



The **RETIREE RECORD**

A NEWS BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS
AFFILIATED WITH APWU POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

PITTSBURGH AREA RETIREE CHAPTER

39 OF THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

POST OFFICE BOX 39 <> SLOVAN <> PENNSYLVANIA <> 15078

JOHN P. RICHARDS, *President and Editor*

VOLUME XIV

MARCH 22, 2019

No. 2

MID SUMMER BLAST/ELECTION OF OFFICERS SET

Reservations for the Chapter annual Mid Summer Blast have been made. The election of officers will also be held at that time. We will assemble at the Chadwick in Wexford where we have our annual Holiday Parties, on Tuesday, July 16, 2019. This early advance information is given so that the date can be marked on your calendars to preserve it. Full particulars for the party will be provided at the appropriate time.

Official notification of the nominations and election of officers will be given at the appropriate time in accordance with requirements of the US Department Of Labor. It has been Chapter practice to hold both the nominations and elections at the Mid Summer Blast because that is usually the largest meeting of members. The election is held at that time in that manner, rather than through the mail, due to the attendance at that meeting and as a cost savings for the Chapter.

ABOUT THE ELECTION.....

When the Chapter was created at a Pittsburgh Metro Executive Board Meeting in 2006, I was designated as President and Joe Anthony was designated as Vice President/Treasurer. We accepted those offices based on the Executive Board's unanimous commitment that the Local would underwrite and provide for "robust" communication activity for Chapter members. (That promise was reneged in 2010, when a Pugar loyalist made a motion at a Local Membership Meeting to withdraw all support of the Chapter. Pugar accepted it and the motion passed. It is my belief that Pugar was the moving force behind that motion because the Chapter, in a newsletter, criticized Pugar's behavior at the recent APWU National Convention.)

Such a development could have been a death blow for the Chapter. However, in anticipation that treachery was likely from the Pugar administration, the Chapter had made provisions to continue publication of the newsletter on our own. Two days after the motion was passed, a newsletter was published and mailed to Chapter members. (Publication has continued since that time.) But clearly the Chapter and our continuing as officers was at a crossroads. We decided to continue without the Local's support.

And we did continue. While Joe Anthony "retired" a few years ago, I have continued as President to this day. But the years have taken a toll due to ageing. When the election is held I will be 82 years old with 61+ years of Union activity. I have already been required to give up my love of sailing and our sailboat, and travel has been curtailed. As so many of our members know, restrictions due to health deterioration are inevitable and not that subtle.

That is why, without reservation, I am soliciting and urging that members step up and stand for all Chapter offices, including President. There are many 'younger' members who can take the reins and move the Chapter forward.

(over)

WHAT NOW FOR RETIREES? A TIME FOR REFLECTION!

The APWU Convention last year witnessed outrageous disrespect and insulting comments at microphones against retirees, led by Eastern Region Coordinator Mike Gallagher and his sycophants and leadership of a California Local. This occurred during discussion of a modest proposal concerning retiree representation at conventions. Under this blistering attack the proposal failed. What was at issue was a proffer that retirees who attended conventions as retiree delegates would be permitted to cast votes. The opponents demanded that retirees should pay full membership dues as well as Retiree Department dues to be eligible to cast votes. **This would mean that retirees who have a reduced income after retirement would have the highest dues in the Union! Bear in mind that the issue was just to be eligible to be voting delegates, notwithstanding the arduous task of being elected as delegates from their Chapters, and finding funding to attend the convention.** With the passage of time reflection of these events is warranted.

To review, during the Biller administration, emphasis was placed on raising funds for political action. These funds cannot be taken from the Union treasury, but must be raised as contributions to the political action fund. It was quickly apparent that retirees were generous contributors to the fund. It was common that retirees contributed @ 25% or more in significant amounts to the fund! On a % basis, retirees contribute more than the rank and file.

However, it was discovered that retiree contributions were unregulated causing concern of government agencies. Thus the Retiree Department and local retiree Chapters were established. According to reports at the time, the Biller administration made it clear that retirees were to be cash cows only. With Retiree Department dues of \$2.00 per month, **only \$0.80 per member per month was rebated to the Chapters. (The dues were increased several years ago to \$3.00 per month, with the extra dollar rebated to the Chapters.)** With an income of \$1.80 per member per month, Chapter activities are limited. (Rank and file dues increase whenever there is a negotiated pay raise. Retiree rebates are static at \$1.80 per member per month.)

ALONG CAME THE STAPLES BOYCOTT

During the three year Staples boycott, the Union leaned heavily on retirees to make the boycott a success. In our area the Local was lukewarm to the boycott, so the Union appealed to our Chapter directly to spearhead the action. We did, and retirees throughout the country likewise were heavily involved in the boycott. Needless to say, the boycott was a success causing Staples to back out of their unholy deal with the Postal Service.

It was this record of service to the Union, coupled with being tasked to carry the Union message to Congressional members when they are in the local area, that was the backdrop when the convention convened. (The Local seems to be uninterested or unable to motivate the membership to engage in the legislative field.) Moreover, with a new emphasis on Hatch Act activities as a result of a letter carrier lawsuit, the Union leans heavily on retirees for this task, inasmuch as we are not under Hatch Act restrictions. In recognition of our activity, it was not too much to ask to be permitted to cast votes at conventions by duly elected retiree delegates. Nevertheless, the convention instead chose to support the voices of negativity and rejected the modest proposal. **It truly is a time for reflection for retirees as we go forward.**

SHUT-IN LIST ~ Norbert Conway, Jeanne McCarthy, Laverne Heil, and Veronica Bujdos, are on the shut-in list. Please keep a good thought for our shut-ins. There but for the grace of God..... (To be included on the shut-in list, call the Chapter at 724 947 9374.)

MAY BE PASSED AROUND/DUPLICATED