



COURTESY COPY
The RETIREE RECORD

A NEWS BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS
AFFILIATED WITH APWU POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION
PITTSBURGH AREA RETIREE CHAPTER
OF THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

POST OFFICE BOX 39 ◊ SLOVAN ◊ PENNSYLVANIA ◊ 15078
JOHN P. RICHARDS, *President and Editor*

VOLUME VI

APRIL 5, 2012

No. 7

NATIONAL AND THE LOCAL NIX COPA!

BACKGROUND~ Before we established the Chapter, Vice President Joe Anthony and I met with the PMAPWU Executive Board to determine parameters and feasibility. Relevant for this report was the commitment we asked for - and got - for Local support of a "robust" mailing program in order to keep our membership informed. The Board voted unanimously in our presence to provide that program. On that basis we agreed to create the Chapter. But the commitment didn't last long.

Initially the Local provided all materials for our publications, use of their machines, and first class postage for mailing. Upon our later suggestion, the mailing cost was shifted to their non-profit permit. Our material was addressed by Local staff and they assisted in mail preparation. We included COPA fundraising campaigns, for which the Chapter provided envelopes and insert material.

But then things quickly began to "slip". First, Local staff assistance was greatly reduced. Then, the Local ceased addressing our material. Envelopes and other materials were withheld. Finally, with little advance notice, the Local withdrew total support of our mailing program. It is our firm belief that the Local believed their actions would terminate the mailing program and in effect put us out of business. **THEY WERE MISTAKEN! BADLY MISTAKEN!** Since that time the Chapter continues to publish our newsletters on about a bi-monthly basis, totally funded by our meager rebate from national. That publication schedule and our vigorous activities program keeps the Chapter on an even keel, albeit with a very modest income!

COPA FUND RAISING DRIVES

As is noted above, before the Local pulled the rug from under the Chapter, and shortly thereafter, in addition to our normal mailing program, we conducted COPA fund raising campaigns, which raised thousands of dollars for COPA. These efforts placed a tremendous financial strain on the Chapter, since we used multiple inserts into the solicitations, including pre-addressed envelopes. The Chapter provided all of the material, and the labor, including computer addressing services, copying, folding, etc., done with "loaned" equipment.

It became apparent that the Chapter could not maintain our normal communication and social program and conduct COPA fund raising campaigns without some assistance. The logical place to seek that assistance was the National APWU, since they are the prime benefactors of the funds generated by those campaigns. We reached out to Legislative/Political Director Myke Reid for assistance in a letter dated December 26, 2011, in which we set forth an outline of what was needed, and what the Chapter would provide. Our proposal was for a joint effort. The letter was met with silence. **Previously we had not received any acknowledgement for our most recent campaign.** That gaffe was blamed on "a secretary"! We have heard that one before! When caught red handed, blame the secretary! As far as we are concerned, it is NOT a secretary's duty to respond to field inquiries.

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY, TRY AGAIN

Having had no response to our proffer, the Chapter sent a second communication to Brother Reed on February 27, which was a restatement of our earlier letter. THIS ONE GOT A RESPONSE! Excerpts of that letter and a few explanations are set forth below.

According to Brother Reed, our first letter got lost in a pile of correspondence on the desk, and it took the second letter to refocus attention on the issue. So what is the status?

Brother Reed and Retiree Director Judy Beard apparently jointly audited our rebate, and reached the conclusion that our modest rebate income is sufficient to conduct business as usual and also conduct COPA campaigns! This is with absolutely no knowledge of what our actual financial profile is, despite both receiving our bi-monthly newsletters which clearly sets forth our entire program. We expect reactionary negative thinking out of Washington, but such a put down reaction to our proffer is frankly beyond the pale.

As insulting as this is, we are floored by the crux of Brother Reed's caution that, "...(i)f we were to subsidize the COPA drive in one chapter, we would soon be subsidizing drives for every chapter in the country." That is precisely what we would expect if the goal is fund raising! It is a perfectly legitimate project to be underwritten by national. After all, when they conduct COPA promotions, which they frequently do, they are totally underwritten by national, at a much heavier cost that we could do jointly. Some Chapters piggy back on the host Local, and give support that way. Others are 'independent', similar to the Pittsburgh Chapter, which totally conducts our own business. Some even sit it out on the sidelines. But wherever funds are generated from the Chapters and the retirees who don't belong to a Chapter, the prime recipient of those funds are active members interests, not retirees. That is a fact. We cannot imagine a more myopic short sighted attitude than the one reflected by National's position. It is like dealing with a 19th Century cabal! A close look at some of those desks in Washington might reveal the continued use of quill pens! Innovation? Progressive thinking falls on deaf ears there.

There have been assertions from long time retiree activists that all National really cares about for retirees is getting their hands on our annual \$225,000.00 COPA donations. We agree with that conclusion. Having avariciously gobbled these funds, National is not hesitant to disrespect retirees at practically every turn as demonstrated by snubbing our elected Convention Delegates at the recent All Craft Conference. The above is but another prime example. So be it. Keep it up and the worm may turn! We remain open to participate, but it takes two to tango!

ALL IS SAD IN MUDVILLE TODAY, THE MIGHTY CASEY HAS STRUCK OUT! THERE WAS SUCH A HEAVY DEMAND FOR PIRATE OPENING DAY TICKETS THAT THE CHAPTER COULD NOT LAY OUR HANDS ON ANY AT A DISCOUNT RATE. THEREFORE, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THEM TO OUR MEMBERS. WE MAY BE ABLE TO GET A BLOCK FOR A GAME LATER IN THE SEASON, POSSIBLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH A TAIL GATE PARTY. WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE INFORMATION AS THE SEASON UNFOLDS.

NEW MEMBER ~ Richard Zalenski. Welcome Aboard!

SHUT-IN LIST ~ Bill Adams, Norbert Conway, Jeanne McCarthy, Laverne Heil, Dorothy Walker, and Ruth Marlett 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