treat stewards as if they were waiters or waitresses on roller skates at a drive-in restaurant. Nowhere in the contract does it say anything about complaining to a union representative at the time clock and insisting they file a grievance, or interrupting a union representative who is trying to eat lunch, and insisting they immediately listen to your problem with enthusiastic interest.

Employees working for the Postal Service have been so well represented that they have totally forgotten that just because a steward **MAY** file a grievance for them does not mean they **MUST**.

**It is because employees have become so uninvolved that supervisors do not respect them, personally.**

If employees really want the respect of their supervisors, then **THEY MUST** earn it. Ultimately, respect is earned by taking ownership of personal responsibility as an employee and a union member.

### Taking responsibility

When an employee feels aggrieved, then **that employee should go to their supervisor and request to meet with a steward, and also be accompanied by a union representative to discuss the grievance.** If every employee did this, then union stewards would not have to be constantly requesting union time from management to do step one meetings – the employees would be requesting the meeting and then management would be answering to every employee – not just to the union stewards and officers.

**This would cause supervisors to take a much more serious look at the employees' grievances, because then there would be two people in the room for the discussion and also two workers that management must cover to accommodate the meeting as well.**

They may not like this, but they do respect the National Labor Relations Act, and will do so because federal law requires it – they have no choice.

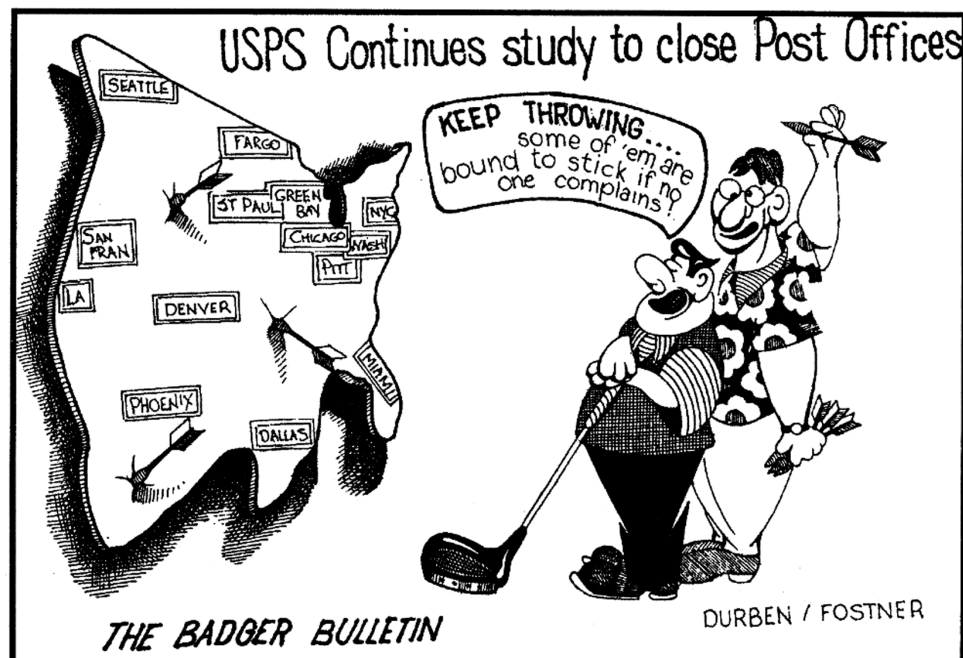
If "you" get involved as an employee and take responsibility for what the contract says that "you" **MUST** do, instead of just expecting union representatives to do what they **MAY**, then not only will supervisors begin to respect you as an employee – **your union representatives will have a whole new respect and appreciation for you as well.** This is where we really need to go as a union if all employees are going to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

Unity is the key to the success of the union. Unity means a lot more than just paying union dues. The next time you hear someone complaining that a union steward didn't do what the contract says they **MAY**, ask that employee if **THEY** have done what the contract says that they **MUST** do.

Someday, the union **MAY** achieve the goal of having every employee treated with dignity and respect in the workplace, but if this is ever going to happen then all employees **MUST** step to the plate and earn the respect of both their supervisors and union representatives. This will happen the day that "you" become an active part of the union. The day that all employees do what **MUST** be done, will be the day that the union **MAY** achieve this goal.

## BEST CARTOON (Honorable Mention)

By Steve Fostner, Northeast WI Area Local Vice President/John Durben, Editor  
The Badger Bulletin  
Green Bay, Wisconsin



## BEST EDITORIAL (First Place)

# National and union elections Now is not the time to give up!

(Why you should vote and work to get out the vote)

By Shirley Jean Taylor,  
National Business Agent  
Unionizer  
Walnut Creek, California

The deadline for our national union election of officers has been extended to October 14, 2010. This is due to the American Arbitration Association reporting that requests were being made for large numbers of duplicate ballots. There have been reports that only 20% of the membership has cast ballots. There simply is no excuse for not voting in the union election as the ballot comes to your home, the postage is prepaid, and you just have to take the ballot back to work and mail it.

It is with great sadness that we accept the fact that President William Burrus has decided to retire. He deserves his retirement because he has given his all for this great union for the last 30 years. We need leaders who will continue the fight to build on the many accomplishments he has achieved for this union. You should want to have a say in who will direct this effort.

Negotiations have started and many forces are aligned against us. You have the Postal Service attempting to “work the refs” through demands made in the media. You have members of Congress calling for concessions in these negotiations and they are calling for layoffs of postal employees because they say without this process, the Postal Service might need a bailout. The Postal Service does not need, nor has it requested a bailout. The Postal Service has overfunded its retirement fund by \$50 to \$75 billion dollars. If the Service was permitted to apply the overpayments to its future retiree healthcare obligations, the fi-

nancial crisis would be resolved.

You have the Postal Service manipulating the numbers for “Standby Time”. You have the deliberate short staffing of post offices and work practices which anger the public. *Why would you put a window clerk*

*“The Postal Service does not need, nor has it requested a bailout. The Postal Service has overfunded its retirement fund by \$50 to \$75 billion dollars.”*

*in the lobby when lines are long and they should be behind the counter helping to get the line down?*

You have supervisors issuing discipline all out of proportion to any infraction – removals are being issued for the smallest of infractions without progressive discipline, or you have discipline being piled on so fast that cases have not been heard at the next step of the grievance process before “new” discipline is given.

All of these things are intertwined. You need to vote in the **November 2, 2010** national and state elections. We must give great thought to which direction we want this nation to go. **We must** educate ourselves on who will best look out for the Postal Service’s bargaining unit employees.

*Ask yourself who and what was behind the requirement to pre-fund future retiree healthcare liabilities in the Postal Account-*

*ability and Enhancement Act of 2006? No other federal agency or private company is required to make such payments. This has resulted in costs to the Postal Service of more than \$5 billion annually.*

**We must** ask what is wrong with providing the citizens of this great nation with health care which does not allow your insurance to kick you out when you get sick, which allows children to stay on their parents insurance until age 26, which lets citizens with a pre-existing illness to be able to obtain affordable health insurance.

Yes, “Main Street” **must be given a hand up, but we must ask ourselves who is more likely to make that happen.** If the deficit was so important to the nation, why is it not okay to give a tax break to all **but** the top 95% of its citizenry? We must ask ourselves what impact giving this 5% a tax break would have on the all-important deficit.

**We must** ask ourselves where was all this “anger” when this country was taken from a surplus (recall President Bill Clin-

ton) to a deficit. **We must** ask ourselves why it is okay to give tax breaks to companies who outsource jobs to countries with lower wage workers. Yes, we need jobs, but don’t we really know who is more likely to look out for the unemployed?

**We must** not forget the elections for governors or our state and congressional representatives. We must also ask ourselves which direction we want our states and municipalities to go. **Now is not the time for surrender! The struggle continues! We must go forward with a progressive agenda because we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keeper. Remember, it could be us who needs a helping hand the next time around because our jobs also could readily be outsourced.**

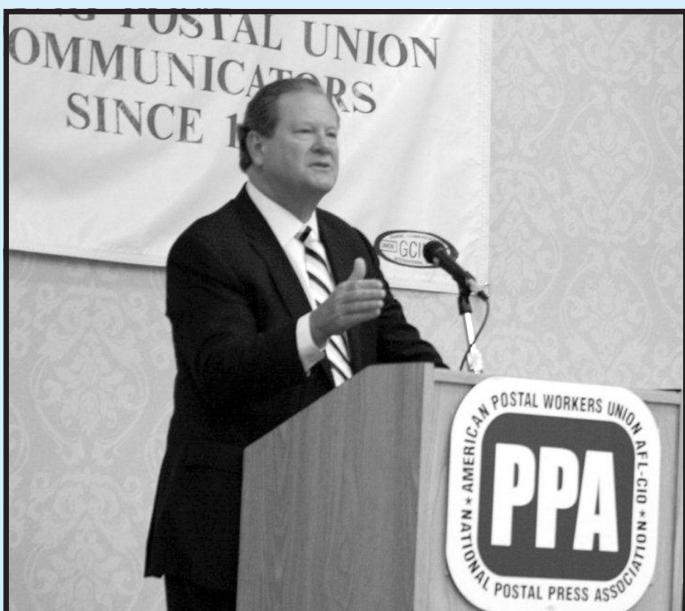
Vote in all these elections and take someone with you to vote and please always give to COPA. On a more personal note, I wish to say Happy Retirement to Local Vice President Margaret Stewart. We will miss you very much. Our prayers and best wishes are with you.

## BEST CREATIVE WRITING (Honorable Mention)

# Solidarity Forever!

By Sarah Brink, Writer  
Flash Report  
Madison, Wisconsin

These are words that shape my life  
ever since I was born to a state employee and his postal worker wife.  
Health insurance paid for my birth  
along with check-ups and vaccinations.  
Good wages allowed us to have decent vacations.  
My parents always told me that unions make my good life possible  
and how when enough people fight they can be unstoppable.  
Work place oppression is bad, worker’s rights are good.  
These things were impact on my childhood.  
I become more politically aware as I get older,  
but I still recall being a little girl on my father’s shoulders  
marching on Capital Square with a megaphone in my hands,  
yelling “What do we want? When do we want it?”  
Questions that even a child could understand.  
Unfair wages, layoffs, violations of rights,  
these were the reasons why I chose to fight.  
My little fingers worked diligently on picket signs,  
my little feet marched in rhythm to picket lines.  
I may not have understood all of the words,  
but I knew that even my little voice was being heard.  
And when it became Scott Walker’s Inauguration Day  
I had much more vulgar words to say.  
Collective bargaining is the heart of union affairs  
and to make that illegal would mean worker despair.  
It would be slaughtering those values that I grew up with.  
It doesn’t take a teenager to see through the bull...  
So people like me must always stay together  
because no matter the law, solidarity is forever!



Ed Schultz host of MSNBC-TV’s *The Ed Show* and the number one progressive radio program, *The Ed Schultz Show* speaking about the plight of America’s Middle Class at the PPA conference opening session. A video of Mr. Schultz’s remarks along with conference photos are available on the PPA website, [www.apwpostalpress.org](http://www.apwpostalpress.org). (Michael Long photo)

## BEST FEATURE STORY (Honorable Mention)

# Too old to rock and roll – too young to die

By Mike Mazurkiewicz,  
Contributing Writer  
Postmark  
St. Paul, Minnesota

I used to make fun of yoga. I thought it was basically a light exercise and meditation program designed primarily for women. And with names like, *tree*, *downward*

*“We have to get older... but we don’t have to get old.”*

*dog*, *frog*, *child’s pose* – not particularly a “manly” exercise program. But then I read that Michael Jordan played basketball all those years without injury due to his extensive stretching routines. I also met a college football player (a 250 lb. linesman) who told me his coach had his team doing yoga three times a week. So when I saw yoga offered thru a local adult education program, I signed up. I was in for a surprise...

There’s a saying that, “May hurts” referring to the aches and pains we experience after spring yard work. One could also say that “yoga hurts” – at least initially. Instead of feeling renewed and “one with the uni-

verse,” I usually felt like I’d been in a street fight – lying crumpled up, drenched in sweat and checking for injuries. But these aches and pains vanished after a few weeks of classes. Now, each morning following yoga I wake feeling like I’ve had the best night’s sleep on the best mattress. I feel fully energized, – not a jittery caffeine or sugar energy – but a nice calm energy with a confidence and alertness that lasts for days.

All of us already do yoga naturally without knowing it. We wake up in the morning with a yawn and stretch. We flex our muscles and send oxygen to them. Breathing and movement – the essence of yoga. There are hundreds of yoga poses. Some are designed to increase strength and flexibility, some focus on improving blood flow, others aim at improving balance. There are also poses that target internal organs. A wide variety of pose sequences are performed during each session and vary according to the instructor and yoga style. Most classes (*i.e. practices*) offered thru adult education and local fitness clubs are considered “Western Style” yoga. They are alignment oriented and focus on the physical aspect of yoga. These classes usually last one hour beginning with a 10 minute warm-up and finish with a 5 minute rest. I have taken longer ninety-minute classes that add breathing exercises and meditation. Yoga is not a reli-

gion – but a sequence of conditioning motions that seek to connect the mind, body and spirit. Practices are done barefoot on a rubberized mat. They are not competitions. You don’t need to be an athlete or even in great shape. Individuals go at their own pace and aren’t required to keep up with other people or instructors – you can rest at any time. You will notice an improvement in your flexibility by the end of each class – and these improvements will continue.

Men and women participants range from young and old, slender to heavier set. Alongside me at my last class was a young woman who was working on her figure following childbirth, and a man in his 70’s who wanted to maintain his strength and balance for bike riding.

Through my yoga practices I discovered another related exercise program with amazing results. Pilates (*pill-ot’-ees*) also applies stretching and breathing routines that focus on what are referred to as “core muscles.” These are muscles located from above your knee to your lowest rib – your abs, obliques, and lower back and thigh muscles. The idea behind Pilates is that whether you’re actively using legs or arms for work, sports, moving around the house, climbing stairs or simply getting in and out of your tub or favorite chair, your strength – *your delivery* – will come from these core

muscles. Pilate’s exercises are designed to increase strength without adding bulk. These exercises are more “technique specific” than yoga. In other words, they have to be done using correct body alignment and applied motion to obtain the desired benefits. After only 10 classes you will definitely feel a difference...after twenty you will see the difference in your abs and waistline... after thirty classes, people will comment on your appearance. I try to rotate my routine with 2 yoga and 1 Pilates classes the first week and switch them the next week. It’s been said that we shrink and get shorter as we age, but by stretching a few times a week, my height has increased from 6’ 1¼ to 6’ 2”. And I feel great!

At the end of a recent yoga class a woman stood up and announced, “I’m eighty years young today, I’m going to India this afternoon, and I wanted to get in a good stretch before the flight.” We all applauded her. May doesn’t have to hurt – neither does October thru December. While we have to get older, we don’t have to get old. You can rediscover yourself thru stretching while adding protection from injury and disease. Grow – don’t shrink! It’s better to be eighty years young than fifty years old. You’re never too old to rock and roll if you’re too young to die.

From the Heart Center... Namaste.

## BEST PHOTOGRAPH (First Place)

# The rally in the valley

By Carol Moschella,  
Associate Editor  
*The Dispatcher*  
Youngstown, Ohio



APWU members protest at the Youngstown main office.

## BEST CREATIVE WRITING (First Place)

# Worrying about retirement? Fuggedabowdit!

## It's a dog's life



By **Augie the Doggie**  
Postmark  
St. Paul, Minnesota

You've been thinking about it for years.

You made preparations. You saved. You attended your union sponsored seminars. You reviewed your online resources. You took advantage of your TSP and other personal IRA savings opportunities. You discussed your future with professional advisors. But you still think you're not quite ready to take the leap into retirement. You worry about the future and what you'll do with yourself. Trust me – I understand your concerns and I'm here to help. Allow me to offer you some advice from my own personal observations and experiences.

First of all, the main problem I see with you human beings is that, thru no fault of your own, your under-developed sense of smell has prevented you from following, (or even noticing) our world's many wonderful aromas and fragrances. You've become too linear in your day-to-day travels and your focus has been too narrow for too long. You over-schedule

yourselves then surrender to technology. You stress and obsess over computers, telephones, managers and where you've got to be at noon. And here's something else I don't understand about all you towering bi-peds. You spend your youth making money and when you get older you spend your money trying to regain your youth! What's up with that?

COME ON PEOPLE! – GET YOUR DOG ON!!!

That's better... Now STAY! Don't wander off just yet. I have good news for you.

Your superior intelligence enables you to re-explore your childhood wonders and discover new joys. Retirement will create a wonderful new reality for you. Don't be like my friend and colleague Pavlov's dog. He classically conditioned himself into thinking he always needs to be certain places at certain times for rewards. – What a dog-gone shame! Reward yourself instead! Ring your own dinner bell and salivate over the fragrance of freedom. Stop taking life so seriously. It's time for re-programming and re-booting your operating systems. Live in the present moment. Relax, go for walks, take naps, enjoy life's treats. Sniff out the full range of your

surroundings with deep breaths and explore new directions. Re-invent yourself. It's easier than you think. Take it from me. I've been retired for seven years now – and I'm only seven years old! Are you still worrying about retirement? Fuggedabowdit! It's a dogs life!

Oh, and one last thing:  
QUIT ANTHROPOMORPHISING ME!

I'M A FREAKIN' DOG FOR CRIMENY SAKE!

Augie the Doggie is a bow-lingual female miniature daschund who serves as the consultant to Science Diet and Pupperoni Treats. She resides with her parent, former *St. Paul Postmark* editor Mike Mazurkiewicz who is currently enjoying a dog's life.

## BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE (Honorable Mention)

# Black leadership in the American Postal Workers Union

By **Al Ross, Clerk Craft Director**  
*Unionizer*  
Walnut Creek, California

Each year the month of February is recognized as Black History Month. The American Postal Workers Union has a history of leaders who were people of color and I would like to recognize Earl Miller.

Miller was born on December 10, 1919 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Before becoming employed with the Postal Service, he attended Alabama State University where he ran track and he also served as a staff sergeant during World War II in North Africa and Italy.

In 1965, Miller was elected Executive Vice President of Local 125 of the United Federation of Postal Clerks and he was re-elected when a merger created the American Postal Workers Union.

In 1972 he was elected president of the Minneapolis Area Local 125 and served in the position until 1978 when he retired from the Postal Service. He was the first black president of the local and he also was an active leader in the Minnesota AFL-CIO. Miller's philosophy was that unions should form coalitions outside their organization, which is still very much the philosophy in today's APWU. Miller was also credited with many improvements for Minneapolis workers such as increasing wages, and he led a drive for a parking ramp for downtown postal workers. That parking ramp was essential because of the safety concerns for postal workers who worked the night shifts.

Miller was a strong willed individual and he had to be because during his tenure in an APWU leadership role, the APWU was predominately white. Miller never forgot the black community how-

ever, as he was also active in the NAACP. This was echoed at the time by former NAACP Minneapolis Branch President Matt Little. "I could always depend on Earl to get things done," he said.

Miller helped organize the Minnesotans' participation in the 1963 civil rights march on Washington, D.C., and for 40 years he was active in the state's AFL-CIO including the sergeants-at-arms committee for the union's annual convention. He also served as a member of the Committee on Political Education and as an APWU delegate to many conventions. His effective leadership style was felt by many, including current Minneapolis Area Local President Jerry Sirois.

"The lessons he taught to me and other union people will go on," he said. "He taught that in negotiations it's not all about winning, but it's also about finding something that is mutually beneficial to both sides."

Miller, a dedicated member of the APWU, died on January 26, 2007 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He was 87.

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