

Happy New Year

# SALEM UPDATE

Vol. 31 No. 1

January 2011

### President's State of the Local Address Janeil Payne

Greetings! The old adage that time really flies by when you are crazy is really true, or so I am told. Can you believe that on the date of our very next Union Meeting (**January 22, 2011 at 4:30PM at the Union Office on the corner of Commercial and Mission St**) it will be exactly one year since I became your very first female local president? Like I said, time flies by fast when you are crazy!

This is my very first State of the Local Address. I am going to surprise all of you and keep it sort of short. Yeah right you say, no really – I want you to bring your questions and concerns to our next meeting and I will go more into detail on some of the issues that I plan to cover here, plus hopefully we will actually know something positive about our National Negotiations by that

time. Come early and enjoy the food which is always provided at our meetings. At that meeting I wish you would provide me with feedback on exactly how you think I am doing as your local president, what areas I do well in and where I need massive improvement. Also I would like to know where/how you as members would like to see this union be in a year, five years, ten years, etc. (For those pessimists among us I believe the Postal Service will be here in ten years – it may not be in the form that we see it in now but we will be here, we offer an affordable and valuable service.)

Now for the state of the local – One year ago I took office. At that time we had a fairly large attendance at our meetings, over the course of this year that has seemed to change. This concerns me. There are members who have stopped attending the meetings as they do not like all the officers. There is one sure way of fixing this problem; that

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is either for those dissatisfied with who the officers are to run for an office or to persuade someone that they believe would do a better job to run. When you have a white ballot election, you get those willing to do the job. Second, there are members who do not agree with some of the topics which have been discussed, specifically politics, at the meetings. Please understand the Congress has the ability to literally wipe out the contract and for that matter the Postal Service with the stroke of a pen, so to speak, so who is in office is very important to our job security. Frankly while I love my job and what I do (yes, even working at Vista Station) I work for a pay check so that I can have a home, some nice things, good benefits, insurance, etc. My wages, hours and working conditions are extremely important to me so I strive to see that job friendly congress people and bills are introduced and passed. Many of us are close to retirement, others are somewhere in the middle, and a few are just beginning their careers. It is in the best interest of all of us to see that the United States Postal Service is kept worker friendly and in full service to the American public. If you have other reasons for not attending the meetings, please let the stewards, officers, or myself know so that we can attempt to address the issues and make our meetings something you won't want to miss.

New contract – as much as I would love to tell you that we have a new National Agreement to vote on, at this time we do not. It has been extremely frustrating to not be getting much information. I have decided that there is so much at stake on the table that our national team is keeping it under wraps. I hope that is the case but it is looking more and more like they will not be able to reach an agreement.

We have a new editor for our paper which is Patrick Fortune. By the meeting I hope to be welcoming Richard Brown as the new Webmaster/Data Administrator. It is with some sadness to see Geo Beck heading off to new adventures but we wish him well and thank him for all the wonderful work he has done for us over the last several years. We are also looking forward to working with both Patrick and Richard.

We have been very successful for the most part in having the grievances sustained in our favor that we are sending on to Step 3 and/or direct appeal to arbitration. To this I extend a big thank you to Clerk Craft Director Chuck Hentz and Vice President Bob Patterson, also to the stew-

ards who are providing enough information to help make the grievances sustainable. It is so true that it is the quality of the information in the Step 1 that can make or break a case. I know from experience that it is also the research and work that the Step 2 designee puts into the process as well. My sincere thanks go to all the stewards and officers for all the hard work that you do.

Two areas that I would like to see more stewards step forward would be in the Maintenance Craft and in the Associate Offices. I understand that we may have Robin McCall stepping up to be a steward in the Lebanon Office. She will be working with Bob Patterson, who I have appointed as the steward in Lebanon for the time being, until Robin has found her feet. I know she will do a wonderful job and look forward to working with her. As for the AO's, there is plenty of activity out there. I have been working on issues in Lebanon, Sweet Home, Lyons, and last but definitely not least – Albany. If the other offices have issues, please do not hesitate to contact me.

As for Salem, there are always issues. One of the biggest issues at the plant, besides the standard overtime, is the compression of Tour 1 and Tour 3. Many of you have had to either bid a new job or have had your hours changed in the last few months. This is definitely having an impact on our members. As your President I am doing everything in my power to insure that the changes are being made contractually correct. I realize that these changes are hard on you the members and our families.

Customer Services always has issues with staffing, overtime, you name it they are there. I still can not believe that a day job with the hours of 8:25 to 17:25, consecutive days off, went unbid, most likely because it had a Vista Scheme attached to it. Now it is out in limbo land as we are still under Article 12 withholding. I keep hearing that Portland has placed all 61 people that were being excessed. I know that we have welcomed John Roells from Tigard at the Vista Station, pending qualification on a bid job. He is a voluntary transfer in lieu of having a junior person excessed. I believe that there are some employees who have been transferred into the Eugene area as well. We have not had official word that the excessing has been completed at this point. I would not be unhappy if we could get more transfers as I do not see the Postal Service doing any hiring of regular clerks in the near future.

This is getting longer than I had intended. You really need

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to come to the next meeting to get the rest of this. I will touch on one more thing before I sign off though.

Vista – is has been a long journey but I am pleased to report that all the Vista clerks that were held for their scheme have now been placed into their new bid positions, either in Maintenance, the plant, or the DCU. We are still desperately short of clerks at Vista but the new crew is working hard at perfecting their scheme qualities. A few of us even have high hopes of actually being able to

### “BOB’S CORNER DESK”

By Bob Patterson

**HAPPY NEW YEAR – 2011!** At the beginning of every New Year most of us extend a similar greeting to most of those we know and even to many strangers we’ve never met or will ever see again. It’s our custom to do so. It’s a way of embracing the genesis of a new beginning and hope for revival of good things to come. One can only hope.

For much of America and the rest of the world 2008 and 2009 were particularly stressful from an economic standpoint and 2010 has only shown slight indication of recovery. *Known* unemployment still averages around 10% +/- nationally with many regions and areas enduring much higher percentages. Many unemployed Americans have been on the rolls of the unemployed for more than two years with no end in sight. More than 20% of Americans exist below the government acknowledged poverty-level while many millions more are “*underemployed*” by definition.

Which brings this to you and me: For the moment, we’re in pretty good shape. For the moment! But things they are a changing. And they can change rather quickly.

For those of you that haven’t been keeping your ears close to the internet, and even for those of you who have, the current negotiations between the APWU and the Postal Service, which began formally on November 20<sup>th</sup> and which have further been extended on numerous occasions, are *not* proceeding well at all, according to APWU Executive President Cliff Guffey. It appears that newly appointed PMG Patrick Donohue and his principle negotiators only agreed to the several contract negotiation extensions “during the holidays” as transitory so as to proffer a carrot to the Union as a “sign of good will.”

In the final analysis, however, it was little more than a de-

work our bid jobs some day. Something tells me that the jobs may have to be reposted for bid before that actually happens but we seem to stand a great chance of being able to bid them back again. Someday I may actually grow up and be a full fledged window line clerk – some where over the rainbow!!!!

Well this is my report – please come to our next meeting and I will provide more detailed information and answer any questions/concerns you may have. All members at the Associate offices are also invited to attend.

ay tactic to buy more time, as the Postal Service never had any real intention to bargain in good faith from the get-go. Why, you ask? Why should they? They don’t need to.

As many of you know, I began my postal career in 1973 and retired in 2007. Consequently, I’ve had the opportunity to observe a good number of these negotiation processes and the results from afar. Historically, the Union (most all of the postal unions) has been able to bargain not only in good faith but also from a *position of strength*. Not so the case now. The deck is measurably stacked against the APWU and rests very much in favor of the Postal Service.

This is not just a case of USPS crying broke or being financially disadvantaged, as they have repeatedly done so in the past. This time, **THEY ARE!** USPS is broke and on the brink of financial insolvency. They have intentionally seen to that. That is the real legacy of former-PMG John Potter and the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. Having incurred more than \$11-billion in losses the past two fiscal years and looking at more billion dollar losses in Fiscal-2011, USPS isn’t about to concede to any union contract demands. They don’t have to.

By way of analogy, APWU negotiators sat down at the high-stakes poker table with an empty purse and little more than a stack of IOU’s. Conversely, USPS can rightfully claim “we got nothing to pay you thieves” and the public, Congress, mailing industry, and even President Obama, who you helped put into office, are behind us by and large. The only way we can save the Postal Service is for you postal unions – especially the APWU and NALC – to make major concessions in your current National Agreements and cave into “give backs.” This is quite likely the strategic tack the Postal Service has taken that has stalled negotiations, which in turn will likely lead

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to binding arbitration.

More to the point, USPS just as likely has stalled for the express purpose of putting off negotiations as long as possible until the installation of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress in hopes that “favorable” legislation will assist in their negotiation tactics. After all, one of the things proposed by California Congressman Darrell Issa (and others) is legislation in respect to federal employees, including postal employees, that would require arbitrators to “consider the financial health of the Postal Service” in any arbitrated decision. Even though that has always been a de facto requirement per se, by codifying such a requirement could easily empower an arbitrator to “roll back” both pay and benefits amongst other considerations.

At the end of the day, in the past the Union did not fear to go to arbitration, I presume that newly-elected President Guffey has been or is attempting to avoid arbitration at all hazards this go round as he sees that the Union would likely lose more than it would gain. I know that I am of the opinion that the Union would lose huge.

**Happy - 2011?** Not for USPS and perhaps even less for APWU. And if the APWU takes a hit, the other postal unions better damn well take note. I ain't no economist, so I cannot begin to forecast or predict what the economy will or won't do. I pray it improves. But I see dark clouds getting even gloomier for USPS and if storms clobber the

Postal Service then you can rest assured that the postal unions will suffer equally as bad, worse.

Postal Service management has been USPS' own worst enemy during this debacle – not the postal unions – but when all is said and done, failed legislation and those selfish corporate entities who want to “take over” those successful, lucrative parts of USPS will spell the ultimate doom of USPS and the postal unions who represent the craft employees therein. Certainly technologies and different forms of communication have impacted USPS in many ways to be sure but those facts alone have not rendered the Postal Service irrelevant.

The question remains, what are you the craft workers, the remaining APWU members going to do, if anything, about saving the Postal Service and your postal careers? Do you care? Do you at all understand or care or comprehend how it is that you have it as well as you do? Do you honestly believe that the Postal Service just decided out of the goodness of their heart to pay you the wages and benefits that you receive and provide the working conditions because it occurred to them to do so? Really?

At present you are NOT one of the unemployed, under-employed, without health insurance, or without a roof over your head or food in your home. But you damn well might be had it not been for your Union --- the APWU! You can thank your Union for that and your union leaders. With that thought in mind, ask a NON-member why he/she isn't paying dues or where you'd be today if there was no union. Happy 2011! I mean it. Bob....



**-- GENERAL MEETING MINUTES --****(November 30th, 2010)**

The November 30th, 2010, General Meeting of the Salem Area Local #604 was called to order at 6:05 PM by Vice-President Bob Patterson. President Janeil Payne was delayed due to her window line training. A motion was M/S/P to accept the October meeting minutes as written. Bob asked for a moment of silence for the recent loss of member and co-worker Sister Sharon Boswell's untimely passing after a lengthy illness. Sadly, death has taken members Sharon Boswell, Steve Pedigo and Shelby Landreth during the past year from our Local and we wish them Rest in Peace and comfort to their families and friends in their grief.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS:**

**Secretary-Treasurer Debra Patterson:** No new members to report this month. A donation of \$50 was sent to Willamette Valley Hospice in memory of Sharon Boswell. IRS is requiring all future tax payments and paperwork be made by EFT starting the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2011. Debra is setting up a separate checking account to handle this task.

**Maintenance Craft Director Bob Budlong:** Bob reported that Tom Ryan from the Portland PO will be filling in as Maintenance Manager (A) upon Doug Peter's retirement. Mr. Ryan has reported there will be no more long term personal change of schedules (PS-3189's) accepted while he is in charge. Gary Southworth and Doug Peters retire on the December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Clerk Craft Director Chuck Hentz:** Chuck reported on local clerk grievance activity. Overtime issues are the hot issues right now. The two Vista clerks, Sam Girard and Angie Adair are now working at the Plant where they should have been moved to months ago consistent with their new bid assignments.

**Vice-president Bob Patterson:** Bob went over the exclusionary period - December 4<sup>th</sup> thru December 31<sup>st</sup>. There is no penalty OT during this time, you can work 12 hours per day and they can work you 7 days a week. The contract negotiations have been extended to November 30<sup>th</sup>. No information from the talks is being given out. The Rural Carriers have rejected the USPS proposal for wage freeze and cuts in benefits. Bob went over the USPS staffing update report and the letter that the NAPS sent to the PM General about the reduction of Managers during the holiday seasons. Say goodbye to Postmaster General Potter - his last day is December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**President Payne's Report:** Janeil reported on the Veterans project Human Relations Director Sue Carney is working on to help the homeless veterans in Washington DC. Bev Ellis reported that at state convention next April the Auxiliary will be collecting personal items to be made into personal bags for APWU family members in need. Janeil reported on the recent white powder incident fiasco at the Sweet Home PO that was handled every way it could be handled wrong. Janeil is still working on the problems at the Lyons PO.

Janeil is now fully qualified on her new bid assignment as an SSDA and will be assigned to Vista Station this Saturday - December 4th.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** Geo Beck has submitted Brother Richard Brown as a candidate to take over Geo's duties as Webmaster for the Local's web site www.Salem604.org. The E-Board will meet with both Geo and Richard soon to discuss the proposal.

**Good of the Union: Pot-of-Glock = \$60:** Manuel Vela's name was drawn but he was not present to win. The next meeting the pot will increase to \$62. Patrick Fortune and Gary Rush won the \$25 Fred Meyer holiday gift certificates.

**Door Prize Winners:** Sue Hudson, Bob Patterson, Rick Laursen and Janeil Payne.

**NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY - January 22nd, 2011 at 4:30PM.**

**Members:** Patrick Fortune, Edyne Leavenworth, Donna Hadley, Rick Laursen, Kathy Bonney, Gary Rush, Richard Brown, Tom Ellis and Sue Hudson

**Officers & Stewards:** Janeil Payne, Bob Patterson, Debra Patterson, Chuck Hentz, Bob Budlong, Fred Deleon, Tracy Brown and Karl Hegney.

**Guests:** Bev Ellis – APWU Auxiliary

Respectfully submitted:

Debra J. Patterson / Secretary-Treasurer  
Salem Area Local #604  
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

**Maintenance Musings  
Bob Budlong**

Hello again fellow union brothers and sisters!

As your reading this I'm guessing we still have no contract. And the Deadline as I understand it is 60 days from the date the contract expired which was November 20Th 2010. And if you don't know what happens after the 60 days is up I'll hazard a short description of what I think will happen, we get the shaft. Yep, pretty short but that is what you can expect, forget about your Cola, pay raises, employment protection and any topic you care to mention. The USPS senior management doesn't want to settle this, they are going to go to mediation and I would bet that they will come out smelling like a rose.

And the back-up plan is to cut clerks and mechanics to the bone. I know this because the last maintenance manager, Doug Peters told me. We are in for a very bad year, so get ready. I only hope the APWU can keep up with the flood about to come our way. You can help by coming to the local meetings, and heck maybe even re-join and start helping out a little bit. Talk to an APWU steward or officer or any member today! You need us and we need you!

**TSP Watch**

The G, F, C, S, and I, Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative, trading costs, and investment fees.

|                | <b>G</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>S</b> | <b>I</b> |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| December       | .20%     | -1.05%   | 6.68%    | 7.38%    | 8.12%    |
| Last 12 Months | 2.81%    | 6.71%    | 15.06%   | 29.06%   | 7.94%    |

**Clerk Craft Director\***  
Chuck Hentz

**Editor/Salem Update**  
Patrick Fortune  
E-mail: fortunepatrick@msn.com  
Subject line: Salem Update

**Local Data Administrator**  
(Vacant)

**Associate Office Director**  
( Vacant )

**Director of Organization**  
( Vacant )

## Officers of the Salem Area Local

**President\***  
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E-mail: Janeilp@hotmail.com

**Vice President\***  
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503-399-9512  
E-mail: Ledawg6@msn.com

**Maint Craft Director\***  
Bob Budlong

**Secretary/Treasurer\***  
Debra Patterson  
503-399-9512  
E-mail: Sweet\_DJ@msn.com

**Albany Director\***  
( Vacant )

**Health Plan Director**  
( Vacant )

**Legislative Director**  
( Vacant )

\*Indicates Executive Board Members

Tour 1 Manual: Karl Hegney  
Tour 2 Automation: Janeil Payne  
Tour 2 (Exec): Linda Klosterman  
West Salem: (Vacant)  
Hollywood/Oak Park: (Vacant)  
Maintenance: Vacant

## Salem Main Office Stewards

Tour 1 Automation: Tracy Brown  
Tour 3 Manual: Chuck Hentz  
BMEU: Linda Klosterman  
Vista: Vacant

( R ) Indicates Retired Officer

Tour 2 Manual: Janeil Payne  
Tour 3 Automation: Chuck Hentz  
Tour 2 (MO): Linda Klosterman  
Pringle: (Vacant)  
Keizer/Brooks: (Vacant)  
MVS: (Vacant)  
DCU: Fred Deleon

**Representing:** Salem, Albany, Stayton, Dallas, Willamina, Sweet Home, Lyons, Independence, Aumsville, Lebanon ,Turner & Monmouth.

### Alternates:

Tour 1: Janeil Payne  
Tour 2 Mail Processing: Linda Klosterman  
Tour 3: Tracy Brown/Karl Hegney



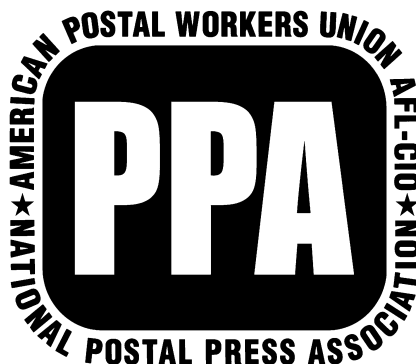
### Associate Office Stewards:

Albany Steward: (Vacant)  
Dallas Steward: ( Vacant )  
Sweet Home Steward: ( Vacant )

### Editorial Policy:

The *Salem Update* is published 8 times a year. Contributed articles will be welcome and will express the opinions of the writer, and not necessarily the opinions or policies of the Union or Editor. The Executive Board reserves the right to refuse to publish any item which in their opinion may be detrimental to the Union. All articles are due five days after the general membership meeting.

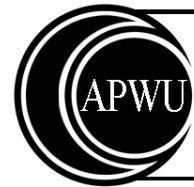
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www.Salem604.org

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Next Meeting  
January 22, 2011  
1630 Hours(4:30 PM)  
At the Union Office  
780 Commercial St SE  
Suite 106