



# The Hi-Lites



The official publication of Milwaukee, WI Area Local APWU, AFL-CIO  
(Proud Postal Press Association National Awards Winner)



MAY 2016 Volume 38 Issue 5

## The Final Countdown



**Contract Arbitration Decision Expected  
In 30 To 60 Days**

### 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**

*I gave an update at the April General Membership Meeting regarding our National Contract. As this article goes to press, Arbitration hearings on the APWU Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Postal Service have concluded and the union expects a decision in 30 to 60 days.*

During 18 days of hearings that focused primarily on the economic provisions on the new contract, the union and management presented their positions, called witnesses, submitted evidence, and offered rebuttals.

The three-member panel of arbitrators began its deliberations on May 4. The panel is comprised of a union-appointed arbitrator, a management-appointed arbitrator, and Neutral Arbitrator Stephen B. Goldberg, who will determine the outcome.

He has the responsibility to look at all of the evidence presented to him from both sides and make a decision on what our new contract will be. We are anticipating that a decision should be reached by late summer. Once that is done, we will begin to prepare for local negotiations that allow us to negotiate with local management on rules that affect us on a daily basis.

## The Home Stretch

*"We are anticipating that a decision should be reached by late summer."*

According to the National Agreement in Article 30, we can only locally negotiate certain things with management on 22 specific items. Those items are:

1. Additional or longer wash-up periods.
2. The establishment of a regular work week of five days with either fixed or rotating days off.
3. Guidelines for the curtailment or termination of postal operations to conform to orders of local authorities or as local conditions warrant because of emergency conditions.
4. Formulation of local leave program.
5. The duration of the choice vacation period(s).
6. The determination of the beginning day of an employee's vacation period.
7. Whether employees at their option may request two selections during the choice vacation period, in units of either 5 or 10 days.
8. Whether jury duty and attendance at National or State Conventions shall be charged to the choice vacation period.
9. Determination of the maximum number of employees who shall receive leave each week during the choice vacation period.
10. The issuance of official notices to each employee of the vacation schedule approved for such employee.
11. Determination of the date and means of notifying employees of the beginning of the new leave year.
12. The procedures for submission of applications for annual leave during other than the choice vacation period.
13. The method of selecting employees to work on a holiday.
14. Whether "Overtime Desired" lists in Article 8 shall be by section and/or tour.
15. The number of light duty assignments within each craft or occupational group to be reserved for temporary or permanent light duty assignment.
16. The method to be used in reserving light duty assignments so that no regularly assigned member of the regular work force will be adversely affected.
17. The identification of assignments that are to be considered light duty within each craft represented in the office.
18. The identification of assignments comprising a section, when it is proposed to reassign within an installation employees excess to the needs of a section.
19. The assignment of employee parking spaces.
20. The determination as to whether annual leave to attend Union activities requested prior to determination of the choice vacation schedule is to be part of the total choice vacation plan.
21. Those other items which are subject to local negotiations as provided in the craft provisions of this Agreement.
22. Local implementation of this Agreement relating to seniority, reassignments and posting.

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Currently, the Milwaukee Area Local negotiates dozens of different Local Memorandums of Understandings (LMOU's) that cover the entire Milwaukee Installation (Main Plant, City Stations, Annex) and many of the Associate Offices in the 530 and 531 Zip Codes. If you have any ideas or want to see any changes regarding the items listed in this article , please put it in writing to any officer or steward for us to review for your LMOU.

With Summer fast approaching, remember to enjoy the weather while it's warm and sunny. Take your kids, grandkids or even that neighbor kid down the block out fishing or to the zoo this summer. It will be something that they will always remember. Enjoy!

\* \* \*

**Labor Cuts Account for 75 Percent of Savings, OIG: USPS Cost-Cutting Strategies 'Not Sustainable'**  
APWU Web News Article 4/28/2016

The Postal Service has cut labor costs by more than \$10 billion since the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) was passed in 2006, but its cost-cutting strategies are "not sustainable," according to a recent report by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Labor costs declined by nearly 21 percent (when adjusted for inflation and excluding the pre-funding of retirees healthcare) and account for approximately 75 percent of the total reduction in expenses. But "the tradeoffs among cost control, service quality, and modernization remain a concern for the Postal Service," the report warned. The report, titled "*Peeling the Onion: The Real Cost of Mail*," said cost-cutting measures included:

- ◆ Substituting career workers with non-career employees at an average of 3 percent per year
- ◆ Decreasing work hours by an average of 2.8 percent annually
- ◆ Reducing wages by an average 3.1 percent per year
- ◆ Downsizing and restructuring the network
- ◆ Reducing the number of delivery routes
- ◆ Decreasing the use of air transportation
- ◆ Reducing capital expenditures
- ◆ Lowering service quality

The extensive use of non-career employees, who earn lower pay and receive fewer benefits than their career counterparts, is "problematic," the report found. While turnover among career postal workers is less than 1.3 percent, the quit rate for non-career workers was 29 percent in fiscal year 2014, "perhaps due to low wages and low benefits," the OIG said. The high turnover among non-career employees "raises the question of whether the Postal Service can continue to increase its productivity if it has to deal with training and recruiting new employees constantly," the report said. "Furthermore, the impact on service quality of increased use of non-career employees is unclear."

"What is clear is that the impact of cost reductions on customer service has been considerable," the OIG said. External First Class Measurement (EXFC) scores for a single piece of First-Class mail declined by nearly 6.71 percent for two-day service and by almost 38.60 percent for three-day service compared to the previous year – despite the implementation of more relaxed service standards in January 2015.

***It's the Pre-Funding***

The report blames the PAEA-mandated pre-funding of retiree health benefits 75 years into the future as the "primary source" of the Postal Service's financial problems, noting that pre-funding costs reached \$49 billion between fiscal year 2006 and 2015. Eliminating the payments would have reduced total losses by 90 percent.

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**Dimondstein**

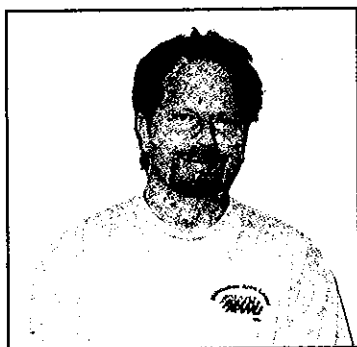
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Nonetheless, "Overall, the Postal Service is doing better financially than sometimes reported in the press," the OIG observed. "If the Postal Service is to meet the commercial and universal service needs of America's growing population, it must continually seek to improve customer service and be allowed to make appropriate capital investments to fully integrate its network with the digital world. Postal stakeholders and management need to develop ways and means for generating adequate revenue so that the Postal Service can build for the future," the report concludes.

APWU President Mark Dimondstein urged management to rethink its strategy. "This report underscores concerns we've been raising for quite some time," he said. "Cuts to service and jobs are hurting the people of the country and jeopardizing the future of our great national treasure.

"If management takes this report with the seriousness it deserves they will stop delaying America's mail and make sure the Postal Service is properly staffed so that we can carry out our mission. In the end, the Postal Service is a service, not a business."

\* \* \*



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

## New Health Benefit For PSEs

*"If any PSE has any questions they can contact me."*

be allowed to sign up for the USPS Health Benefits Plan. Coverage will be effective on July 9th, 2016. If a PSE does not sign up during this opportunity, the next available opportunity to sign up for health insurance won't be until the health plan open season later in the year.

If any PSE has any questions they can contact me. Additionally, as with PSE enrollment in the APWU Consumer Driven Plan during the past few years, I will assist any PSE who is an APWU member with signing up for this new plan.

You can reach me Monday thru Friday at the Union Hall, 414 273-7838.

Thanks to a recent agreement between the APWU and USPS, Postal Support Employees (PSEs) who have not yet reached 360 days of service and PSEs who are newly hired, will be able to enroll in the newly available USPS Health Benefits Plan. Previous rules held that PSEs had to wait 360 days and be rolled over for another term to be eligible to enroll for any health insurance through the USPS.

Bi-weekly rates for the USPS Health Benefits Plan are as follows:

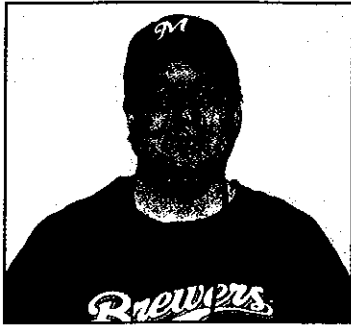
- Self Only: \$35**
- Self Plus One: \$195**
- Self and Family \$355**

The Postal Service will contribute at least \$125 per pay period toward the cost of the insurance.

Any PSE who signs up for this new plan and subsequently reaches the end of their initial 360 day appointment can then switch over to the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan which is a better overall health plan.

"This benefit is a step forward, especially for those who need self-only coverage. This stop-gap measure will improve conditions for PSEs who need insurance for their first year. This benefit applies to all PSEs, regardless of the number of hours they work. This is significant because the Affordable Care Act requires employers to cover only those workers who work a minimum of 30 hours per week."

*(APWU President Mark Dimondstein)*



**Jim Arneson**  
**Maintenance Director**

*Recently we won an Arbitration concerning a senior employee being forced to attend a school prior to a junior employee. The Arbitrator ruled that this was a violation and awarded the employee out of schedule pay for this violation.*

I would like to thank NBA Curtis Walker who was the advocate for this case. I was able to be the Technical Assistant for this case and hopefully will be able to advocate some arbitration's soon. I would also like to thank Mr. Dan Singer for building an excellent case that enabled us to prevail in this case.

While it took a few years to get this case to arbitration, we are beginning to make some headway in the backlog of our Step III grievances. This is why no matter how small the grievance may seem to you, it is still important to alert your Union Stewards of violations of the contract.

Recently I have received questions concerning the TL-5 of the MS-47. I would like to answer some of the more frequent ones.

With this "Team Clean", how do I know which team I am going to be on and what happens if I do not have enough members of my team fill all the specialist positions?

## Team Clean

*"I have received questions concerning the TL-5 of the MS-47. I would like to answer some of the more frequent ones."*

The concept of "Team Clean" is just the method of cleaning the facility. It is a method of instead of one person cleaning a room you will have many people cleaning the room.

For example you will have a light duty specialist wiping down the horizontal surfaces. Then a vacuum specialist will come into the room and vacuum it. Then a utility specialist will come in and pick up the trash.

So instead of a single employee doing all of those tasks you will have many of them doing parts of the job. This way employees will just do one set of tasks per floor. **But in cases of absences an employee may be assigned a couple of different specialist positions for the tour.**

I heard this will reduce staffing, is this true?

**Unfortunately, yes, this will probably be true. Anything the Postal Service does lately is to reduce staffing, regardless of the safety and health of the employees.**

Did the Union sign off on this?

The headquarters Maintenance Director Steve Raymer looked over the proposed MS-47 that the Postal Service came up with, and decided to try and negotiate the MS-47 as he has been done in the past.

While parts of the new MS-47 are tough to stomach, he was able to negotiate some things into it that will lessen impacts and reinforce things the Union has been trying to get for years. For example, if there is a reduction in hours there will be no excessing of employees. Instead, as jobs become vacant they will be reverted. So this is good news.

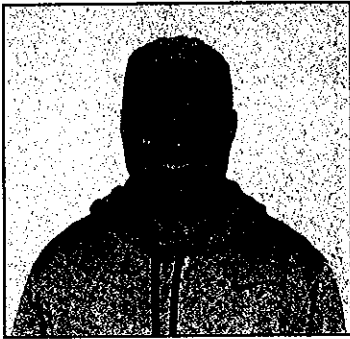
Furthermore, part of the settlement included a one time conversion of PSEs to regular back in 2014. Also good news- The rule that 90% of the hours in the package must be used or the employees get paid overtime at the end of the fiscal year.

So while this hurt the craft a little, Director Raymer believes that he was able to reduce the impact on the custodial staff and get some issues settled that have always have been sent to arbitration.

It's better to have a sure thing then not know which way an issue might go before that arbitrator.

Have a Good Summer!





**Chris Czubakowski**  
North Sectional Director

*Supervisors at certain associate offices, are not using NTFT employees according to the contract. As such, its time to lay down the law regarding NTFT's and their basic contractual rights.*

First and foremost, if you are a NTFT with a duty assignment of less than 30 hours you should not be required to work outside of the duty assignment that you hold. Period. NTFT's are full time regulars and not PTF's. Period.

The only exception to this rule is if you hold a NTFT flex duty assignment. The start-times and off-days of NTFT flex full-time assignments may be changed from week-to-week without out-of-schedule obligations, subject to a Wednesday (of the prior week ) notification. Weekly and daily guarantees will remain unchanged.

NTFT employees will normally work the hours (daily and/or weekly) identified in their bid assignment, except in an emergency. In the case of an emergency, these employees are entitled to out of schedule premium (extra 50 percent) for hours worked outside their schedule.

It is understood that an emergency is defined as "an unforeseen circum-

## North Section Connection



*" If you experience this treatment after being involved in union activities you need to notify the Union "*

stance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature.

Non-traditional full-time assignments will also have no more than 1 hour lunch. The only exception to this is in Post Offices (RMPO's) where it was necessary to accommodate the conversion of PTFs to full-time status( split shifts will be permissible).

If you are in a level 21 office and being forced to take a lunch that is longer than one hour, management is violating your rights and you need to notify the Union.

If you are a NTFT employee and management has worked you outside of your schedule you may be due some serious backpay in the form of out of schedule premium that is owed to you. Furthermore, you may have unjustly incurred LWOP that needs to be adjusted (so that you don't lose annual leave/and or sick leave at 80 hours).

Finally, please don't fall for the supervisor telling you it can't be done or that you cant grieve a pay issue if its over 14 days.

Time limits for pay issues are six years. If you believe you are due out of schedule premium please contact the Union. We will ask management to do a pay adjustment and/or file a grievance to get you the money you are entitled to.

### Protection Against Retaliation

I want all of our members to know that it is unlawful for any supervisor to interfere with, restrain, or coerce employees if they exercise their right to Union representation or participation. For example, supervisors may not respond to a union member who participates in an interview with taunts, threats, discipline and/or disparate treatment.

If you experience this treatment after being involved in union activities you need to notify the Union so that we may investigate the issue and file appropriate charges with the National Labor Relations Board.

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency vested with the power to safeguard employees' rights. It acts to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices committed by retaliatory supervisors.

To win a case of retaliation for Union activities, the Union must prove all four of the following elements;

1. That you took some protected activity, such as reporting a violation, testifying as a witness, or some other action to help enforce the contract.
2. That the employer knew or believed you took such protected activity.
3. That you suffered an adverse employment action, such as discipline.

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4. That the employer was motivated by your protected activity to impose the adverse action. Unfair labor practice charges, which include retaliation charges, are investigated by the NLRB. They then determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe the law has been violated.

Specific remedies awarded by the NLRB regarding retaliation vary from case to case but upon the Union proving its case, management will be forced to post an order requiring that the specific supervisor cease and desist from such unfair labor practices in your office.

**Wisconsin State Legislative Director**

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the Wisconsin State Convention in Green Bay , I was elected to serve the APWU members of this state (including those of the Milwaukee Area Local) as Wisconsin State Legislative Director. I am truly humbled and honored at the opportunity to serve this membership in this capacity and will continue to fight for the advancement of our legislative interests through elected officials who are committed to not only protecting the wages and benefits of postal workers but also preserving universal and affordable service as set forth in The Constitution of the United States of America.

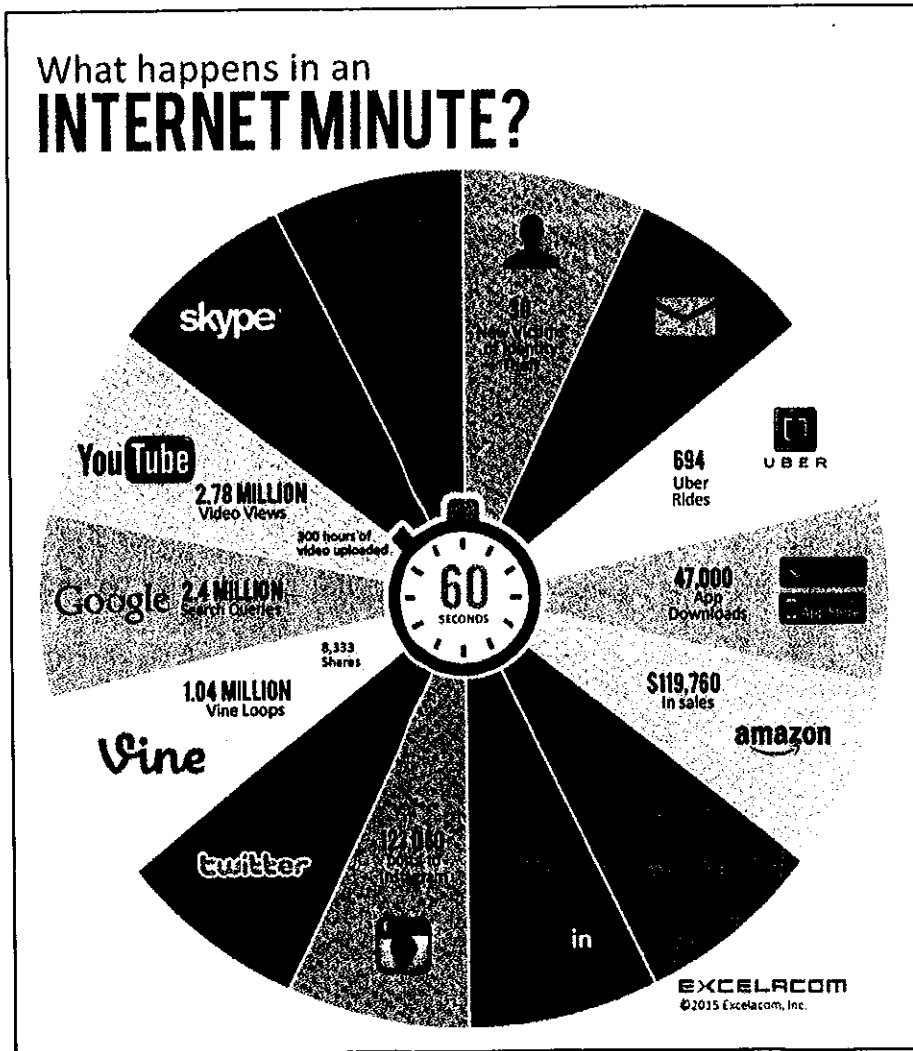
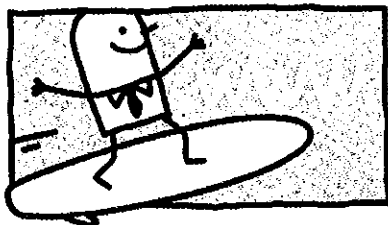
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**SURF'S UP!!!**

Sometime in the near future , Milwaukee Area Local Members will be able to grab their "boards" and surf on into The Milwaukee Area Local website.

The website, approved by members at the March GMM, is currently a work in progress. Local Business Agent Mark Ferrari spearheaded this bold undertaking and continues to work with a local web designer regarding content and design.

The Executive Board looks forward to announcing the date the site finally goes "live" and becomes a part of what happens in an internet minute.





**Greg Becker**  
**South Sectional Director**

*Whenever the U.S.P.S. makes a demand for money for any reason, this is called an Employer Claim. As an employee of the U.S.P.S. we may be liable to pay back money owed to our employer for any reason.*

Management can make a "Claim" when a Sales and Service Associate (Window clerk) is "out of tolerance" on the window, or if an error is allegedly made when calculating negotiated benefits, or if the U.S.P.S./O.W.C.P. makes a "Claim" that the clerk owes the Continuation of Pay benefit. In accordance with Article 28, management has the right to make an Employer Claim.

Some clerks will receive an invoice from Eagan, Minnesota when the clerk requests Annual Leave re-credited when management has transacted A/L instead of LWOP (for FMLA, military, etc.).

You have the choice to pay this invoice or leave things as they are. In this example, you requested this action which resulted in an invoice being sent to you and you have the option to pay this invoice or not. Sometimes, you may receive an invoice from the U.S.P.S. payroll and have no idea why you received this document. You can ask your supervisor

## Protecting Our Clerk Craft: Bargaining Unit Work

*"It is the role of our Union and its members to protect its "work"..."*

to find out why you were sent an invoice. Regardless of the reason, a good rule of thumb is that if you didn't request the action which triggered the invoice, the union recommends that you make sure the contract is followed. If management demands payment, request a Steward as soon as possible. The invoice itself may not have the information required in accordance with Article 28 of the National Agreement.

Article 28 states, "In advance of any money demand upon an employee for any reason, the employee must be informed in writing and the demand must include the reasons therefore."

Management must issue a "Letter of Demand" with the determination of existence, nature, and amount of debt. Furthermore, your appeal rights should be included. Management has a right to issue a Letter of Demand, and clerks have the right to challenge the merits. Always request a Steward to ensure that your rights are protected in accordance with Article 28 and the Handbooks and Manuals.

Sometimes after a full investigation, it is found that you do owe the money. The contract states that, "No more than 15 % of an employee's disposable pay or 20% of the employee's biweekly gross pay whichever is lower, may be de-

ducted each pay period to satisfy a postal debt, unless the parties agree, in writing, to a different amount." No money can be collected until the grievance and /or petition has been filed pursuant to the Debt Collection Act has been exhausted of contractual and / or administrative remedies.

### **NEVER IGNORE A LETTER OF DEMAND!**

A Letter of Demand that is ignored is a debt that must be paid. Clerks who are Sales and Service Associates are especially vulnerable to receiving a Letter of Demand unless the clerk "exercises reasonable care in the performance of his/her duties.

What does that mean? Management is responsible for adequate security, an established procedure for cashing checks, and giving audits every 4 months. clerks should keep a record of poor financial practices at your Post Office. Always Lock your drawer, never let anyone work out of your drawer, put your "RSS" in standby when away, stay within tolerance, and check your key envelope to insure that it has not been tampered with. Taking these precautions should help prevent a Letter of Demand.

I have grieved instances where management took leave right out of a clerks Annual leave balance to col-

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lect an alleged debt, or issued a Letter of Demand for miscalculation of leave 25 years ago. Always check your pay-check to see if your leave/pay adds up, and question any invoices sent to you. Failure to grieve or file a petition pursuant with the Debt Collection Act could cause you to owe money that may not be contractually owed. ***Always request a Steward.***

If you work in the South Sectional A.O.'s I can be reached at (414) 530-3449. Please call me about this or any other matter. Thank you.

\* \* \*

**AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF WISCONSIN  
STATE CONVENTION  
APRIL 29 & 30, 2016  
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN**



The General Session of the Convention started at 10am on Friday, April 29 with an invocation and a patriotic Presentation of Colors. APWU State President Steve Lord then led the state delegation through various reports given by the Committee of Credentials, Rules Committee, Nomination and Election Committee, Constitution Committee, and Resolutions Committee.

*(Photo by John Durben)*

National Maintenance Director Steve Raymer (at podium) administered the Oath of Office to the new State Executive Board Officers. (left to right)

**Steve Kendall-Treasurer**

**Jeff Worden-Dir. of Members at Large**

**Steve Lord-President**

**Chris Czubakowski-Dir. of Legislation**

**Lucy Hauser-Dir. of Education, Organization, and Human Relations**



*(Photo by John Durben)*

## APWU Committee on Political Action –COPA

APWU COPA, the union's Committee on Political Action, was created to raise voluntary contributions from our union's active, retired and auxiliary members to support the campaigns of candidates for public office.

The APWU needs a strong voice in political affairs. We must support elected officials who advance our goals and help defeat those who oppose them.

Over the last 20 years, building a strong COPA fund has been a major priority for the APWU. With the support of tens of thousands of APWU members, COPA has raised millions of dollars to support candidates who stand up for working families.

Thanks to the generous contributions of many members – and a large percentage of our retirees – legislators are aware that the American Postal Workers Union is a political force to be reckoned with.

But the challenges we face are great, and we must increase our COPA fund to help elect candidates who support a vibrant public Postal Service and who support the goals of working people. Every APWU member, retiree and member of the APWU Auxiliary who contributes to COPA is vitally important – no matter the size of his or her contribution.

### What COPA Does With Your Contributions?

Every contribution is recorded in our computer system and deposited directly in COPA's bank account. By law, COPA funds may not be co-mingled with other APWU funds. The Secretary-Treasurer's Department is responsible for administering the COPA account, and employees in APWU's accounting department make sure that individual and group contributors are acknowledged.

COPA Committee members meet regularly to survey the political landscape and to determine the best use of COPA funds. We consult with headquarters staff and other APWU national, state and local officers about

### BIDDING BIG FOR COPA

North Sectional Director/ State Legislative Director Chris Czubakowski, Automation Director Larry Brown Jr., South Sectional Director Greg Becker and Steward /State Treasurer Steve Kendall displayed items they won at the COPA auction held at the Wisconsin State Convention on April 29. A total of \$3,700.00 dollars was raised for COPA at the state convention. These contributions will go to candidates for federal, local, and state offices that support legislation that favors postal workers.



## To Contribute to COPA by Electronic Fund Transfer or Check

(Please select a donation method, complete this form, and mail to: APWU COPA, PO Box 17254, Baltimore, MD 21297-1254)

**Contribute by EFT:** The COPA Fund will automatically deduct the amount you choose to contribute, with no fee to you.

**OR Contribute by Check:** My check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the sum of:

\_\_\_\_\$2 \_\_\_\_\$4 \_\_\_\_\$6 \_\_\_\_\$10 \$\_\_\_\_\_ per pay period  
and forward that amount to the American Postal Workers Union, Committee on Political Action (COPA).

I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the APWU COPA Committee in writing.

**(Please include a voided check or copy of a check when you return this coupon.)**

If you are currently contributing to COPA through EFT and want to change the amount of your deduction, please check here: \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: _____ <small>Last First MI</small>
Social Security/Employee ID #: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Local: _____ Occupation: _____
E-mail address: _____
Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____

## To Contribute to COPA Through PostalEASE:

(Employees may designate three payroll allotments. Follow the instructions below.)

### ONLINE:

1. Access PostalEASE online by going to [liteblue.usps.gov](http://liteblue.usps.gov). You will need to enter your Employee ID number and your USPS PIN number.
2. In the first column of the PostalEASE Employee Main Menu ("Payroll") click "Allotments/Payroll Net to Bank."
3. Under the "Welcome to Allotments/Net to Bank Application" menu, click "Allotments."
4. Your name should now appear in the upper left corner with three spaces for allotments. If you have existing payroll allotments, they will be listed under "Current Information." Click on "Add a New Allotment."
5. Enter the following information to add a new allotment:
  - a. Routing transit number: 054001220
  - b. Account number: Enter 2 9 3 2 0 0 0 1 followed by your Social Security number.
  - c. Account type: Select "Checking" from the drop-down menu. This refers to the APWU COPA checking account into which your contribution will be deposited.
  - d. Amount: Enter the amount you wish to contribute to COPA every pay period.
6. Once you have entered all the above fields, click "Validate."

### PHONE:

1. Dial 1-877-477-3273 (1-800-4PS-EASE).
2. Press #1 for PostalEASE.
3. When prompted, enter your employee ID number and PIN number.
4. When prompted, choose option #2 (to select payroll allotments).
5. When prompted, select option #1 (to select type of allotment).
6. When prompted, press #2 to continue.
7. When prompted, press #3 to "add" the allotment.
8. When prompted, add routing number 054001220.
9. When prompted, enter 2 9 3 2 0 0 0 1 followed by your Social Security number.
10. When prompted, press #1 for checking.
11. When prompted, enter your chosen bi-weekly allotment. Press #1.
12. Press #9 to end the call (or #1 to repeat).

### Don't Have Your USPS PIN?

To obtain your PIN: Call 1-877-477-3273. Press #1 for PostalEASE. When prompted, enter your Social Security number. When prompted for your PIN, pause, then press #2. Your PIN will be mailed to your address of record the next business day.

## Home Front Addressing Veterans' Unemployment

APWU Web News Article 5/1/2016

*(This article first appeared in the May-June 2016 issue of The American Postal Worker magazine.)*

The APWU recently joined with representatives of other unions to meet with Michael Michaud, the new Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Services (DOL VETS). Michaud is a long-time member of the United Steelworkers. Prior to his appointment, Michaud served 12 years as a member of Congress from Maine, advocating for veterans on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Health Subcommittee.

On March 2, union leaders gathered with the Michaud to discuss how we can work together to help veterans, transitioning service members, military spouses and caregivers find good jobs. Despite strides being made, millions of veterans remain homeless, hungry, unemployed and underemployed. Veterans are twice as likely to become chronically homeless as other Americans. They represent 11 percent of the adult civilian population, but account for 26 percent of the homeless population. African-Americans and Hispanics account for 10.4 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively, of our veteran population but equal roughly 45 percent of homeless veterans.

It's not surprising that these statistics coincide with the veteran unemployment rates reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Veteran unemployment is highest among African-Americans, Latinos and women. It has skyrocketed in the last decade among younger post- 9/11 combat veterans who are suffering homelessness and food insecurities at alarming rates because of an inability to find good paying, secure jobs. Can we really ignore the correlation between unemployment and the high rate of veteran suicides? If we want to make a meaningful impact on the lives of veterans and their families, we must address unemployment. During the meeting, Michaud stated his immediate objectives. They included: preparing transitioning service members and veterans for careers; enhancing job-seeking tools; creating good paying, secure job opportunities; and protecting rights under the Uniform Services and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and the Veterans' Preference Act (VPA). Grassroots campaigns to educate veterans, service members and employers about their respective rights and obligations, and inform them about available resources, will also be incorporated.

Michaud acknowledged that the most effective ways to combat issues that plague our veterans are community based. VETS is working to bridge relationships at every level with the Department of Defense, Congress, veteran service organizations, employers and unions. Building upon the DOL Transition Assistance Programs (TAP), launching the *veterans.org* website – a one stop employment services shop – as well as mandating musters to military life cycle, and readiness programs are also instruments of the mission.

VETS is cultivating partnerships with Soldier for Life, which has already saved \$250 million in unemployment costs; DoD Skilled Bridge Authority to promote civilian job training opportunities and Hiring Our Heroes to coordinate business and union participation in job fairs and transition summits being hosted on base. This offers great potential for APWU local and state involvement. Michaud also hopes to work closely with states to improve programs that address underserved and incarcerated veterans, housing, grants and employer incentives.

During the discussion, APWU highlighted USERRA's failure to protect jobs of Guardsmen and Reservists who deploy for more than five years. We pointed out that the list of VPA-reserved positions is antiquated. We objected to the Postal Service's unwillingness to maintain hiring registers and its refusal to open competitive exams for Veteran Preference Eligibles as required.

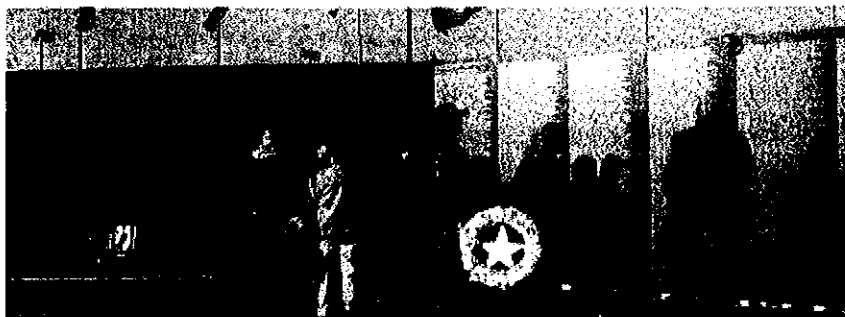
Union leaders, including the APWU, raised concerns over employers bolstering their veteran percentages by hiring veterans only to release them during probationary periods or before career conversions. These factors, coupled with low wages, no benefits and limited work hours contribute to low retention ratings and high unemployment. Michaud agreed to work with APWU in an effort to resolve our concerns.



The 50th Anniversary of the War in Vietnam

# Operation Badger Base

An Event Commemorating All Wisconsin Veterans



## Join Us August 11 - 14, 2016 to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the War in Vietnam.



*Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund "Wall that Heals" and Learning Center/Museum, Live Music, Veteran Services and Counseling Information, Wisconsin National Guard participation with vehicle and equipment displays, Military Aircraft Fly-by, Food Booths, and much more!!*

On the grounds of:



6200 Millpond Road, Madison, WI



## Prince Recognized That If ‘There Ain’t No Justice, Then There Ain’t No Peace!’

by: John Nichols

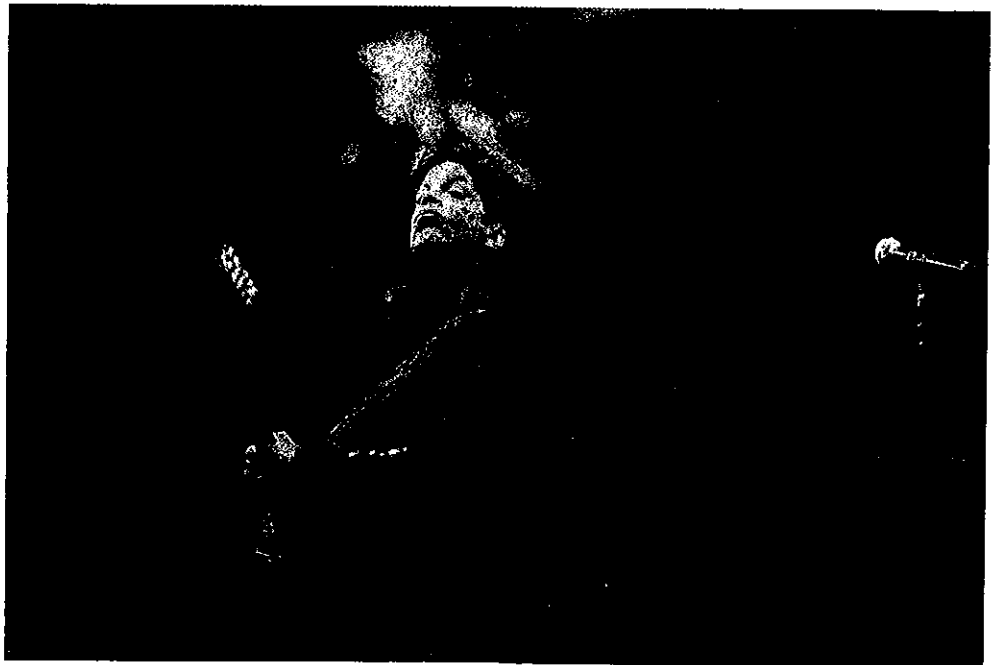
Prince was not often identified as a political artist. He was rarely referred to as a protest singer. Yet, in the last year of a remarkable life, he was hailed as a “funky Pete Seeger” who amplified the message of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. There was so much more to Prince Rogers Nelson, who has died unexpectedly at age 57, than politics. But Prince often made bold statements about the issues of his times—as when he used the song “Ronnie Talk to Russia” to urge President Ronald Reagan to get serious about nuclear disarmament.

And he kept doing so, telling the audience at the 2015 Grammys ceremony that “black lives... still matter.” Prince embraced controversy, and he sometimes inspired it—Tippie Gore formed her music-labeling group, the Parents Music Resource Center, after she found her 12-year-old daughter Karena listening to his song “Darling Nikki.” Prince broke down barriers, made demands and opened up dialogues in ways that changed lives. Prince referred to his band as The Revolution, argued that “the gatekeepers must change” and championed the ideal of a new power generation.

A brilliant musician and performer, he controlled his own career, absolutely and without apology. That allowed him to remain exceptionally engaged with his times, and to respond immediately to tragedy and trauma. He released new songs to benefit New Orleans relief initiatives at a point when officials were still struggling to respond to the 2005 storm.

“The system is broken. It’s going to take the young people to fix it this time.” — Prince

The son of a jazz pianist and a social worker, Prince rejected categories and stereotypes and invited generations of fans to break through racial, gender, sexual, and musical barriers. If he had an ideology, it was a faith that human beings could achieve unity and transformational change. Indeed, even in the most difficult of circumstances, the Jehovah’s Witness imagined that unity—and the possibility that might extend from it. His response to the killing of Trayvon Martin was to work with his friend Van Jones to develop the #YesWeCode initiative to prepare 100,000 low-income young people for careers writing computer code.



Less than a year ago, in May of 2015, Prince released the song “Baltimore” as a tribute to Freddie Gray and other African-American men who had died while in police custody. The song, Prince’s spokesman said, a response to “the slew of killings of young black men.”

*(next page please)*

(continued from previous page)

Referencing Baltimore’s Freddie Gray and Ferguson’s Michael Brown, Prince sang: “If there ain’t no justice, then there ain’t no peace.” “Are we gonna see another bloody day?” he asked, and then he answered: “We’re tired of the cryin’ and people dyin’—Let’s take all the guns away.”

“[With] ‘Baltimore,’ Prince is trying on a different protest singer’s hat—he’s playing funky Pete Seeger, leading chants and rousing hearts to inspire activism in a specific place and time,” observed NPR music critic Ann Powers. “This song personalizes its call for armistice with names we’ve all come to know, names that press upon our hearts. ‘Does anybody hear us pray for Michael Brown or Freddie Gray?’ Prince sings before offering a philosophical zinger: ‘Peace is more than the absence of a war.’ The chant that anchors ‘Baltimore’ is contemporary, too—not “We Shall Overcome,” but ‘No Justice, No Peace,’ which arose in response to hate crimes in the 1980s and resonates in Ferguson, Staten Island and Sandtown today.”

On May 10, 2015, Prince appeared in Baltimore to perform the song as part of a “Rally 4 Peace” concert, where he told the crowd: “The system is broken. It’s going to take the young people to fix it this time. We need new ideas, new life...”

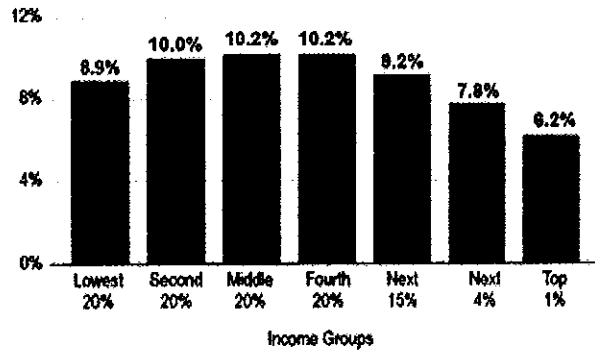
## Prince Rogers Nelson (June 7, 1958 – April 21, 2016)



**“Honey, I know, I know, I know times are changing.  
It's time we all reach out for something new  
That means you too.”**

### In Wisconsin’s Tax System, Best-Off Pay Smallest Share of Their Income in Taxes

Wisconsin state and local taxes in 2015, as the average share of income for non-elderly taxpayers by income group. The figures include the effect of the deduction of state and local taxes for federal income tax purposes.



Source: RTFP

WISCONSIN BUDGET PROJECT





**Jeff Worden**  
West Sectional Director

*IT'S SUMMER TIME AND THAT MEANS IT'S TIME..... FOR THE HEALTH & HYGIENE DRIVE.*

*That's right, it is summer time (and I'll bet you thought I was going to say, "Time to take a vacation").*

The Milwaukee & Waukesha Area Labor Council are currently conducting their 26<sup>th</sup> Annual HEALTH & HYGIENE DRIVE. There are nearly two dozen Milwaukee & Waukesha homeless shelters that are in need of Health & Hygiene products and of course YOU can help!

## Health & Hygiene Drive

*"The Milwaukee & Waukesha Area Labor Council are currently conducting their 26<sup>th</sup> Annual HEALTH & HYGIENE DRIVE."*

The Drive started on April 4<sup>th</sup> and goes until June 3<sup>th</sup>! Some of the items needed are;

- Toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Non-alcohol mouthwash
- Razors & Shaving cream
- Hair care products
- Spray Deodorant
- Baby products
- Feminine products
- Laundry supplies
- First aid supplies
- Paper products

You can drop off these items at any of the following locations;

**Milwaukee Area Labor Council**  
633 South Hawley Rd, Suite 110

**Waukesha County Labor Council**  
1726 South West Avenue

**United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County**  
225 West Vine St.

If you have questions, please contact the AFL-CIO Community Liaison: Jay Reinke at 414-771-7070 or email at: [jay@milwaukeeelabor.org](mailto:jay@milwaukeeelabor.org).

You may also drop off the needed items at the union hall, 417 N. 3rd St. Milwaukee, Mon thru Fri. between the hours of 8:00 and 4:30pm.

Since this will be the last *Hi-Lites* for the summer... I hope everyone has a fun and safe summer.

Oh, and by the way... go take a vacation. Take Care.

\* \* \* \*

## MAY DAY 1886

On May 1, 1886, Chicago unionists, reformers and ordinary workers combined to make the city the center of the national movement for an eight-hour day. Between April 25 and May 4, workers attended scores of meetings and paraded through the streets at least 19 times. On Saturday, May 1, 35,000 workers walked off their jobs. Tens of thousands more, both skilled and unskilled, joined them on May 3 and 4. With all of Milwaukee's industry, the city's employers did not escape the nationwide strikes. On May 5, seven Wisconsinites were killed by the state militia while marching on behalf of the eight hour day in what is known as the **Bay View Tragedy** that occurred outside the Bay View Rolling Mills. May 1, is celebrated in many countries as a traditional springtime festival or as an international day honoring workers.

**Attention Workingmen!**

**MASS MEETING**

TO-NIGHT, at 7.30 o'clock,

HAYMARKET, Randolph St. Bet. Desplaines and Halsted.

Good Speakers will be present to denounce the latest atrocious act of the police, the shooting of our fellow-workmen yesterday afternoon.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

**Achtung Arbeiter!**

Gruppe

**Massen-Versammlung**

Heute Abend, halb 8 Uhr, auf dem  
Seumarkt, Randolph-Strasse, zwischen  
Desplaines u. Halsted-Str.

Es sind Redner werden den neuesten Schreckensfall der Polizei, über die gestern Nachmittag unsere Brüder erschossen wurden.

Das Exekutiv-Komitee.



Milwaukee & Waukesha Area Labor Council's 28th Annual

# HEALTH & HYGIENE DRIVE



Nearly two dozen Milwaukee & Waukesha homeless shelters are in need of health and hygiene products. Help by collecting items, running workplace drives and asking others to donate.

## COLLECTION DATES

# April 4 - June 3

## DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

- **Milwaukee Area Labor Council**  
633 South Hawley Road, Ste. 110
- **Waukesha County Labor Council**  
1726 South West Avenue
- **Milwaukee & Waukesha Fire Department Stations**
- **United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County**  
Milwaukee Office: 225 West Vine Street  
Waukesha Office: 1717 Paramount Drive

*Monetary donations are also accepted.  
Please make checks payable to Labor Community@Work.*

## QUESTIONS?

**Jay Reinke**  
AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison  
414.771.7070 ext. 16  
jay@milwaukeelabor.org



## NEEDED:

- Toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Non-alcohol mouthwash
- Razors & shaving cream
- Combs, brushes & hair picks
- Hair care products
- Spray deodorant
- Lip balm
- Baby products
- Feminine products
- Paper products
- Laundry supplies
- First aid supplies

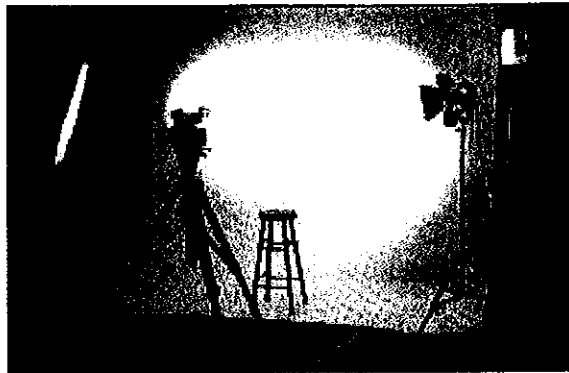
Sponsored by:  
Milwaukee Area Labor Council  
AFL-CIO and the AFL-CIO Community Services Committee



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Graduation Day Is Right Around The Corner!



The Hi-Lites will feature graduates in our up-coming September issue. Provide us with the information listed below in showcasing your pride.

- ◆ Name of Graduate
- ◆ Your relation to the Graduate
- ◆ Photograph...  
Please **DO NOT** submit a photo from a digital printer (it cannot be used)  
Please indicate if you would like your photo to be returned
- ◆ Contact # for any questions
- ◆ Your name, pay location and/or work area
- ◆ Brief "well wishes" or any other interesting info you would like to share!

*Note: If the above information is not typed,  
we would ask that you print legibly.*

**Deadline: August 26, 2016**

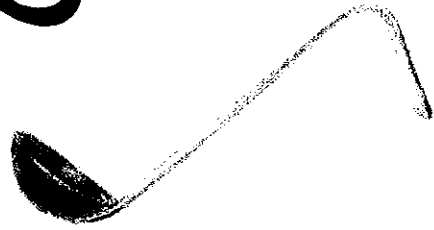
**Send to:** The Hi-Lites  
417 N. 3rd Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53203



*A picture is the expression of an impression. If the beautiful were not in us,  
how would we ever recognize it?*

*~Ernst Haas~*

# LABOR'S LADEL



## Graduation Party Recipes

### Hats Off Graduation Treats

#### Ingredients

- 2 miniature peanut butter cups
- 2 chocolate graham cracker cookies
- 1 teaspoon peanut butter
- 1 fruit roll up

#### Directions

1. Invert a mini peanut butter cut. Top it with a dollop of peanut butter and cover it with a chocolate covered graham cracker.
2. For the tassel, lightly roll up a portion of a portion of fruit leather, snip some fringe on one end and use a little water to moisten the other end. Attach the moistened end to the graham cracker.



### Graduation Diplomas

#### Ingredients

- 40 fajita sized flour tortillas
- 4 (8 ounce) packages of softened cream cheese
- 4 (8 ounce) packages of sliced beef, diced
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 bunches green onions, chopped small

#### Directions

1. Mix ALL ingredients, except tortillas, together to make filling or use your favorite pinwheel filling recipe. Spread desired amount of filling onto each tortilla, just as if you were making pinwheels.
2. Roll up as if you were making a pinwheel-DO NOT CUT\ Tie a 6-8 inch length of colored ribbon around the middle of the rolled up tortilla to look like a diploma.



American Postal Workers Union

# The Hi-Lites

P.O. BOX 1995, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1995

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



## MEETING NOTICE

Wednesday, 8:30 pm  
May 25, 2016

MILWAUKEE AREA LOCAL

UNION HALL

417 N. Third St.

414-273-7838

414-273-7845 (TTY)

414-273-7843 (FAX)

**PROUD  
UNION  
HOME**



Time Dated Material



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Chris Czubakowski \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Editor

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