

Top Flight

Spring Edition

May 2012

MISSISSIPPI POSTAL WORKERS UNION

2012 STATE CONVENTION

JUNE 7-9, 2012

HYATT PLACE JACKSON/RIDGELAND

1016 HIGHLAND COLONY PARKWAY

RIDGELAND MS 39157

Presidents Corner

I returned from the Tri-State Conference in Tunica to the news that all 4 AMP studies being conducted in Mississippi had been approved. Imagine my surprise when I received this information from the local television station and not the Postal Service.

We tried something new at our conference which I hope will become the standard for future conferences. We rotated the instructors instead of the students. In this way all delegates received the same information at the same time. In past conferences, with the breakout system maintenance, motor vehicle and clerk delegates would all receive information from their respective National Directors and NBA's. The new method allows all the delegates insight into what is going on with all crafts. Also new was the elimination of questions during classes which tended to slow things down with individual issues which didn't necessarily apply to all the delegates. Questions were asked and answered at the end of the day.

Under the new method of conducting the conference it became overwhelmingly apparent of the impact to the host local. The elimination of trying to match delegates to classrooms was gone. The cost of trying to get classrooms for all the classes was also gone.

This year's conference was hosted by the State and I want to thank Pat Lampley for the excellent organization, coordination and help with registration and many little details that made the conference a success. I also want to thank the members from Jackson, Hattiesburg and the Coast for their assistance with COPA and other details that needed attention.

We had 120 delegates and 13 National Officers in attendance. I should thank the Postal Service for that because of all of the violations to the contract. I hope that every delegate returned home with information to answer the questions from the membership.

If you were a delegate to this year's conference, please let me know what you thought of how it was conducted. As I said, this was the first of its kind and we can tweak it if need be.

Mark Cunningham - President

Pictures from Tri-State



*If a man tells you he loves America,
yet hates labor, he is a liar.*

Abraham Lincoln

MPWU

Mississippi Postal Workers Union
State Officers
2011-2013

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R E G I S T R A T I O N F O R M

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2012 STATE CONVENTION

JUNE 7-9, 2012

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1016 HIGHLAND COLONY PARKWAY

RIDGELAND MS 39157

1-888-492-8847 CODE: G-APWU

ROOM RATE \$77.00 PLUS TAX (CUT OFF- MAY 25, 2012)

NO SMOKING FACILITY, VIOLATIONS WILL BE FINED

APWU Contact: Anthony T. Puckett, 601-594-3317

puck1536@aol.com

PLEASE MAIL YOUR REGISTRATION INFORMATION TO: MPWU CONVENTION

P O BOX 1948

JACKSON MS 39215

NAME	
LOCAL	
ADDRESS	
PHONE	

DELEGATES(\$35.00 Per Delegate)(*ONE BANQUET TICKET INCULED*)

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

TOTAL DELEGATES _____ AT \$35 = _____
 Estimate number of extra banquet tickets _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO JACKSON MS AREA LOCAL.
PLEASE SEND REGISTRATION INFORMATION BY JUNE 1.
EXTRA BANQUET TICKETS WILL BE **15.00 EACH.**



The following members donated to \$52 Copa Club in time to get their names in the Top Flight.

Melanie Bennett-Housley	Hattiesburg MS
Jean Cotton	Jackson MS
Mark Cunningham	Gulfport MS
Timothy Eaton	Hattiesburg MS
Susan Hatcher	Hattiesburg MS
Dorothy Hollingsworth	Hattiesburg MS
Patricia Lampley	Hattiesburg MS
Anothony Puckett	Jackson MS
Leo Tate	Starkville MS

Please send your COPA \$\$\$\$\$\$'S.

The United States Postal Service delivers more mail to more addresses in a larger geographical area than any other post in the world. The Postal Service delivers to more than 151 million homes, businesses and Post Office boxes in every state, city, town and borough in this country. Everyone living in the U.S. and its territories has access to postal products and services and pays the same postage regardless of their location.

- 66 billion — revenue in 2011, in dollars
- 167.9 billion — number of mail pieces processed in 2011
- 31,509 — number of Postal Service-managed retail offices
- 1.2 million — number of people who visited usps.com each day
- 236 million — dollar amount of online stamp and retail sales at usps.com in 2011
- 467 million — total revenue, in dollars, from Click-N-Ship label purchases in 2011
- 543 million — amount in revenue from 2,500 Automated Postal Centers

0 — TAX DOLLARS RECEIVED FOR OPERATING THE POSTAL SERVICE

If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500

Again: •The Postal Service receives NO tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. We are required by law to cover our costs.

- The Postal Service has the world’s largest retail network — larger than McDonald’s, Walmart and Starbucks combined (in U.S.).
- The Postal Service can and does compete with the private sector — and it collaborates, too. UPS and FedEx pay the Postal Service to deliver more than 400 million of their ground packages to residences and the Postal Service pays them for air transportation — taking advantage of their comprehensive air network.
- The Postal Service is the only organization in the country that has the manpower, network infrastructure and logistical capability to deliver to every residence and business in the U.S. and its territories.

•An independent assessment by Oxford Strategic Consulting named the U.S. Postal Service the best postal service among the 20 largest economies in the world. Criteria included the average number of citizens served, the number of letters and parcels delivered, service reliability and public trust.

•The Postal Service has the world’s largest civilian fleet and the world’s largest alternative fuel-enabled fleet of vehicles.

•The Postal Service delivered 168 billion pieces of mail in 2011 — facilitating \$10 trillion in commerce.

If you miss the way it used to be - then tax a millionaire, support a union, and buy American.

The **TOP FLIGHT** is the official publication of the Mississippi Postal Workers Union. The opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Editor or the Executive Board of the MPWU.

All submissions are welcome, but may be edited, when necessary, for space or clarity.

Send submissions and change of address information to:

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On Facebook
Mississippi Postal Workers Union



From the MS FEDS Director

Brothers and Sisters:

How would you like to belong to a great organization? This organization was created to show empathy for families of our fellow co-workers who have died because of illness, accidents or just old age.

When a loved one dies emergency situations arises and the insurance plans have not had the time to pay for the necessary expenses. A group of employees thought highly enough of their co-workers that they wanted to do something to help the families in emergencies. This, the death of a co-worker, counts as an emergency.

Believe me, some things the family is never prepared for and these funds come to be very useful in the event of death of a family member.

I, a member of the MS-FEDS, am asking that we as a Union come together and support the Fund that would help our fellow co-workers should the need arise. Please join this wonderful organization and show some support for the families.

PLEASE SIGN UP AND JOIN THE MS FEDS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION!

Proposed changes to State and Tri-State format

At last year's State Convention, Billy Woods put forth an idea to combine the Tri-State Conference and State Conventions to be held during the same week.

The idea is to save money, so that Locals will only have to pay travel to one conference rather than two functions. It would also save the National in that there would be less expense for Billy and Jerry to attend each State Convention. Additionally, it would save each State organization the cost of sending their President to each State Convention.

This issue will come up at our next State Convention scheduled for June 7th through 9th 2012. Please give this issue serious thought and let your ideas be known to myself or your delegates to the State Convention. This issue will impact the State Constitution as well as many Local Constitutions and possibly LMOU's.

All three states must approve this proposal. We will be the last state to hold our convention, so I will already know how Tennessee and Alabama have acted on this issue. If any of the 3 states are opposed to this new concept, then the issue will not be adopted. But, that wouldn't necessarily stop each state from doing it independently.

Mark Cunningham - President

**United We
Bargain
Divided We
Beg**

COPA, stands for Committee On Political Action

The purpose of COPA funds is to help support political candidates at all levels of government get elected or re-elected.

The American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO collects contributions from APWU members throughout the year. Our National President has also in the past established goals for each Local based on the number of members in the Local.

The goal established for the Mississippi is close to \$10,000.00

Reasons to contribute

Your job

Contrary to popular belief, Congress controls our destiny.

Before Congress established the U.S. Postal Service we were a department of the Federal Government, with disputes resolved by the President in whatever manner he chooses. Postal Managers were political appointees from the Postmaster General on down. Congress, not the USPS established wages for employees.

Congress still regulates the Postal Service even though we are supposed to be a self-sustaining entity. The laws created over the years still dictate how the Postal Service is to provide "Universal service at an affordable price."

Think of it this way, would you still work for the Postal Service if you had no

Annual Leave

Sick Leave

No Lay-off

Lower Wages

No Seniority rights

There are some in Congress who want to help the USPS eliminate your benefits and job.

These are the things that your COPA contributions help protect. COPA dollars are provided to candidates and elected officials based on their voting record for Working Class People, regardless of occupation supported and ***regardless of party affiliation.***

We need voices in Congress as well as at local levels who support working families.

Voting record of our Senators

<http://aboutpolitics.com/politicians/Mississippi-MS>

Voting record of our Congressmen

District 1 – Alan Nunnelee

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/person.xpd?id=412442>

District 2 – Bennie Thompson

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/person.xpd?id=400402>

District 3 – Gregg Harper

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/person.xpd?id=412280>

District 4 – Steven Palazzo

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes.xpd?year=2012&person=412443>

Surpriiise! Surpriiise!

Who does the Postmaster General think he's fooling? In a recent interview on C-span, when asked about the closing of 3600 post offices, he told the interviewer, "I never said I was going to close these post offices". The interviewer was stunned (as was I) and the perplexed look on her face was priceless. Wasn't there a list of offices to be closed put out by the PMG? Didn't Congress hold hearings on these closings? Didn't Congress ask the PMG to put a "hold" on closing these post offices?

You remember what Gomer Pyle used to say in situations similar to this? I expected the PMG to grin real big and say "Surprise, Surprise, I was just kidding about closing those post offices, had my fingers crossed when I said it so it doesn't count".

Honestly, that answer didn't really surprise me because the PMG has established sort of a record of saying one thing now and then saying something opposite later.

Remember right after our contract was ratified he called a press conference and looking straight into the cameras said "this labor agreement is good for the APWU, it's good for the Postal Service, and it's good for our customers".

Then, a couple of months later came the "Surprise, Surprise". He sent a "white paper" to Congress basically saying he had his fingers crossed when he signed that labor contract and now he needs Congress to give him the power to get out of it if the Postal Service is to survive.

With the awesome talents this PMG has for double-talk and flip-flopping I think he has the potential for a successful career in politics.

On March 9, the APWU asked if the PMG had ever looked at what effect all these closings and realignments would have on revenues and the Postal Service answered "No, we haven't looked at that".

I know what you are thinking, and you are right!

March 21 the Postal Service said "Surprise, Surprise, we actually did a study but it was faulty because it indicated the PS would lose \$5.3 billion if we implemented the changes we want, so we did a better study and it indicated we would lose only \$500 million".

I wonder what the next "Surprise, Surprise" (with fingers crossed behind the back) will be.

State of the State

The new government in Mississippi is pretty much entirely under Republican control, not that there's anything wrong with that, but it does mean there's a 99.9% chance that labor in Mississippi is not going to get any positive attention for at least a few years now.

They started the session off giving a good hint at their intentions by trying to change workers compensation rules to favor employers instead of employees.

We see what the republican agenda is when they take over other states; they don't even try to hide it anymore. They are in concert in their efforts to break the Unions and they have the money (Citizens United) and the propaganda (Fox News, Wall Street Journal, Murdock, Limbaugh, Heritage Foundation, etc.) to do it.

Of course, in Mississippi, there's not much to break. Public employees don't really have unions, I guess there must be a law against it. Teachers have unions that have no collective bargaining rights, and they are on one year contracts. Can you imagine how that makes them feel? They get all that education and preparation for a teaching career and then when they are hired, it's only for one year. How can you make plans under conditions like that.

Since we are a right to work state (right to be fired for any reason) the system does not have to give teachers a contract for the next year if they don't want to.

There are some state democrats on our side on labor issues, but they are in the minority, so almost anything the republicans want to push detrimental to labor is almost assured of passing.

The good news on the labor front, if you could call it that, is that this state is so far behind on the labor front that there doesn't seem to be much else they can do to us, and they seem to be pre-occupied for the moment with doing everything they can to strip women of their reproductive rights, getting rid of all "illegal" immigrants, and finding ways to keep minorities, the poor, the young and the very elderly from voting.

And of course, there's gerrymandering to get at too.

All of this right-wing radical social engineering they are busy with gives me cause to predict they will not have the time to mess with us anytime soon.

Patience is a virtue.

Tim Eaton



History for the 99%

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement in Zucatti Park formed a temporary community in which all the essential needs of the community were furnished by the members of that community. Among these essential needs was a library, and within that library, which was ransacked and destroyed in a middle-of-the-night raid by police, was Howard Zinn's "People's History of the United States".

Mainstream histories lead a person to the conclusion that great changes in human political movements are caused by great men who think great thoughts. This premise is followed by the rest of the story consisting of details about how these great men enacted (usually using other people's efforts) their great ideas.

In OWS vernacular, most histories are written about, for, and from the perspective of, the 1%.

Howard Zinn's "People's History of the United States" was written about, for, and from the perspective of the 99%, and it is fitting that this should be one of the books in the OWS library. "People's History", first published in 1980, depicts the struggles of Native Americans against European and U.S. conquest and expansion, slaves against slavery, unionists and other workers against capitalists, women against patriarchy, African-Americans for civil rights and socialists and others who have protested war and militarism.

Howard Zinn (1922 – 2010) was an American historian, academic, author, playwright, social activist and WWII veteran who wrote over 20 books during his lifetime. He wrote "People's History" as a text book so young people could see history "through the eyes of common people rather than political and economic elites". In a 1998 interview, Zinn said his reasons for writing "People's History" was because he wanted young people "to understand that ours is a beautiful country, but it has been taken over by men who have no respect for human rights or constitutional liberties".

"People's History" has been updated several times since first published and the latest edition contains 25 chapters beginning with "Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress" and ending with "The 2000 Election and the War on Terrorism".

One critic said Zinn "challenged national pieties and encouraged critical reflection about received wisdom. He understood that America's various radicalisms, far from being 'un-American', have propelled the nation toward more humane and democratic arrangements".

I don't know if OWS will get new copies of "People's History" or not but I can tell you this; I'm not giving mine up!

Tim Eaton

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**Mississippi Postal Workers
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