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Volume 38 Issue 6

*200,000 postal workers represented by the APWU
have a new union contract!*

We Have A Contract

Must Reads Regarding The New Contract

- ♦ *Arbitration Award Details (page 3)*
- ♦ *Newly Converted Benefit Info (page 12)*
- ♦ *Life Insurance Open Season Ends 9/30 (page 19)*
- ♦ *President Dimondstein Open Letter (page 21)*



Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

Big Bend Brookfield Burlington Butler Cedarburg Cudahy Darien
Delafield Delavan East Troy Elkhorn Elm Grove Franklin Fredonia
Germantown Grafton Greendale Hales Corners Hartford Hartland
Jackson Kewaskum Lomira Milwaukee Menomonee Falls Mequon-Thiensville
Muskego Mukwonago New Berlin Oak Creek Oconomowoc Oakfield
Okauchee Pewaukee Plymouth Port Washington Salem Slinger South
Sussex Wales Walworth Waterford Watertown Waukesha Whitewater



**Paul McKenna
President**

A New Contract, Local Agreement

“All-In-All, the contract as a whole is a good contract for our APWU members.”

It has been a long time in the waiting, but as you know we finally have a new National Contract. It has many improvements for PSE’s and keeps the many protections that the current career work force has had in previous contracts.

There is no doubt that the PSE’s received many enhanced benefits in this new agreement. One of the main goals that National APWU President Mark Dimondstein was to chip away at the disparity between the career and non career work force. He did just that. He was successful in achieving an all career workforce in Maintenance and MVS. That was a huge accomplishment. Those two crafts no longer have PSE’s. In Milwaukee this created over 30 new career positions within those crafts.

In the Clerk Craft, we had an additional 60+ PSE’s converted to career status. This contract is a life changing event for those PSE’s who will now enjoy the benefits that the rest of the career workforce have.

Some of the other highlights for career employees in our new contract include; a 3.8% pay increase over the life of the 40 month contract; retention of COLAs; retention of No Lay-off Protection; the elimination of

NTFT assignments in Function 1 (Plant and Annex) and Function 3 (MVS); retention of language that limits any excessing to no more than 50 miles.

If you want to know more about specific changes in this contract, feel free to talk to a union officer or steward, call the union hall or come to one of our monthly union meetings. We will be happy to explain the changes to you.

All-In-All, the contract, as a whole, is a good thing for our APWU members. It continues to provide us with a decent living, good benefits and great job security. Our National Contract is one to be proud of as it is envied by many other unions.

Now that the National Contract is settled, it is time for us to begin the process of negotiating new local contracts for the Milwaukee Installation and the almost 100 Associate Offices (and the Remote Offices that belong to those AO’s) that the Milwaukee Area Local represents. This can be a daunting task. As such, I have approached upper management to discuss the possibility of negotiating one agreement that would cover all of those offices. This would be a win-win for both sides as it would make things consistent in each office and would reduce the time, money and energy in negotiating dozens of local contracts individually. Hopefully management will consider this idea and agree to it.

If you have any ideas that you want to see in your Local agreement, it must be submitted to one of the union officers or stewards by the end of September (to be considered during local negotiations).

**Vote In Election Of
National Union Officers**

Ballots for the 2016 Election of APWU National Officers will be mailed to members’ homes Saturday, Sept. 10, to Thursday, Sept. 15. All members “in good standing” as of June 24, 2016, will receive a ballot.

To be counted, ballots must be returned to and received in the designated post office box in Washington, DC, by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 5.

Members in good standing who have not received their ballots by Monday, Sept. 19, should notify their local or contact the American Arbitration Association between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at 800-529-5218 to request a duplicate. Ballots may also be requested by visiting www.aaaelections.org/apwu.

All requests for duplicate ballots must include the member’s name, address, employee ID number (or retiree ID number), the last four digits of the Social Security number, division (craft), and local

Arbitration Award Announced! We Have a New Union Contract!

Web News Article 7/08/2016

The big news is in – 200,000 postal workers represented by the APWU have a new union contract!

On July 8th, Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg issued his arbitration award that sets the wages, hours and conditions of employment in our new union contract. This award concluded a two-year struggle for “Good Service, Good Jobs, Good Contract” that included contract negotiations, mediation, arbitration hearings – and solidarity actions on work floors and in communities around the country.

“We have gained many positive results in these difficult times,” APWU President and lead negotiator Mark Dimondstein said. “We, as a union, should be proud of the results. We made some real progress on most of our major goals. We gained an all-career workforce in our Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Crafts. We secured real general wage increases. We preserved our COLA and no lay-off protections. We strengthened conversion opportunities for PSEs and improved PSE wages and benefits. We strengthened job security by limiting subcontracting, particularly in relation to MVS. We achieved a temporary moratorium on new plant closings and consolidations. We laid the basis for better protecting retail services and for expanding postal services. While we were unable to stop management’s demand that employees pay a greater share of health insurance premiums, we successfully fought back the main concessionary demands of postal management-- for increased percentages of non-career employees, a new tier of lower- paid career employees, the elimination of COLA and the weakening of our no layoff protection.”

All provisions of the previous contract that remain unchanged carry forward into our new contract including seniority and bidding rights, the grievance procedure, protection against unjust discipline, annual and sick leave, holiday and over-time pay and all the other important union benefits we have won over many decades of struggle.

Length of the Agreement

May 21, 2015 - September 20, 2018 (40 months)

Career Employee General Wage Increases

There will be across-the-board pay increases of 3.8% for career employees over the life of the Agreement:

1.2% effective November 14, 2015 (Retroactive)

1.3% effective November 26, 2016

1.3% effective November 25, 2017

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)

The COLA for career employees is maintained under the current formula. Cost of living adjustments will be made in March and September of each year of the Contract.

PSE Wage Increases

PSEs (who do not receive COLA raises) will receive wage increases as follows:

2.2% effective November 14, 2015 (Retroactive)

2.3% effective November 26, 2016

2.3% effective November 25, 2017

PSE wages will be increased by fifty cents per hour over the life of the Contract as follows:

\$0.09 per hour effective November 14 2015 (Retroactive)

\$0.20 per hour effective May 13, 2017

\$0.21 per hour effective May 26, 2018

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Arbitration Award

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No Lay-Off Protections for Career Employees

The no lay-off protections of Article 6, for employees with more than six years of service, remain in full force. In addition, no lay-off protection is extended to all career employees who are on the rolls as of July 8, 2016. This protection covers the 32,000 postal workers recently converted to career who have not yet achieved the six year threshold of no lay-off protection.

Job Security Provisions

There will be no new subcontracting of PVS driving work during the life of the contract.

For a minimum of the first year of the contract, the postal service will not expand contract stations, village post offices and approved shipper programs. (The fight over Staples is not affected by this moratorium.)

There will be no further plant closings and consolidations until at least April 2017.

Workforce Structure

- ◆ All Maintenance Craft PSEs will be converted “in place” to career within 60 days of the Award. Thereafter the PSE category of employee will be eliminated in the Maintenance Craft.
- ◆ All Motor Vehicle Service Craft PSEs will be converted to career - either full-time or PTF - within 60 days of the Award. Thereafter, the PSE category of employee will be eliminated in the MVS Craft. However, in the future PSEs could be authorized as part of a package to bring back currently subcontracted MVS work.
- ◆ PTF employees are reintroduced into the MVS craft, not to exceed 20% of the MVS career workforce.
- ◆ Non-Traditional Full-Time (NTFT) duty assignments are eliminated in Function 1 (mail processing) and Function 3 (MVS) and will be reposted as traditional full-time duty assignments. NTFTs cannot be introduced into the Maintenance Craft. Current four day a week/ ten-hour a day duty assignments may remain in place if the local parties agree. Local parties may mutually agree upon more such assignments under the Modified Work Week Memo.
- ◆ Non-Traditional Full-Time employees in Function 4 (Retail) are now capped at 8%, excluding NTFT assignments in POSTPlan offices. (Previously there was no cap.) The rules concerning schedules and postings in the NTFT memo remain. However, the restriction on assigning mandatory overtime to non-OTDL employees is narrowed from installation wide to the facility.

Veteran Hiring

Preference Eligible Veteran hiring will be greatly enhanced with the creation of the all- career workforce in the Maintenance and MVS Crafts where Veterans will now be hired directly into career positions.

Career Employee Health Benefits

The Health Plans and benefits for career employees remain in effect. Over the next three years, the employees’ portion of the health premium will increase 1% a year. For the APWU Consumer Driven Health plan, the Postal Service will continue to pay 95% of the premium.

PSE Health Benefits and Holiday Leave Pay

PSEs will now receive six paid holidays. (PSEs had no holiday leave.) The holidays are the six major holidays of New Years, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The number of hours paid for the holiday will vary by size of office: 200 Man year offices – 8 hours. POSTPlan offices – 4 hours. All other offices – 6 Hours. PSEs who work on a holiday will have the same option as career employees to have their annual leave balance credited in lieu of holiday leave pay. The 75% contribution of the USPS to the premiums of the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan, available after one year of service, remains in effect. In addition, PSEs will now have access to a USPS sponsored health plan upon employment with the USPS contributing \$125.00/pay period.

Limits on Excessing

During the life of the CBA, no employees can be excessed beyond a 50 mile radius.

Bereavement Leave

Clarification on expanded bereavement leave coverage to “in-laws.”

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Enhanced and Expanded Services

Parties established a joint Service Enhancement and Innovation Task Force authorized to discuss research, and consult experts with a goal of agreeing to programs including pilots to implement agreed upon services and practices. At least one pilot program must be implemented within 12 months.

Uniform and Work Clothes for Eligible Career Employees

Allowances for uniform and work clothing programs will be increased

Effective May 2016, increase of 5%

Effective May 21, 2017, increase of 2.5%

Effective May 21, 2018, increase of 2.5%

Eligible PSE Employees

PSEs employed in retail for the first time will receive an annual uniform allowance for three shirts, subject to the normal eligibility requirements.

Clerk Craft

- ◆ Incorporates successful MOU “Re: Filling of Residual Vacancies” into the Contract.
- ◆ New pecking order for full-time vacancies allows for a possible PTF transfer and conversion of PSEs within a 50-mile radius.
- ◆ New pecking order for PTF vacancies provides for conversion of PSEs within the installation, the transfer of PTFs within 50 miles and conversion of PSEs within a 50-mile radius.
- ◆ PTFs can express a preference to work outside their installation.
- ◆ One-time conversions of all Clerk Craft PSEs in 200 work year installations with over 2.5 years of service as of July 8, The conversions will be completed as soon as practical but no later than 60 days from July 8, 2016. One year from the award, the parties are ordered to discuss the possibility of another one-time conversion.
- ◆ New language in Article 37.5.D that streamlines process for PSE conversion to career.
- ◆ eReassign Task Force established to explore improvements to the posting and placement process.
- ◆ Employees can now exercise retreat rights without regard to level.

Maintenance Craft

- ◆ All Maintenance Craft PSEs converted to career and the PSE category eliminated.
- ◆ Maintenance Jobs MOU eliminated except for provisions related to pending disputes over “Unit Clarification”.
- ◆ Significant improvements to excessing provisions in Article 38.3.K.
- ◆ New provisions for ET-11 issues including a nationwide PAR for ET-11s and negotiations for LMOUs with MTSC.
- ◆ Retained the Subcontracting Cleaning Services MOU with entire installation in the 18K sq. ft. formula.
- ◆ Retained the 50-mile rule on excessing.
- ◆ New pecking order putting APWU bargaining unit employees ahead of non-APWU employees for in-service register selections.

Motor Vehicle Craft

- ◆ All MVS Craft PSEs converted to career and the PSE category eliminated except when part of package to bring in contracted work.
- ◆ Numbered paragraphs 1, 3, and 4 of the 2010 Motor Vehicle Craft Jobs MOU terminated Paragraph 2 remains and includes the evaluation of 8,000 HCR routes for possible return to PVS.
- ◆ No new subcontracting of PVS driving work during the life of the contract.
- ◆ Because of the loss of flexibility with conversion of all PSEs, elimination of NTFT assignments and restriction on sub-contracting, the Award provides for the return of PTFs with a 20% cap.
- ◆ Clarification of policy regarding Vehicle Maintenance Agreements (VMAs) in offices with vehicle maintenances.
- ◆ All Full-Time Regular Motor Vehicle Craft employees – not just operators – will use their seniority for vacation scheduling.
- ◆ Bids for Examination Specialist (SP-2-188) and Vehicle Operations – Maintenance Assistant (SP-2-195) are open to all full-time regular MVS employees.



**Glenn Griggs
Customer Service
Director**

I hope that everyone had a safe and fun summer. If you work in the city stations you know it was a challenging summer. Our union brothers and sisters' jobs were threatened with abolishment, some jobs were under fire to be reposted, and some of our members were facing excessing. Through negotiations, the union convinced management to stop these changes. Although we were successful at stopping these changes, it is important for me to reiterate what you need to do in order to decrease the chances that your job will be abolished/reposted.

1.)Make all your punches- If you are not making your correct punches you most likely are not getting proper credit for the work you performed. For example, if you are working on the window and subsequently perform distribution in the back (while still punched into the window operation), you most likely aren't getting credit for working in distribution. Additionally, in management eyes, the numbers will show they have too many window clerks. This is because you are still punched into the window operation yet are not doing any window transactions (because you were performing distribution).

2.)Don't let carriers, supervisors, or custodians do bargaining unit

Challenging Summer

"I want to congratulate all the PSE clerks and custodians who made regular on September 3rd, 2016. "

clerk work- It is very important to write a detailed statement within 14 days of the violation so we can file the appropriate grievance. The statement should have the names of whoever is doing the work, how long the work was performed, and what was done. To the members at the stations that write statements-thank you and keep it up.

3.)Clerks performing non-clerk work- When you do this you are showing management that at least one position is not needed at your stations. So the union is asking you to refrain from doing work other than clerk work unless you are given a direct order. If this is the case, you need to let the union know immediately.

Following these few steps won't stop management from attempting to abolish, excess or repost jobs. But it will help the union fight any potential changes in the future.

Elimination of Jobs in CFS

Another challenge the union faced this summer was the proposed elimination of jobs in CFS. Although the outcome was not what we hoped for or liked, we were able to keep the impact to a minimum. We were also able to negotiate having weekends posted for the employees that remained in the unit. We will continue to push for jobs to be put back into the unit until everyone that was excessed has an opportunity to return. I will keep everyone updated on any new developments.

PSE agreement

Last summer the union filed a grievance for equalization of hours for PSE clerks at the city stations. The time frame for the grievance was from 6/5/2015 thru 6/24/2016 when the grievance was settled. The breakdown of the settlement is, as follows; If you were a PSE clerk that worked at the city stations for the majority of the time (if not the whole time) between 6/5/2015 thru 6/24/16 you will receive a onetime payment of \$527 dollars. If you worked a combination of time between the stations/CFS/plant or got converted half way thru you will receive a onetime payment amount of \$277 dollars.

This was all part of the \$25,000 dollar settlement for equalization of PSE hours. The names and amounts were already submitted to management for processing. If anyone has any questions or concerns , feel free to contact me at 414-460-3468.

I want to congratulate all the PSE clerks and custodians who made regular on September 3rd, 2016. If you don't have a pin number for Lite blue/ Postal Ease, I strongly recommend that you set one up as soon as possible. This will be the pin number that is required to bid on jobs, check your paycheck and personal file etc. If you already set up a pin number then you are good. Once again, welcome.

"Packer Backers"...Are you ready for a Super Bowl run!





Larry Brown jr
Automation Director

I hope everyone had a great summer. First and foremost, I would like to say CONGRATULATIONS to our newly converted PSEs. You're not non career anymore baby!!! (Round of applause...!) I know it was a long road for some (Almost 5 years) but you finally made it.

Now you too will have a story to tell. There are going to be more PSEs that get hired in the future. They are going to walk through those doors the same way some of you did. They, like you, will have no idea what to expect out of this job. They'll just be happy that they have a job making \$16.06 an hour. *(Not including night differential)* I remember some of you that are getting converted were the same way. A lot changes in almost 5 years, doesn't it? It wasn't good enough to just be making the \$15.63 an hour anymore. You wanted to be a regular. So when the new PSEs, that will eventually get hired, ask you that question, "Why should I join the union?" Remember your time as a PSE!!! Remember how happy and excited you were the day you found out that you were becoming a regular!!! The UNION fought for that.!!!

Do you think that Management wanted you to make regular? Management wanted an additional tier

Back To Business

"I shouldn't have to give you a million reasons why you should be in the union."

added to our pay scale. One in which the new PSEs that we speak of *(the ones not hired yet)* would have made less money than the current PSEs make. So think about it. If you remove the people that fought for you *(whether you always agree with every decision or not)* what does that mean? Besides a bunch of other things, you don't become a regular. You're probably not even a PSE. *(Casuals were worse off)* I shouldn't have to give you a million reasons why you should be in the union. That one reason should suffice.

We could talk about reasons to join the Union all day long, but we'll switch subjects. I would like to talk about BPI. BPI stands for Break-through Productivity Initiative. It was started in 2001 to increase productivity throughout the USPS. Different operating units across the country are monitored and compared. This is why back in 2007, *(when we first started hearing about BPI)* Automation had to become certified.

Standard procedures were developed, such as the 28,000 pieces per hour, *(which was 24,000 pieces per hour back when we were becoming "Automation Certified")* and implemented in order to share performance expectations. Other things such as the 30 second per jam rule *(every jam had to be cleared and the machine restarted and running within 30 seconds.)* were targets set to drive our performance. The

higher performing units are then used as models and are studied to identify the best practices.

When you see machines starting to disappear off the workroom floor don't just look at it like management is taking machines out. *(And we're losing 4 more machine)* The decisions regarding the addition or the removal of machines are not made locally. They are made by USPS headquarters. Those decisions are made by people that have probably never stepped inside our plant one time.

The purpose of becoming certified was to allow management to standardize the way mail was processed across the country. They can identify the workload and the resources *(How much mail, and how many man hours should be needed.)* by just looking at a computer screen. It should make no difference where in the country, because everything should be running the same.

I would ask that everyone begin to punch into the appropriate mail processing operations at the time clock. This is one of the largest factors into improving BPI scores. When you are punched into a DPS operation *(918)*, but you are running standard mail *(893)*, our scores are taking a hit as standard mail runs much slower than first class. 20,000 pieces per hour on standard = great. 20,000 pieces per hour DPS = horrible. "Big Brother" has already started to take notice as

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Brown jr...

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you can no longer punch into a base operation at the time clock. Those hours are going to be monitored closely.

When USPS "Headquarters" compares the different operating units around the country, the units that are not performing up to par lose jobs. This can come in the form of losing machines. *(Less machines, less bodies needed to run them)* This can also come in the form of excessing. This was the case when I lost my job back in 2011. *(Being excessed to me technically is being fired which is why I use that wording)* I was told that Headquarters determined that St. Paul was a comparable plant to Milwaukee and that Milwaukee's numbers were way lower. So they attempted to increase the numbers in Milwaukee by subtracting the people. Do more with less.

Whether we like it or not, BPI will continue to be one of the major tools driving the Service. Our awareness to what is going on is our greatest form of defense. Making the appropriate punches is just 1 SIMPLE thing that can be done to increase our BPI.



**Larry Victory
MVS Director**

PSE Pay And Back Pay

We are trying to get updates on these issues from the National Union. We know that all the pay issues have not been fixed properly. Local management thinks it's a National's issue and therefore needs to be resolved there. They continue to tell us they do not have the authority to change pay rates and issue the back pay.

Full Time Careers

All PSE employees on the rolls in PVS will be converted to PTF or FTR status on September 3rd, 2016. A PTF (Part Time Flexible) has the same benefits and rights as a FTR employee. The biggest thing is that PTFs don't have set schedules- but if you choose to bid on a hold down you will be guaranteed those hours

My Last MVS Update

"Please support your coworkers when they have a safety issue."



(on that run) until the employee returns to work or the job is filled by a successful bidder.

Locals Contract

The Local Memorandum of Understanding for the Milwaukee area local will open up in September. Please submit any suggestions you might have to me in writing. I can be found in the VMF between 7AM and 3 PM (in the stockroom). My phone number is 414-270-2156.

Safety

Please support your coworkers when they have a safety issue. I've had two employees with major issues this past year. However, these two employees received little support from their coworkers. Management claimed that because "no one else was complaining" there wasn't a legitimate issue that needed to be addressed. If an employee fills out a 1767 (an unsafe workplace form) please consider

filling one out with them. You can also cosign the other employee's form. If you have any questions regarding this procedure please contact me.

Garagemen

The VMF was supposed to get two PSE garagemen. That cannot happen now because there are no PSE's in the Motor Vehicle Craft except if they are for new highway contract work. Hopefully, management will hire two career garagemen.

DSI

We have multiple grievances on the DSI Ad-Hoc positions. We would like 5 full-time positions added to the safety department. Safety has been using carrier and MVS ad-hoc for years. The Union feels that these positions should be added to this department. Please do not train new drivers on the spotter, 7 ton or tractor trailer unless they have been certified by a DSI to use that equipment.



Chris Czubakowski
North Sectional Director

In 2012, Union households made up 18 percent of the electorate. These Union households voted 58 percent Obama/40 percent Romney. This means that 40 percent of people living in union households supported a presidential candidate who, much like Donald Trump, was the embodiment of everything anti-postal and anti-union.

Please let that soak in for a minute. I think it's about time that postal union members share a certain cold hard reality with family members regarding the 2016 election. The reality is that the wrong candidate in the White House could be the death knell of the USPS and the standard of living our families are afforded under our right to organize and our collective bargaining agreement.

It is important that APWU members rebut the corporate misinformation about unionism (and labor friendly candidates like Hillary Clinton and Russ Feingold) by reaching out to family members and having those discussions. These discussions can truly make a difference!

It is also important that Milwaukee Area Local Members consider volunteering some time to the 2016 AFL-CIO Working America Program this election season. The program is a grass roots effort that utilizes phone

Fighting For Our Jobs In 2016 If Not You, Who?

"...in order to decipher the truth, we need to scratch under the surface of disingenuous and misleading rhetoric."

banking/door to door canvassing to mobilize voters to pull the lever for union friendly candidates. Postal workers have historically stepped up to the plate and played an integral part in the success of this program. Brothers and Sisters, please remember two things; No amount of time is too small and the more voters we have contact with, the more it moves the needle in favor of candidates who support working people. The AFL-CIO statewide program is currently up and running at full speed until November 8th, 2016.

The hours are 10am-7pm (Monday thru Friday) and 10am - 4pm (Saturday). APWU Members who are interested in volunteering should contact President McKenna at 414-273-7838 or Emily Mueller, AFL-CIO Milwaukee Area Service Organizer, at 414-745-8343.

State And Federal Legislation – Two Sides Of The Same Coin

While we have a tendency to believe that federal laws dominate our daily life, that simply is not the case. In fact, State Legislatures passed more than 24,000 bills in 2014 (that breaks down to 462 new laws per state). In comparison, the 113th congress passed only 296 bills between January 3rd, 2013-January 2nd, 2015.

Because of this disparity, it is important that we keep one eye focused on state politics. Since Citi-

zens United, the donor class and their front groups have pumped unfathomable amounts of dark money into state races to influence public policy in ways beneficial to those same moneyed oligarchs. At their behest, the Wisconsin State Legislatures and Supreme Court Justices have been very busy tilting the playing field away from working people.

In fact, since the Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012, the GOP majority in Madison has continued to feverishly dismantle everything that once made Wisconsin a national leader. They've smashed unions, defunded public services and blown up government transparency, voter access, public education and the UW-System.

To be blunt, the corporafascist ALEC robots in Madison have betrayed this state, the public trust, and the origins of their own party. It boggles the mind that any of them can even sleep with a clear conscious having operated against the public good in all they do. Massive campaign contributions from their benefactors, however, allow them to hypocritically continue to wear their versions of moral upstanding citizenry on one sleeve and betrayal of the public trust on the other.

The strategy they have used at the state level to privatize public education and cripple the UW-System was to defund, degrade, demonize, and

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Czubakowski

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destroy. **Sound familiar? It should. This is the same strategy that is used by anti-postal politicians at the federal level to privatize the Postal Service and obliterate good paying union jobs. Brothers and Sisters, we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines of state politics anymore. We need to remind ourselves that our state legislature is where tomorrow's anti-postal federal politicians are being groomed.** Governor Walker and his merry band of anti-postal ALEC robots must be stopped. A first step towards accomplishing this goal will be undoing their election engineering that began with the Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012.

The Great Wisconsin Gerrymander of 2012

On May 24th, 2015, a federal judge began hearing another lawsuit challenging legislative districts drawn after the 2010 census. Plaintiffs have claimed that the state's assembly map unconstitutionally favors GOP candidates and thus constitutes an unconstitutional partisan gerrymandering. The statistics speak for themselves; In the 2012 election, 1.4 million Democrats voted in State Assembly races compared to 1.2 million Republicans, but the GOP came away with a 60-39 Assembly majority. Furthermore, those same maps gave the Republican party an efficiency gap of about 13% in its favor. The efficiency gap is the percentage of wasted party votes in an election. This is an extreme number as fewer than 4% of all statehouse plans drawn up between 1972 and 2014 benefited a party to that extent. The whole 2012 redistricting process was insidious; secrecy agreements, withholding of information, contacting the RNC for approval, erased hard drives, and staff members covertly working with law firms on the maps. I'm glad the courts are getting a second look at this. One of the reasons previous challenges to redistricting failed was because there wasn't enough actual data to demonstrate its effects. We have that data now, and I am hopeful we'll see justice this time around!

Raising Legislative Awareness

Social media has become one of the best ways for unionists to share information and ideas. As such, I would like to continue to invite APWU Brothers and Sisters to become a member of my Facebook Group titled, **"APWU Wisconsin State Legislative Director/ Milwaukee North Sectional Director"**. This Facebook Group is updated regularly with legislative news and items of concern to postal workers. Joining this group is as easy as 1...2...3! 1. Log onto Facebook and type the name of the aforementioned Facebook Group into the search bar. 2. Click on the name of the Group (this will take you to the Group Page)3. Join the Group by clicking "Join Group" in the top-right corner. Please consider joining!

I would also like to share one of Wisconsin's best political blogs with the membership. The blogsite is: <http://www.jakehasablog.blogspot.com>. This impressive blog, authored by a UW-Madison economics graduate named Jake, sheds a much needed light on the myriad of issues that the corporate mainstream press ignores or glosses over. Those who know me know that I always compare politics to a lottery ticket. That is, in order to decipher the truth, we need to scratch under the surface of disingenuous and misleading rhetoric. Jake does just that! Check it out, you won't be disappointed!

2016 Labor Day March

On September 5th, 2016, Milwaukee Area Local APWU Members and their families participated in the Milwaukee Labor Day March and activities at the Summerfest grounds. Those who represented our Local Union enjoyed a fun filled day of Union pride and camaraderie as they joined with other unions to honor workers and celebrate Labor Day. The Milwaukee Area Local would like to thank everyone who participated in this event.



Donald Trump Is the Anti-Labor Day Candidate: Running Against Fair Wages, Worker Rights, and Unions And the party's platform is a litany of foolish dreams and ugly thoughts.

By John Nichols

Donald Trump, the billionaire candidate who has argued that “having a low minimum wage is not a bad thing for this country” and complained in a 2015 GOP debate that wages are “too high,” is running for president this fall on the most virulently anti-worker and anti-union platform in the history of his Republican Party.

Trump and the anti-labor partisans who nominated him for the presidency have rejected the legacy of a Grand Old Party that once cheered when Abraham Lincoln declared: “Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.” For more than a century, Republicans made a serious effort to compete with Democrats for the votes of workers. And they did so not just by uttering a few kind words on Labor Day but by supporting and embracing pro-worker and pro-labor policies.

Back in the 1950s, when Republicans such as Dwight Eisenhower actually fought for a robust and fair economy, the party promised to “clarify and strengthen the eight-hour laws for the benefit of workers who are subject to federal wage standards on Federal and Federally-assisted construction, and maintain and continue the vigorous administration of the Federal prevailing minimum wage law for public supply contracts” and to “extend the protection of the Federal minimum wage laws to as many more workers as is possible and practicable.” The 1956 Republican platform pledged “to protect more effectively the rights of labor unions” and announced that “The protection of the right of workers to organize into unions and to bargain collectively is the firm and permanent policy of the Eisenhower Administration.”

This year's Republican platform is dismissive of the federal minimum wage, declaring (in a stance similar to the one Trump appears to have evolved toward) that decisions about base hourly wages “should be handled at the state and local level.” It endorses the anti-union “right-to-work” laws enacted by Republican governors such as Wisconsin's Scott Walker, and calls for taking the anti-union crusade national with a proposal “for a national law” along “right-to-work” lines. The 2016 GOP platform also attacks the use of the Fair Labor Standard Act to protect workers; rips the use of Project Labor Agreements to raise wages and improve working conditions; and proposes to gut the 85-year-old Davis-Bacon Act, which guarantees “prevailing wage” pay for workers on federal projects.

At campaign stops in swing states such as Ohio, Trump tries to portray himself as a champion of workers. Yet he sends conflicting and frequently wrongheaded signals on issues ranging from wages (going so far as to claim that he didn't say wages are “too high”—despite the videos of him griping to a GOP debate audience, “Taxes too high, wages too high, we're not going to be able to compete against the world”) to trade policy (while the Republican nominee says he would negotiate better deals, he still does not seem to recognize that it is the “race-to-the-bottom” mentality of free-trade advocates that harms workers and communities). Trump's decision to make fiercely anti-union Indiana Governor Mike Pence his running mate should be read as another signal that the Republican presidential nominee is prepared to steer federal policy making toward the disastrous approaches of dogmatic governors such as Pence and Wisconsin's Walker.

Dwight Eisenhower warned, as a Republican president, about politicians “who hold some foolish dream of spinning the clock back to days when unorganized labor was a huddled, almost helpless mass.” “Only a handful of unreconstructed reactionaries harbor the ugly thought of breaking unions,” Eisenhower argued in the prosperous 1950s. “Only a fool would try to deprive working men and women of the right to join the union of their choice.”

Unfortunately, this year's Republican Party ticket is composed of a pair of unreconstructed reactionaries—and the Republican Party's platform is a litany of foolish dreams and ugly thoughts regarding the rights of workers and the trade union movement that defend those rights.



**Mark Ferrari
Local Business Agent
& Health Plan Rep.**

Benefits At A Glance: For Newly Converted Employees

“Get involved in your union. Go to union meetings.”

Congratulations to all newly converted career employees! As a career employee you now have more rights and benefits. Below are many of the benefits that are either now available to you for the first time or which are improved upon as a career employee. All thanks in large part to the union negotiated contract with the USPS.

Health Insurance: The USPS will now pay more towards the premiums of all plans thanks to the APWU contract. Additionally, please remember that Health Plan Open Season occurs once per year for an approximate one month period near the end of the year and allows you to change your current plan to a different plan during this period. (Certain personal situations that meet the criteria of a Qualifying Life Event [QLE] may allow you to change your plan during other times of the year. Marriage, divorce, birth of a child, etc. would meet the conditions of a QLE.) You can contact me as the local APWU Health Plan Representative to find out more.

Life Insurance: You now have the opportunity to enroll in a Federal Employee Group Life Insurance plan. If you have family members who depend on your income you may want to make sure they are protected in case something happens to you.

You have a limited amount of time to enroll in this so please review all information the USPS sends you as soon as possible.

Job Bidding: As a career employee you have the opportunity to bid on vacant duty assignments that are posted. The rules vary somewhat depending on what craft you are in (Clerk, Maintenance, MVS) so contact your steward to find out more information on how to bid and apply.

Overtime List: You can sign up to work overtime for every 3 month period (quarter) during the year. The Overtime Desired List allows you to sign up to work your off days and/or before tour and after tour. Check with your steward on how to sign up for overtime if you have any questions.

Holidays: As a career employee you will get 10 paid Holidays. These are: New Year’s Day; Martin Luther King Day; Washington’s Birthday; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Columbus Day; Veteran’s Day; Thanksgiving Day; and, Christmas Day.

Additionally, in conjunction with the holidays, you have a right to volunteer to work the day designated as your holiday and/or any of the other 2 days considered part of the “Holiday Call.” Contact a steward for further information on how to go about this.

Contractual Pay Increases: You will get annual pay increases and Cost Of Living pay increases where applicable added to your hourly and yearly rates of pay.

Step Increases: In addition to your contractual raises and Cost Of Living Allowances guaranteed under the union contract with the USPS, newly converted career employees also get step increases depending on what pay level you are in as follows:

- ◆ Level 3 = 44 weeks
- ◆ Levels 4-7 = 36 weeks
- ◆ Levels 8-11 = 30 weeks

Sunday Premium: Full time career employees receive an additional 25% of their hourly base pay during a scheduled tour that includes any part of Sunday. This cannot exceed 8 hours per day and does not apply when you are working on overtime.

Penalty Overtime Time Pay: Also known as “double time” pay, this applies under certain situations such as when working both off days in a service week or over 10 hours in a service day.

Annual Leave: Is accrued based on your number of years of creditable federal service (military time included.) Less than 3 years of service = 104 hours per year; at least 3 years and less than 15 years of service = 160 hours per year; 15 years or more of service = 208 hours of annual

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leave per year. Keep in mind that these hours will be pro-rated for the remainder of the year but at the beginning of the new year you will get the total amount forwarded to you to be used for the duration of the year. Also, as a career employee you will be asked to choose annual leave for the next year as part of the “initial annual leave” selections. This is usually done in December and is based on your seniority in the section or office you work in.

Sick Leave: Is accrued at no more than 4 hours per pay period based on number of paid hours in a pay period. Unlike annual leave, sick leave is NOT forwarded to you as you must earn it as you go.

Transfers: As a career employee you may request a transfer to another office anywhere around the country. The approval is based on certain criteria that must be met prior to the transfer being approved.

Human Resources Shared Services (HRSSC): You can call 1 877 477-3273 when you have to report an absence, to bid or to check on other postal related benefit issues. You should have already received a pin number sent to you to allow you access to the HRSSC phone system.

Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS): You qualify for a pension when you retire and are automatically enrolled in FERS. The amount is based on your years of service and your base pay. Previous military service and casual service prior to 1989 can be counted provided you take measures to buy back that time. HR Shared Services can be contacted for further info on military and casual buyback at 1 877 477-3273.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP): Is a retirement savings and investment plan that is separate from the Federal Employees Retirement System plan. You may contribute money from your paycheck into the TSP with matching funds up to 5% of your base pay. There are several different funds you can invest in. See tsp.gov online for further information.

Liteblue and PostalEASE: Make sure you are password registered to access these sites in order to utilize many different employment options from viewing your pay information to bidding on jobs to applying for a transfer to TSP contributions. Remember, the password for these sites is different than the one used to contact HRSSC by phone. The web addresses are liteblue.usps.gov and ewss.usps.gov. *These sites are best viewed using the Internet Explorer browser.

APWU Website and News: As an APWU member you can keep up on postal and union related news at the website apwu.org. Additionally, you should receive the APWU magazine every 2 months and the local *Hi-Lites* newsletter. Read this information to learn about your rights as postal employees and ask questions!

Some Additional Advice for All Members...

Get involved in your union. Go to union meetings. Learn what your rights and benefits are by asking questions of your stewards and officers. Membership meetings are held monthly (with the exceptions of June, July, August and December) at the Union Hall, 417 N. 3rd St. (Across the street from the main office downtown.) Read the monthly minutes that are posted on your APWU boards or that are mailed to your office for dates and times of meetings. Also, if you have good attendance and are willing to listen and learn, you should think about stepping up and becoming a union steward. It takes APWU members like this to continue standing up for those hard fought rights and benefits we all enjoy today. If anyone has any questions regarding this article or anything else you can contact me during normal business hours at the Union Hall. 414 273-7838.

Remember...

***THE UNION
IS ONLY AS GOOD
AS IT'S MEMBERS
MAKE IT.***





Jim Arneson
Maintenance Director

Things To Know And Do When Converted To Career Custodian

“There are time limits for signing up for these benefit plans.”

1. Fill out the Preferred Assignment Register sheet. Can you explain what a PAR is used for? Make sure you look at all the pages (front and back) and sign all of them. Make sure you rank the positions that you want with Number 1 being the most preferential. Leave blank any job that you would never want. Be aware that if you leave it blank you will be passed over for it. When you turn your sheets in to your supervisor make sure they sign them. Make sure you retain copies for your records. Also make sure that you fill out both the full time PAR and the part time PAR. If you have any questions contact a Maintenance Union steward at (414) 270-2019.

2. Within 15 days of making regular you should receive a maintenance test sign up form. You have 30 days to return the form. I would advise that you sign up for all the tests. If you do pass the tests you can still submit a form to reject any position for that result. Also try to make the appointments during your work hours. The Postal Service will not pay you to take the test when you are off the clock. This is called the “No loss, No gain” rule. The Postal service has 150 days to complete the procedure for these tests. If you do not get your results within 150 days

after signing up for the test contact your Union Steward. (414) 270-2019.

3. If you are a full time regular you have the option of signing up for overtime via the Overtime Desired List (OTDL). As an overtime volunteer, you have the option to sign up for before and/or after tour. You can also sign up for overtime on one or both of your offdays. For instance, if you have Tuesday/Wednesday off and you only want to work Tuesday you can note that on the sign-up sheet. Unfortunately at this time, Part Time Regulars (PTR) cannot work overtime unless it's an emergency.

However, as a PTR, you are guaranteed to work the number of hours (each week) that the job was posted as. The OTDL sign-up sheet should be available the first day of the month prior to the start of the new quarter. Quarters are 3 months long. January to March, April to June, July to September and October to December. If you forget to sign the OTDL list during the sign-up time, you cannot sign-up again until the next quarter.

4. Look at investing in your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The TSP is a major part of your future retirement. The more money you put into your TSP, the more money you will have in your retirement. The sooner you start investing, the more your money will grow. In general terms,

the USPS will match up to 5% of your base salary that you put in to your TSP Account.

5. Sign up for health insurance if you need it. Look at and consider all of the different plans. The APWU Consumer Driven Plan is a great plan at a very low cost. If you have any questions regarding the APWU Health Plan please call APWU Local Business Agent (LBA) Mark Ferrari at (414) 273-7838. He is the local union contact for the APWU Health Plan and he can help you with your decision.

6. Look over the Vision and Dental benefits. These are offered by the Postal Service at www.benefeds.com.

7. Review life insurance options. The Postal Service offers many different options.

♦ **Note:**

There are time limits for signing up for these benefit plans. You should get a blue booklet in the mail after your conversion. This booklet will detail many of the benefits and make you aware of the time limits to sign up.

Look it over and make sure you submit for them as soon as possible. You can also call the Shared Services Center at 1-877-477-3273 to answer additional questions or concerns regarding your benefit options.

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8. Register on *liteblue.usps.gov*. This site has valuable information relating to your postal employment and benefits. It is the portal to utilize eReassign. eReassign is used to put in a transfer request to an Associate Office or another district in the country.
9. Check out the benefits that the Union has to offer. These include long and short term disability, legal services, and much more. Packets with additional insurance benefits available to Union members are normally available in the Stewards offices located in the Main Office and Annex. If there are not any packets, please contact LBA Mark Ferrari at (414) 273-7838.
10. Make sure your supervisor signs you up for clothing allowance. Contact a Union Steward if you have any problems.
11. Some of the new benefits you get by becoming career include: Paid holidays; regular step increases; a bump in pay; Cost of Living Increases; Job Security; a good Retirement Plan; and, the ability to bid for different positions- just to name a few!
12. Also, please keep in mind that if you have not completed a full 360 day term as a PSE prior to your conversion to career status you will have to serve a 90 day probation once converted.
13. Be advised that you are not allowed to take annual leave within the first 90 days of conversion to career regardless if you have been a PSE over a year or not. Management will not be able to put you in for it and if they do it will be kicked back and you may end up owing money.
14. Get involved with your Union! Come to General Membership meetings! Make your voice heard! The Union has fought hard to get you converted to career regulars. The union has also fought to get you paid holidays and pay increases. Now help us fight for other brother and sisters in the Union! The Union is only as strong as its members! It is important that we get involved in order to keep our Union strong. In closing, I want to congratulate you on your conversion to Career Custodian. This was something that the Union set forth as its goal since the ink dried on the previous contract. I'm proud to say that it's a goal that we successfully achieved!

APWU MEMBER RETIREMENT CLASS

Saturday, October 8th, 9am-11am
Wednesday, October 12th, 6pm-8pm

APWU Union Hall, 417 N. 3rd St. Milwaukee, WI 53203

If you are an APWU member interested in learning about your CSRS or FERS pension, the TSP, Social Security and how to manage your money in retirement, please contact the APWU at 414 273-7838 at least 2 days prior to the date of the class to let us know if you plan on attending.

- ◆ Deaf/Hard of Hearing APWU members interested in attending and who desire an interpreter should contact the APWU as soon as possible so we can attempt to schedule one for you.
- ◆ Your spouse or significant other is welcome to attend with you.
- ◆ Snacks and beverages provided.



Greg Becker
South Sectional Director

I hope everyone had a great summer. I would like to outline one of the issues that I am working on pertaining to the Associate Post Offices (A.P.O.'s) and the Remotely Managed Post Offices (R.M.P.O.'s).

As I mentioned in the August Executive Board minutes, I have filed 3 grievances enforcing the language of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on page 427 of the National Agreement and the resulting Pre-Arbitration dated February 4, 2016. This Pre-Arb settlement clarifies the following issue, "When the 2 hours or less of custodial work cannot be combined with other maintenance duties to create a duty assignment." In essence, the 2 hours or less of custodial work must be added to clerk work hours.

This issue has added importance since the PostPlan offices were established by Arbitrator Goldberg in late 2014. In many Associate Offices (A.O.'s), management has contracted out its custodial work in A.P.O.'s with 18,000 sq. ft. or less. This is contractual per the MS-47 handbook.

When PostPlan started, many small 2, 4, or 6 hour R.M.P.O.'s were attached to a larger A.P.O. These small R.M.P.O.'s had less than 2 hours of

Performing 2 hrs Or Less Of Custodial Work At Small Offices

"...in many instances, management failed to comply with the MOU..."



custodial work per day to be performed. The MOU on page 427 allowed management to add the custodial duties on to a 6 hour office to create closer to a 8 hour duty assignment. Furthermore, at a 4 hour R.M.P.O., a PSE may work closer to a 6 hour work day.

Unfortunately, in many instances, management failed to comply with the MOU on page 427 and the resulting Pre-Arb. and allowed or directed the clerks to perform custodial duties between waiting on customers. The Pre-Arbitration dated February 4, 2016 eliminated this issue and mandated proper training for the small office Clerks, especially when working with chemicals.

What I found when talking to my South Sectional Clerks was that management was still violating this Pre-Arbitration. Prior to this agreement, I had filed a grievance at the Darien 6 hour R.M.P.O. to protect the clerk's safety and insure that the Darien Clerk worked the custodial duties either before the window opened or after the window closed, not working with hazardous chemicals between waiting on customers during window hours. As I further investigated, I found that management was violating the contract everywhere I looked.

Many Clerks do not know that their rights are being violated in this re-

gard, probably since 2011. Grievances were also filed at the Kansasville and Lyons R.M.P.O.'s.

On July 29, 2016, the grievance filed at the Darien office was sustained at Step 3 awarding back pay to the Darien Clerk as well as ordering management to repost the NTFT Duty assignment to reflect the additional hours to perform the custodial duties.

Across the country, the enforcement of the Pre-Arb dated February 4, 2016 could result in thousands of Duty Assignments with weekly hours closer to 40.

The grievances at Kansasville and Lyons are awaiting settlement. Management agreed to the Pre-Arbitration and could remedy this violation at every office with less than 2 hours of custodial work that cannot be combined with other maintenance duties.

If you are working at a 2, 4, or 6 hour R.M.P.O. or any other small office with 2 hours or less of custodial work and you are performing custodial duties between waiting on customers (or you are at a office where no custodial work is being performed by anyone) contact me as soon as possible.

I can be reached at 414-530-3449 if you have a question about this or anything else.

Thank you.



**Jeff Worden
West Sectional Director**

I hope everyone had a safe and fun summer. Summer in Wisconsin goes by pretty fast so we have to enjoy it while we can!

We now have a contract! That's right! On July 8th, Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg issued his award for American Postal Workers Union. I believe this is a VERY GOOD contract. We kept the NO LAY OFF protection. The no layoff protection also applies to all those CAREER EMPLOYEES who were on the rolls as of July 8, 2016. We will receive a 3.8% raise over the life of the contract, which is from May 21, 2015 through Sept 20, 2018.

This new contract allows for the One Time Conversion of all Clerk Craft PSE (s) in 200 MAN YEAR offices who have over 2.5 years of service as of July 8, 2016. Currently the Milwaukee Main office is a 200 Man year office.

The Waukesha and New Berlin post offices have ALWAYS been considered "200 man year offices" yet Management is currently challenging us on this. The most recent report shows the Waukesha post office as a 100 Man Year Office and the New Berlin post office as a 100 man years office. 100 plus 100 equals 200. Manage-

Welcome Back

" We will be entering into Local Negotiations in the near future."

ment, however, refuses to put them together!

The fact of the matter is that the Waukesha and New Berlin post office are NOT separate offices. They are one (1) installation! We are currently arguing this with postal management at the National Level. I will keep union members updated as more information becomes available.

LOCAL NEGOTIATIONS

We will be entering into Local Negotiations in the near future. If any MEMBER has any ideas regarding things they would like to see added, deleted or changed within their local agreement they should contact their Director.

STOP STAPLES

The "STOP STAPLES" campaign is still alive and kickin' . Let's all do our part to Save our Service and insure the sanctity of the US Mail. The APWU Wisconsin State has Postcards that members, family and friends can fill out. These postcards will be sent to the CEO OF STAPES and state , " *we will take our business elsewhere t unless all of the postal counters are staffed by USPS employees!*"

APWU members, including retirees, can contact your Local Director/Steward or call me at (414) 530-7186 to get you packet of postcards. You can then share them with co-workers, friends and family mem-

bers. Upon completion, return them to me and I will make sure they get mailed to the National.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE DRIVE

I would like to thank all of the members who donated to the recent Health and Hygiene drive that was sponsored by the Milwaukee and Waukesha County Labor Councils. The Milwaukee Area Local collected over a dozen boxes of items. This was by far the most successful Health and Hygiene drive ever held by the Milwaukee Area local. Thanks to all that donated.

LABORFEST 2016

The Milwaukee Area Local had a good turnout this year at the annual Labor Day march. The march is a really good opportunity to not only show the public that Milwaukee is a union town but also educate them about all of the good that unions do. Upon arriving at the Summerfest grounds, those who marched were treated to food an beverage tickets and a whole bunch of family friendly activities. A great time was had by all. I would like to thank those of you who came out to represent the Milwaukee Area Local.





Karen White
Recording Secretary

Greeting to all my APWU Brothers and Sisters. I hope that you and all of your families had a wonderful Summer. This month I would like to write about bereavement leave.

APWU represented employees may use a total of up to three workdays of annual leave, sick or leave without pay, to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or to attend the funeral of a family member. Authorization of leave beyond three workdays is subject to

the conditions and requirements of Article 10 of the National Agreement, Subsection 510 of the Employee and Labor Relations manual and the applicable local memorandum of understand provisions.

A Family member is defined as a:

- (a) Son or Daughter-a biological or adopted child, step-child, daughter-in-law or son-in law
- (b) Spouse
- (c) Parent
- (d) Sibling-Brother, Sister, Brother/Sister-in-law
- (e) Grandparent

THE IN-LAWS REFERENCED IN THIS MOU APPLIES TO CHILDREN, INCLUDING ADOPTED CHILDREN, STEPCHILDREN AND SPOUSES THEREOF,

Bereavement Leave

“Documentation evidencing the death of the employee’s family member is required...”

SPOUSE AND PARENT THEREFORE AND BROTHER AND SISTERS AND SPOUSES THEREOF.

For employees opting to use available sick leave, the leave will be charged to sick leave for dependent care, if eligible. Documentation evidencing the death of the employee’s family member is required only when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interest of the Postal Service.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I would like to remind everyone that if you have changed your address, please call the union hall with the updated information. We don’t want you to miss out on any important information due to an incorrect address.

Thank you.

USPS Third Quarter Financial Report

According to financial results released on Aug. 9, the Postal Service has earned \$1.3 billion in operating profit so far this year, making this the fourth straight year the USPS is operating in the black. Operating profits in 2015 and 2014 also totaled more than \$1 billion each. The year-to-date operating profit has increased by \$100 million compared to the same period last year; shipping and package volume increased 13.6 percent compared to the same period in 2015. Despite the improvements, the Postal Service announced a “net loss” of \$1.6 billion for the quarter and an operating loss of \$522 million.

“With no taxpayer funding, the Postal Service provides essential services and enjoys widespread support from the people of the country,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “Letter volume is stabilizing, and the explosion in online shopping has led to sharp increase in package revenue, so there is great potential for a strong, public Postal Service to thrive. “For the Postal Service to continue to flourish, Congress must pass comprehensive postal reform that addresses the pre-funding hoax, allows the Postal Service to expand and enhance service, and adopts appropriate practices for investing the USPS retiree health benefits fund,” he said. “The APWU is working with our sister postal unions, USPS management, mailing industry groups and key legislators to reach consensus on such reform.”



Life Insurance Open Season



The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program, FEGLI, is having an Open Season from September 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016. ***This is the first FEGLI Open Season since 2004.***

During the month of September 2016, if you are a Federal employee eligible for FEGLI, you can elect any coverage that FEGLI offers, including Option C coverage on the lives of your eligible family members. Employees who are in their first 12 months of workers' compensation are also eligible but they must meet pay and duty status requirements before their coverage can come into effect. You do not need to be currently enrolled in FEGLI to elect coverage during the Open Season. Open Season elections have no medical exam required and no health questions to answer.

Elections made during the FEGLI Open Season have a one-year delayed effective date. Coverage you elect in the September 2016 FEGLI Open Season will be effective on the first day of the first full pay period on or after October 1, 2017, as long as you meet pay and duty status requirements. For most biweekly employees, this means your coverage will be effective on October 1, 2017. For most Postal employees, this means your coverage will be effective on October 14, 2017. Your new premiums will be effective when your new coverage is effective. You will not pay your new premiums during the one-year waiting period.

The FEGLI Open Season is for FEGLI-eligible employees and qualifying compensationers only. Annuitants are not eligible to make FEGLI Open Season elections. By law, annuitants are never allowed to elect or increase their FEGLI life insurance coverage, even during an Open Season. Like employees, annuitants can cancel or reduce FEGLI coverage at any time unless assigned.

Making Your FEGLI Open Season Election

There is no special election form to use during the FEGLI Open Season. You make your Open Season election using the existing FEGLI election form, Standard Form SF 2817, or its electronic equivalent if your agency offers one. Submit your election to your agency's human resources office. If you submit your election by hand or electronically, be sure to indicate to your agency that this is an Open Season election. If your agency uses a shared service center or if you submit your election by mail, your agency may have a cover letter for you to attach to show that yours is an Open Season election. Your agency will give you a copy of your election as proof of receipt. Your agency will give you another copy of the election when your coverage becomes effective after you meet pay and duty status requirements. Be sure to elect ALL the FEGLI coverage that you want on your Open Season election, not just the coverage you want to add or increase. Any coverage you do not elect is waived or cancelled.

If you like your current FEGLI coverage, you do not need to take any action during the Open Season. If you do nothing during the FEGLI Open Season, you will keep your existing election. You are not required to re-elect your coverage.

Retiring after the FEGLI Open Season

All regular rules still apply for continuing FEGLI into retirement. This includes the requirement that for any types or multiples of coverage you wish to bring into retirement, you must have that coverage throughout your last five years of Federal service, or your entire period or periods of service if you retire with less than five years. Because coverage elected during the FEGLI Open Season will be effective no sooner than October 2017, this means that if you want to bring your Open Season coverage into retirement, you must retire in October 2022 or later, five years after the coverage becomes effective. If you plan to retire before October 2022, consider this when deciding whether to elect coverage during the FEGLI Open Season. By law, there are no waivers for the five-year rule under the FEGLI Program.



John Miceli
Treasurer

USA TODAY, (Paul Davidson)

The steep decline in union membership in recent decades has had an outsize effect on the American workforce, tamping down wage increases for nonunion workers, a new study says. The fading of unions in the U.S. has tempered wage growth for non-union workers, a study says.

The steep decline in union membership in recent decades has had an outsize effect on the American workforce, tamping down wage increases for nonunion workers, a new study says. Average weekly earnings for nonunion private-sector male workers would have been 5%, or \$52, higher in 2013 if the share of union workers had remained at 1979 levels, according to the study out Tuesday from the liberal-leaning Economic Policy Institute ahead of Labor Day. That's tantamount to a loss of \$2,704 annually for the average nonunion worker.

Decline Of Unions Has Hurt All Workers

“...unions often establish labor-friendly policies that generally promote fairness in pay.”

The paper was authored by Washington University sociologists Jake Rosenfeld and Patrick Denice, and Jennifer Laird, a research scientist at Columbia University's Center on Poverty and Social Policy.

The earnings loss is smaller for women because they were not as unionized as men in 1979. Weekly wages would be about 2% to 3% higher for women if union membership had stayed at 1979 levels, the report says. About 10% of male private-sector workers were union members in 2013, down from 34% in 1979. In that period, the share of women who belong to unions fell to 6% from 16%.

The report argues the dwindling influence of unions is a significant but often ignored reason for wage stagnation, along with globalization, technological change and the slowdown in educational achievement gains.

The prevalence of unions affects the pay of nonunion workers in various ways, the study says. Nonunion employers often raise their workers' pay to foster loyalty and head off an

organizing drive. Kodak deployed that strategy in highly organized New York State, the study says.

The fatter paychecks of union workers also creates a more competitive labor market that forces nonunion companies to lift wages to prevent employees from jumping ship. And unions often establish labor-friendly policies that generally promote fairness in pay, benefits and worker treatment, according to the report.

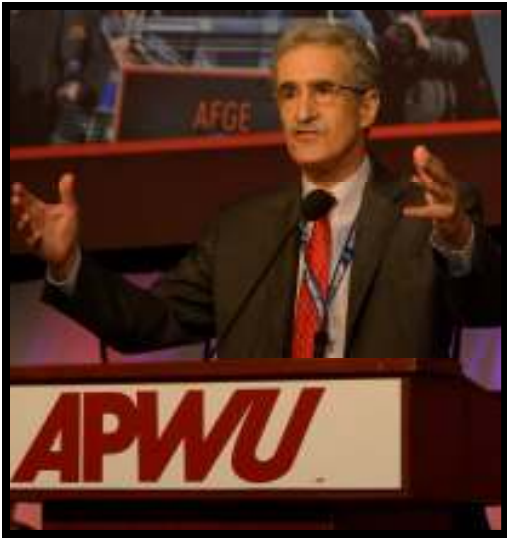
The gains of yesteryear were not limited to nonunion workers at risk of joining unions, the study says. When those workers received raises, their higher-level supervisors who couldn't join unions also saw sharper pay increases to maintain salary hierarchies, the paper says.

But the losses engendered by shrinking union participation are most pronounced for nonunion private-sector male workers who lack a Bachelor's degree.

Wages for that group would be 8% higher in 2013 if union membership had stayed at 1979 levels, translating into an annual wage loss of \$3,016.



Contract Negotiations Reflect Our Power



APWU President Mark Dimondstein

“Negotiations come down to power,” APWU President Mark Dimondstein told delegates at the union’s National Convention at a meeting on the new contract. The results of negotiations reflect how much power and leverage each side can assert, he said. With that in mind, as part of the fight for a good contract, union leaders sought to strengthen our members’ power on the work floor and build support for our struggle in the labor movement and beyond.

The new Collective Bargaining Agreement is the result of a two-year fight. “You were all involved in it,” Dimondstein told the assembly at a special meeting. Throughout the two-year struggle, the union was always preparing for the possibility that our contract dispute would end up in arbitration, he said. “Arbitration is risky,” Dimondstein pointed out, because “everything gets thrown up into the air” and because “one person decides our fate.” The APWU contract covers more workers than any single Collective Bargaining Agreement in the country, so the result – good or bad – would affect the entire working class.

The union set big goals and faced significant obstacles. But the APWU also had significant strengths:

- ◆ We have our union!
- ◆ More than 80 percent of the APWU workforce are union members and our ranks are growing.
- ◆ We organized a contract campaign.
- ◆ We have collective bargaining rights.
- ◆ Our members’ voices were present throughout the negotiations.

“We developed a strong strategy and did a lot of creative things. We had the contract campaign and Contract Action Teams. Most of you were part of it,” Dimondstein told delegates. “Don’t underestimate what you did. We sent management a message.” Every time workers put on a sticker, a button, a T-shirt, or sent in a selfie showing union pride and solidarity, it became “part of our leverage and our collective strength,” he added. Dimondstein also credited labor solidarity for the union’s success. “We had a lot of unions standing with us, including on the opening day of negotiations. Brother Fred Rolando of the Letter Carriers sat with us at the table on the opening day. We had probably seven or eight unions with us on opening day.”

AFL-CIO President Trumka represented the labor movement, testifying on opening day. Actor-Activist Danny Glover also testified, representing A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service. “That sent management a message too,” Dimondstein said. The union’s guiding principle was “no concessionary bargaining.”

Nonetheless, management demanded concessions. The Postal Service sought to:

- ◆ Establish a new tier with lower wages and benefits within the career workforce.
- ◆ Eliminate COLAs and turn them into lump-sum payments that would never become part of base pay.
- ◆ Increase the percentage of non-career workforce.
- ◆ Weaken or eliminate no-layoff protections.

Instead, we accomplished a great deal:

- ◆ Halted the race to the bottom.
- ◆ Created more career work.
- ◆ Protected COLAs.
- ◆ Defended no-layoff protections.

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Dimondstein

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- ◆ Won general wage increases.
- ◆ Increased job security.
- ◆ Uplifted PSEs where we still have them.
- ◆ Solidified the conversion process.
- ◆ Established a task force to explore enhanced services.

We Can Forge Ahead, Build Power & Win!

In a rousing speech to convention delegates, President Mark Dimondstein outlined the challenges and possibilities facing APWU members. “We are working, living and struggling in a time where there is an all-out war on workers, our families, our communities, our standards of living, our rights, our organizations,” he said. “Make no mistake about it: It is Them vs. Us. Wall Street vs. Main Street. Capital vs. Labor.”

“Our precious right to vote is under severe attack,” and “elections are increasingly and openly bought and sold,” he said. “By design, we have a ‘winner takes all’ election system perpetuates the choice between the ‘lesser of two evils.’” and “stacks the deck against the development of a needed union-based political party...” “CEOs of fast food chains make \$9,000, not a month, not a week, not a day, but an hour – while they resist workers’ demands for \$15 per hour...” “Public libraries, parks, hospitals, schools, utilities, transportation and yes, public postal services, are under extreme attack aimed at privatization...”

“But since the people trust the post office and postal workers, outright privatization is not so easy. Instead privatizers seek to degrade service as a means to their end: Keep the lines long, hours short, delay mail, deliver late. This is the aim of the recent bipartisan rollback of postal rates and the bi-partisan 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which created the congressionally-manufactured financial crisis being used to choke the Postal Service.

“All this is part of our reality. But there is another truth as well: Workers are standing up and fighting back– a message powerfully delivered by the uprising of hundreds of thousands of courageous Wisconsin workers who sparked a new period of labor activism. Fast food and retail workers are leading the charge for living wages, and making real gains. Unionized auto workers stood firm in recent contract negotiations and largely eliminated the divisive two-tier wage systems at the “big three” auto companies. Forty-thousand unionized workers took on the behemoth Verizon Corporation in a 46-day strike, and won.”

“The union leadership of all our divisions won major arbitration cases and reached significant settlements with management that improved job security. Examples include gaining thousands of jobs with POSTPlan, ... ‘Global Settlement’ of \$56 million in back pay while defending bargaining unit work and protection against violations of subcontracting in Maintenance and Motor Vehicle crafts. Building on the outstanding settlement on the filling of residual vacancies, the union has succeeded in converting 33,000 PSEs to career since the last convention! What a life-changing, union-won event, thanks in part to the work of so many of you to enforce the contract – and a great opportunity to bring new members and activists into the union cause.”

“Last convention, I spoke of the need to build a grand alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service. It is now a reality and consists of 140 organizations, including 80 national labor, faith-based, community, environmental and civil rights organizations. The APWU has also spearheaded the campaign for Postal Banking. The ‘legal loan sharking’ predatory payday lending, check-cashing industry preys on tens of millions of the working poor. The Postal Service, with its highly-trained and dedicated workforce and its presence in every community, is well-positioned to provide paycheck cashing and other basic financial services, commonly performed by postal systems around the world. Winning this fight will strengthen our public Postal Service and protect postal jobs.”

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“And what about the Staples fight? Since we took to the streets during the Chicago convention and proclaimed, ‘The U.S. Mail is Not for Sale,’ Staples stock has dropped 50 percent; the company is shuttering stores; its merger with Office Depot was rejected by the courts (thanks in large part to our efforts); and Staples CEO Ron Sargent was forced out. “The Stop Staples movement is going strong. Leafleting at Staples stores is constantly turning away customers and we have won significant victories at the National Labor Relations Board. We have the ongoing support of our sister unions and many allies. This is not just a fight against Staples. Plain and simple, this is a campaign to disrupt and stop management’s plans to privatize retail jobs. And here’s some great news: In his farewell address former Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe admitted we are winning when he acknowledged, ‘Unfortunately, it’s now tougher for us to find retail partners.’ Brothers and Sisters, are you for finishing the battle until Staples gets out of the postal business!?”

“On the legislative front, let’s face it: These are difficult and politically hostile times. Congress has refused to address the pre-funding financial crisis they created and White House nominees to the Board of Governors include the ‘king of privatizers’ James Miller and payday loan lobbyist Mickey Barnett. We have worked with our sister postal unions and even postal management to gain legislative relief. We have begun to build relationships that did not previously exist with Republican members of Congress from rural states as part of our fight to restore and protect good postal services.”

“This leadership will stay deeply involved in the debate over how to improve the bills so that we can support them and win postal reform – reform that fixes the pre-funding crisis and addresses other crucial issues facing the Postal Service. As part of the general fight for justice we participate in the Democracy Initiative to drive corporate money out of politics and defend our right to vote.”

“Let me share a few comments on the 2016 U.S. election: I believe the 2016 presidential primary season was truly historic as millions, particularly young people, proclaimed they were dissatisfied with our country’s rigged political system. Millions responded to Senator Sanders call for a political revolution with its bold, pro-working-class message of living wages, free college tuition, Medicare for All, defending the ‘public good’ and taking on Wall Street greed. Even many of the votes for the anti-union, anti-worker, race- and religion-baiting Donald Trump, reflect legitimate disgust with business as usual. I fully respect that every individual’s choice at the ballot box is a personal decision, mine included. The APWU National Executive Board was on the cutting edge of history when we endorsed Sen. Bernie Sanders, an outstanding friend and supporter of postal workers. And so many APWU activists were enthusiastically ‘Feeling the Bern.’ In light of the results of the presidential primary, and given the stark choices, the National Executive Board has now endorsed the Democratic Party nominee, Hillary Clinton. It will now up to this convention to decide the best way forward in this 2016 election.”

“Oh yes, we may come in different colors, shapes and sizes. We may have arrived on these shores with different stories and histories. We come from different religions, ethnic backgrounds, genders and sexual orientations. We have varying political beliefs from Tea Party to Socialist and a whole lot in-between. But our blood flows in the same direction of justice. Our hearts beat in unity in the fight for more workers’ power. We share the passion for a better life for ourselves and our families and are ready to pass that on to young and future leaders. We are the activist core and firm foundation of the APWU. We believe in a vibrant public Postal Service! We are fighters for justice! So give yourselves and each other a standing ovation!”

“Sisters and Brothers, from our workplaces to the streets, from our neighborhoods to the halls of Congress, it is time to ever more seriously educate, organize, mobilize and galvanize. We will not be able to elect, litigate, hope or grieve our way out of these difficult and dangerous times. We will have to fight our way out with a movement of millions and using all the tools at our disposal. We must build a crusade to organize the unorganized! We must continue to organize a crusade to save the public Postal Service. We must be part of a crusade to save our unions! We must be part of a crusade for social and economic justice. Let’s continue to stand up and fight back, hand-in-hand with each other, all postal unions, all labor, the public and our many community allies...The last two years have shown us this truth. Mobilized and united in action, ‘Fighting for Justice,’ we made great progress...”

...We can forge ahead, build our power, and win! Carry On and Solidarity Forever!"

Graduating Class Of 2016



Jason graduated with Honors from MSOE earning his Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering. Jason has been hired by Snap-on Power Tools as a Design Engineer.

“Congratulations! I am very proud of your accomplishment. God Bless, Love Oma

Jason is the grandson of Amy Davidsz (Retiree)



TIFFANY



Tiffany graduated with Honors from MSOE earning her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. She previously earned her first Bachelor’s Degree from UW-Madison.

“Congratulations! I am very proud of your accomplishment. God Bless, Love Oma

Tiffany is the granddaughter of Amy Davidsz (Retiree)

JASON

SPENCER

Spencer graduated with Honors from Oak Creek HS. He will be attending UW-Stout working towards a Bachelor of Science Degree majoring in Computer Science-Game Design & Development.

“Congratulations! I am very proud of your accomplishment. God Bless, Love Oma

Spencer is the grandson of Amy Davidsz (Retiree)



Graduating Class Of 2016



Matthew graduated from Franklin HS and is going to pursue a career in the Building trades as an apprentice as a Heavy Equipment Operator

“It took a lot of sweat and tears from Mom & Dad, but you graduated. Remember these two things...”

- ◆ *A successful man is looked at with a sense of accomplishment, but to truly accomplish something, be a man of your word.*
- ◆ *Room and Board payment is due the 1st of every month.*

“We love you and are very proud!” Love Mom & Dad

Matthew is the son of Paul McKenna (APWU President)



MATTHEW

PRISCILLA



Priscilla is graduating from Carroll University with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Educational Studies. She is very excited for all the opportunities her future holds.

“I am very proud and know you will succeed in whatever you do!”

Priscilla is the daughter of Linda Bort (T-1 Outgoing Clerk)

Graduating Class Of 2016



Charles graduated from Marquette HS. He will be attending UW-Eau Claire.

"We are so proud of you and everything you have accomplished. We are excited as you move forward into the next chapter in your life. Thank you for being an incredible young man. Best of luck. Take care and God Bless!" Love, Dad, Mom, Kuya Kevin, Kuya Angelito and Anbel

Charles is the son of Belinda Tenorio (Retiree)



CHARLES

AUSTIN & ARTHUR



Austin and Arthur both graduated from New Berlin West HS. Austin will be attending UW-Waukesha. Arthur will be attending Lynchburg College in Virginia.

"My twins... I love you so much! I am so proud of you both. Good luck in college!"

Austin and Arthur are the son's of Beverly Blaha (T-2 FSM Clerk)

LABOR'S LADEL



September 'Sweet Tooth' Recipes

Grandma's Chocolate Zucchini Brownies

Prep time: 30 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Makes 20 Servings

Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter
1 1/2 cups white sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 1/2 cups shredded zucchini
2 tablespoons white sugar
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Grease a jelly roll pan.
3. Sift flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt together in a bowl.
4. Beat the butter and 1 1/2 cups sugar with an electric mixer in a large bowl until smooth. Beat the first egg into the butter until completely blended, then beat in the vanilla extract with the last egg. Mix in the flour mixture until just incorporated. Fold in the zucchini; mixing just enough to evenly combine.

5. Pour mixture into prepared pan. Sprinkle the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar, chocolate chips, and walnuts on top.

6. Bake in the preheated oven until the top is dry and the edges have started to pull away from the sides of the pan, 25 to 30 minutes..

Ice Cream Sandwich Cake

Prep time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

24 vanilla ice cream sandwiches, unwrapped
2 (8 ounce) containers of Cool Whip
1 (12 ounce) jar hot fudge ice cream topping, warmed
1 (12 ounce) jar caramel ice cream topping
1/4 cup chopped pecans

Directions

1. Arrange a layer of ice cream sandwiches in the bottom of a 9x13-inch dish; top with a layer of whipped topping, hot fudge topping, and caramel topping. Repeat layering with remaining ice cream sandwiches, whipped topping, hot fudge topping, and caramel topping, ending with a top layer of whipped topping.
2. Sprinkle with pecans.
3. Cover dish with aluminum foil and freeze until set, at least 30 minutes.



LABOR'S LADEL



Recipes

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