

THE AMERICAN

# Postal Worker

APWU

JULY-AUGUST 2017



## All for One and One for All!





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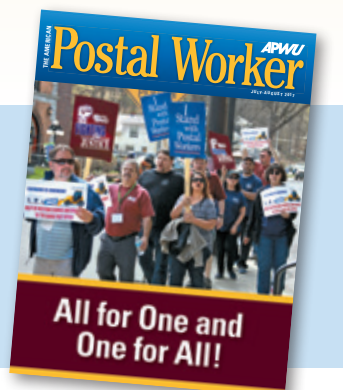
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# 'All for One and One for All!'



Workers deserve to make living wages for the wealth we create and the services we provide. Workers deserve to have decent health care coverage. Workers deserve quality time-off with family and friends. Workers deserve a dignified retirement.

**T**he Three Musketeers must have belonged to the "Musketeers Union" with their rallying cry "All for one and one for all!" That captures the essence of union solidarity.

So does the recent APWU-led informational picket in Barre, Vermont.

Barre is a rural Vermont town of some 9,000 people, with a deep union history rooted in the struggle of immigrant granite workers in the once-thriving granite industry of New England.

As with so many towns and neighborhoods, the Barre post office is an integral part of the community. The office consists of eight clerks and one maintenance employee, as well as city and rural letter carriers. As with postal employees around the country, they are skilled, well-trained and perform their jobs with dedication and pride. They are union-strong with 90 percent of the employees organized.

So why were 100 APWU activists (including yours truly), letter carriers, United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) members, the Vermont Workers Center, the state and local AFL-CIO and faith-based community allies out in force?

Because "Workers Deserve Respect!" – whether we are working in the largest or smallest postal facility. This slogan has multiple meanings: Workers deserve to make living wages for the wealth we create and the services we provide. Workers deserve to have decent health care coverage. Workers deserve quality time-off with family and friends. Workers deserve a dignified retirement.

And yes, workers deserve and demand safe and decent working conditions, free from management abuse and harassment. The postal workers of Barre have not been afforded these basic rights. Workers are berated by management in front of customers. Union rights are ignored and union representatives belittled. Management snubs their noses at grievance settlements. Poor staffing by management adds stress to the employees and undermines service to the customers.

Northeast Regional Coordinator John Dirzius and APWU National Business Agents have attempted to address this problem for over two years, with no positive results from higher-level management.

Enough is enough! Tyrannical management has got to go!

A large percentage of our clerk members work in small towns like Barre, from sea to shining sea, from the northern border to the southern border of our vast country. There are many post offices staffed by a handful of employees. Without the strength in numbers of larger facilities, it is harder for workers to resist and stand strong. Barre Local President Nancy Rowland and the other postal workers are doing just that. I commend their resolve and fighting spirit.

In my many years in the post office, I saw many good supervisors and managers who cared about our service to the people and treated workers with respect. I also witnessed far too many abusive managers. More frustrating is that we, as well as the other postal unions, have rarely found a way to force upper management to hold their managers accountable.

Unfortunately, the abusive atmosphere in Barre, Vermont, is not an isolated incident. However, the APWU just sent a powerful message - No postal worker represented by the APWU is alone. An injury to one is an injury to all. We demand that abusive managers be removed and postal workers be able to perform our work and mission free of intimidation, harassment and abuse.

The Barre action underscores that we will take to the streets when necessary. (Hats off to Brother Dirzius for leading the charge.) Solidarity is what won the *Stop Staples* fight. Solidarity is what produces strong union contracts. Solidarity – "All for one and one for all!" – is the path forward to hold management accountable. Solidarity forever! ■

*Mark Dimondstein*



# White House 2018 Budget Proposal Targets Postal Workers and Postal Services

In May, the White House released their budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2018, as they do every fiscal year. There are a number of disturbing provisions which will directly affect postal workers and postal services for the American people.

The White House's budget proposes \$46 billion in "savings" to the Postal Service by a reduction in the methods of delivery. This could include cutting the number of delivery days and a further reduction in service standards.

The budget also calls for a 6 percent increase to employee pension contributions into the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) – 1 percent a year for each of the next six years. This would result in a pay-cut of thousands of dollars a year for each FERS postal employee.

The budget also proposes eliminating Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) on FERS retirement benefits, reducing COLA for current civil service retirees and a change in calculating future retirement benefits from the "high three" average to a "high five" year formula. In addition, the proposal advocates doing away with the Social Security supplement currently covering the gap in FERS benefits for those who retire before they are eligible for Social Security benefits.

Each of these proposals would be to the severe detriment of postal employees, both active and retired.

## Will Devastate Working Families

Contrary to President Trump's campaign promises to elevate workers and protect Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits, the proposed budget contains a number of extreme cuts which will deeply affect tens of millions of working families. These include massive cuts to Social Security disability benefits, Medicaid coverage, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the student loan program. The budget proposal shrinks all these essential programs while lowering the taxes for corporate America and the wealthy elite.

"This budget proposal is Robin Hood in reverse," said President Dimondstein. "It robs from the workers to give more and more to the wealthy. Taken in their entirety, these are draconian attacks on hard working postal workers and our families."

## Based on Right-Wing Blueprint

The Trump administration's budget proposal contains striking similarities – over 50 instances – to another financial blueprint, one released by the Heritage Foundation. This right-wing organization's mission is to formulate and lobby for government policies benefiting big business and America's

multi-millionaires. In July 2016, the Heritage Foundation released their *Blueprint for Balance: A Federal Budget for 2017*. Both budget reports call for the elimination of dozens of programs and agencies that safeguard or improve environmental protections, public education, aid for the poor, energy research, economic development, occupational safety and job training.

Considering the similarities, APWU members should be prepared for the rest of the Heritage Foundation's blueprint to make its way into the Trump administration's policy, including:

- "Lifting Congressionally imposed restrictions on the closure of USPS processing centers."
- "Lifting restrictions on delivery times and schedules."
- "Eliminating service-level mandates."
- "Eliminating restrictions on competition in the postal business."

The think-tank's blueprint also supports the current pre-funding mandate imposed on the Postal Service, saying the

***"This budget proposal is Robin Hood in reverse. It robs from the workers to give more and more to the wealthy."***

– President Dimondstein

agency should "ensure 100 percent prepayment over a defined and limited period of time." All these goals fall in line with the Heritage Foundation's "ultimate goal... to make the Postal Service a privately run organization... free of restrictions and mandates placed on it by Congress."

## Ready to Stand Up and Fight Back

Ultimately, Congress sets the federal government's budget. However, the White House's budget proposal is a reflection of the spending priorities of the Trump administration. The APWU, working with our sister unions and many allies, will vigorously oppose actions by Congress to allow these cuts to vital government programs as well as any attempts to undermine postal services and the well-being of postal workers and postal retirees.

"No postal worker cast a vote in the last presidential election to cut postal services and worker benefits," Dimondstein continued. "I am confident that our members of all political persuasions will stand up and fight back against these new assaults on postal workers and all working folks."



The APWU delegation of national officers and staff, along with local officers and rank-and-file members from the DC/Baltimore Metro Area.

## APWU Members Receive Jobs With Justice Award for *Stop Staples* Victory

**A**PWU members received the 2017 Jobs With Justice Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award for the victorious *Stop Staples* campaign. The award honored the memberships' successful efforts to save good union jobs and fight back against efforts to privatize retail postal services.

"Thanks to the dynamic efforts of the women and men of the APWU and their allies standing up for the right to earn a fair return on our work and invest in our communities, stopping Staples marked a watershed moment in the fight against a low-wage America," said Jobs With Justice Executive Director Sarita Gupta. "Getting Staples out of the postal business required strategy, unity and relentless pressure, which the APWU achieved."

"It is most appropriate that this award is being presented to the members of the APWU, for they answered the leadership's call to arms in fine fighting fashion," said President Dimondstein while accepting the award on behalf of the APWU membership. "The *Stop Staples* campaign is proof that workers, with the support of friends and allies, can 'take it to the streets' and win! I salute and commend every APWU member – active and retired – and the many, many supporters who made this victory possible."

The Jobs With Justice Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award celebrates individuals and groups who "follow



President Dimondstein (pictured with Jobs With Justice Executive Director Sarita Gupta) accepting the award.

Eleanor Roosevelt's powerful example of championing workers' rights as human rights." ([jwj.org](http://jwj.org))

Jobs With Justice is celebrating its 30-year history of standing with workers and communities to protect workers' rights and promote economic justice. Currently, their network includes 37 local coalitions across the country. To find one near you, go to [www.jwj.org/about-us/our-network](http://www.jwj.org/about-us/our-network).



# Miners Win Permanent Funding for Retirement Health Care

On May 4, Congress passed legislation providing for 22,600 retired coal miners, widows and dependents to have the health care they were promised by the federal government in 1946 and earned through going into the mines for decades to power the country.

Since Patriot Coal's bankruptcy filing in 2012, the members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) rallied and lobbied Congress to secure their retirement benefits. On Sept. 8, 2016, APWU officers and staff stood in solidarity with over eight thousand miners, widows, coalfield community members and union supporters at the UMWA's rally in front of the U.S. Capitol.

"I congratulate UMWA President Cecil Roberts and the entire mine workers' union on this important

victory," said President Dimondstein. "They stood by their members, and took to the streets to secure these benefits. This shows what true worker solidarity and community activism can accomplish."

"Tens of thousands of our members, both retired and active, have marched, rallied, written letters and made phone calls to their representatives in Washington, urging passage of this legislation," said UMWA International President Cecil E. Roberts. "They deserve the lion's share of the credit for getting us to this day."

According to the UMWA, the government will now provide retirement health care to 'orphaned' union miners, to those who lost their coverage because of a recent coal company bankruptcy or closure.



UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

"Congress has done the right thing by providing permanent funding for the care coal miners need," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, who is a former International President of the UMWA. "Union members kept our part of the bargain while mining corporations used bankruptcy laws to break their promises to provide good health benefits and a secure retirement."

Go to [umwa.org](http://umwa.org) to learn more about the UMWA's triumphant battle to secure retirement health care for their members and find out what you can do to support their ongoing struggle to preserve the retired miners' pensions. ■

## JOINT APWU/USPS TASK FORCE ON EXPANDED SERVICES HOLDS FIRST MEETING

During 2015 contract negotiations, APWU brought the issue of expanded postal services, including financial services (postal banking) to the bargaining table. As a result, APWU and USPS management agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) creating a "Service Enhancement and Innovation" task force. The MOU states that the task force will "make its best efforts to agree to programs, including pilot programs, to implement agreed to services and practices ... [and] to cooperate on identifying and developing potential opportunities to increase revenue." The MOU does require that some pilot programs be tested.

"For too long, USPS management has been focused on a strategy of cuts: reducing hours, cutting staff, and closing post offices and processing plants," said President Dimondstein. "The APWU is excited that this new process is underway. It is certainly time for management to move in a new direction and explore options to increase services to the people of this country."

At the first meeting of the task force in June, postal management was receptive to trying new ideas, exploring new ways to ex-

pand service and finding new sources of revenue. The task force, which will meet approximately once a month, will hear from experts in financial services, federal agencies and other relevant areas.

### EXPANSION IDEAS IN THE MOU

The task force will consider measures including, but not limited to:

- Enhancement of products and services
- Partnerships with government agencies
- Modernization of money orders
- Expansion of international money transfers
- Gift cards
- Other subjects the Task Force may decide to consider

Have a great idea for enhancing and expanding postal services? Please write in your ideas and mail them to *APWU headquarters - 1300 L Street NW, Attn: President Dimondstein, Washington, DC, 20005.*

# Members

## May Day Activism

APWU members were part of the thousands marching and rallying worldwide on May Day, the International Day of Workers' Solidarity.

From coast to coast, tens of thousands celebrated in cities across the country, including San Juan, Puerto Rico. Workers and allies united to fight back against increasing anti-immigration sentiment and policies that divide workers from each other at a time when we need to come together.



**Arrion Brown, Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local Support Services Director, Flo Summergrad, New York Metro Area Local Executive Board Member and Editor and Tiffany Foster, New York Metro Area Local Executive Vice President at the Washington, DC May Day rally and march.**



**APWU members of the San Francisco Local and Oakland Local marched in a May Day event in Oakland, CA.**

**Below: Puerto Rico Area Local (PRAL) President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle (center) with PRAL brothers and sisters wearing APWU gear at the San Juan May Day march.**



**APWU members, national and local officers with other union members and staff at the Dupont Circle rally in DC.**



Courtesy BCTGM

**Lake County Area Local President Kenny Carson joined the BCTGM rally.**

## BCTGM Nabisco Workers Rally for Justice

On May 17, Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM) women and men from the Nabisco/Mondelez plant in Chicago rallied outside the company's shareholder meeting. Last year, Nabisco laid off hundreds of workers, and outsourced jobs to Mexico where the pay is so low that the minimum wage is measured by the day, not the hour, and stands at a paltry \$4 per day. Check the label on all Nabisco products and boycott those made in Mexico! Learn more at [fightforamericanjobs.org/check-the-label](http://fightforamericanjobs.org/check-the-label).



# In Action

## Support Services Wear Union Gear

IT/AS Support Services members are wearing union gear on Thursdays to show solidarity during their current contract negotiations.



Pictured are members of the Wilkes-Barre Solution Center wearing their union gear on May 25.



## Local President Marches for Climate Action

APWU of Wisconsin President Stephen Lord is pictured marching in the People's Climate March in Washington, DC on April 29.

## APWU Solidarity

### Biggest Retail Strike in National History 40,000 CWA Members Walk Off the Job

Across 36 states and the District of Columbia, 40,000 AT&T retail workers walked off the job on Friday, May 19, because a tentative agreement could not be reached between AT&T Mobility and the Communication Workers of America (CWA). APWU members joined picket lines across the country during the three-day strike.



APWU Portland Area Local (Maine) members Sharon Long (second from right) and Ed Harrison (third from right) and APWU Auxiliary District 7 Coordinator Joyce Tanguay (fourth from right) with striking AT&T workers.



Portland Area Local (Maine) President Scott Adams and his dog, Chaney.

## SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!

### Be Featured in *Members in Action*

**We need your help!** We need you to send photos of you, your coworkers and/or family at APWU local, state or national sponsored events, community parades, picnics, farmers markets or any other civic event.

Many APWU members are active in their local unions, as well as their communities. Did you hold a union poster while marching in your city's July Fourth parade? Did you support a picket line or organizing drive for other union brothers and sisters? Maybe you handed out some flyers at a community barbecue or baseball game? Let us know what you've been up to!

High-resolution photos should be emailed to [communications@apwu.org](mailto:communications@apwu.org) in order to be featured in this publication and on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org). Be sure to wear your union gear.

# AFL-CIO Young Workers Meet with Brazilian Union Leaders

A delegation of young workers from the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) traveled to Sao Paulo, Brazil for five days in May for an educational exchange with Central Unica dos Trabalhadores (CUT), an organization of Brazilian labor unions, much like the AFL-CIO. The exchange was sponsored by the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center and CUT.

One of the six delegates was APWU member Courtney Jenkins, Legislative Director of the Baltimore Francis “Stu” Filbey Area Local and member of the APWU National Young Members Committee. The other delegates were Rachel Bryan (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), Al Vega (United Steelworkers), Carolyn Kadzyn (United Steelworkers), Sheva Diagne (AFL-CIO) and Maria Robalino (AFL-CIO).

“Our purpose was to discuss how the United States and Brazilian labor movements address economic, social and political issues ranging from racism, to immigration, to income inequality,” Jenkins explained.



## CELEBRATING MAY DAY

APWU member Courtney Jenkins (back row, third from right) and other AFL-CIO delegates attended a May Day celebration in the heart of Sao Paulo with fellow young Brazilian union leaders.

“I could not have been prepared for the amount of people that consumed my eyes,” Jenkins recalled, noting the excitement of delivering solidarity greetings to workers during the demonstrations. “Tens of thousands of Brazilian workers cheering and chanting for as far as the eye could see!”

“It was on that day that I discovered myself a citizen and worker of the world,” he continued.

Days prior to the meeting, Brazil held its first general nationwide strike in 20 years, adding fuel to the discussion.

“Much like in the United States, Brazil is in the midst of political turmoil with working families bearing the brunt of the pressure from government and big corporations,” Jenkins said.

## Workers Share Struggles

During the stay, the delegation held a panel discussion “to dissect ways in which our labor movements are addressing racism, women’s rights, immigration and criminal justice.

“We were able to exchange the ways in which our movements and organizations were on the forefront of the fight for our most vulnerable,” Jenkins said. “The CUT delegation was excited to hear about the APWU’s work around postal banking and its passing of the resolution to support #BlackLivesMatter.”

They also went on a site visit to an abandoned building occupied by homeless men and women who are also leaders of a movement for basic housing rights. “I was humbled to see that the men, women and children who lived in this abandoned building came together to assert their basic human rights,” Jenkins commented. “They had made something out of nothing, turning abandoned office buildings into habitable units...they took pride in their resourcefulness and camaraderie.”

Delegates also visited a night school that helps Afro-Brazilians prepare for college entrance exams. Jenkins explained that while public universities are tuition-free to all students, “discrimination in access to quality education makes the tract to higher education much more difficult for Afro-Brazilians.”

Jenkins said the experience was life-changing. “[None] of us ever imagined being in Brazil, representing our unions, speaking to thousands of workers,” he said. “Our unions lifted us from economic insecurity and showed us what it means to fight for the common man and woman.”

“Becoming a member of the American Postal Workers Union introduced me to the movement, one that fought for change that would positively impact its members and the public it served,” Jenkins continued. “You can tell a lot about the character of a nation based on how they treat their working people, but you can tell even more about a nation based upon how working people treat one another. Thank you APWU.” ■



# Standing Up, Fighting Back

**A**PWU members took battles from the workroom floor into the streets in the last few months, protesting issues such as job cuts and hostile work environments.

Members of the Barre Local (Vermont) teamed up with 100 allies and supporters for an informational picket outside the South Main Street post office on April 28.

According to Barre Local President Nancy Rowell, the post office has had problems since early 2015, including grievances that get settled but are never implemented, along with significant service issues. Since retail windows are not staffed properly, customers wait in lines that go out the door. On top of that, managers criticize window clerks in front of customers.

Rowell explained that workers from all crafts, as well as all four postal unions, have written letters to management at both district and regional levels, to no avail. So, they decided to make the matter public. Rowell said that prior to the picket, members handed out flyers to customers outlining their struggles.

“Our great post office is being destroyed because we don’t have adequate staffing to provide service,” Rowell said. “It’s just one thing after another. We can’t function. We want respect and dignity on the workroom floor.”

## Baltimore Battles Back

Members of the Baltimore Francis “Stu” Filbey Area Local held an informational picket on June 10. The local has lost over 100 jobs due to excessing, abolishment and reversions.

Around 70 postal workers and community allies protested outside the Fayette Street post office as drivers passing by honked, smiled and waved.

Baltimore Area Local President Sherry McKnight explained that the local was protesting postal management’s reversions, abolishment, excessing and cuts to jobs that are happening without proper notification to the union.

“It’s not only affecting postal workers, this affects local families,” explained McKnight. “The ability to receive the mail in a timely fashion is going to be an issue. It’s going to have a great impact on the public.” ■



APWU members and supporters at the Barre, Vermont informational picket against abusive management.



APWU members and allies protest job and service cuts in Baltimore, Maryland.





## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

# Organizing to Save Your Local Post Office

***“Not all post offices  
get closed or  
consolidated. Don’t  
give up your right to  
have a neighborhood  
post office in your  
city or town.”***

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debby Szeredy".

PICTURE THIS SCENARIO... YOUR MANAGER POSTS A FORMAL NOTIFICATION stating the USPS’ intention to move your post office to an industrial park, or a carrier annex, or some other inconvenient and out-of-way location.

Maybe the posting says days and hours of operation will be cut, or the office will close indefinitely (suspended), or it will be closed and consolidated with an office in another neighborhood or town, or your office will be shuttered permanently. Perhaps the Postal Service proposes to substitute the closing office with a village post office or rural letter carriers or a retailer selling stamps.

Such possible outcomes will adversely affect a neighborhood or community. Access to postal services for the community becomes limited and inconvenient while stable jobs with decent wages and benefits disappear.

### **Mobilize Your Community**

The Postal Reorganization Act states that the Postal Service “shall provide prompt, reliable and efficient services to patrons in all areas and shall render postal services to all communities.”

So how does the Postal Service get away with taking these services from everyday citizens who depend on their post office? They do it when the community is unaware of their right to fight back.

The Postal Service is required to notify the public and all patrons when there is a proposal to close, suspend, cut hours or relocate a facility. The notice should contain a date, time and location for a public meeting. Notice must be posted two weeks before the scheduled meeting date.

If the location, date and time are not best for the community, you have the right to request the meeting be rescheduled to a location and time that allows individuals and businesses to be present, raise concerns and ask questions of the Postal Service.

Make your voices heard. Get your city council involved to help find an adequate space and time for the meeting.

For your convenience, a sample letter asking to reschedule the meeting can be found in the booklet *Organizing to Save the Post Office*. It can be found on the Vice President’s web page, under “Resources,” at [www.apwu.org/departments-divisions/vice-president](http://www.apwu.org/departments-divisions/vice-president).

The booklet also contains pointers about organizing your community to fight closures and other reductions of postal services. It has advice and tactics about



reaching out to the public, building arguments to continue the local post office services and it details the appeal process to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC).

## Getting Out the Message

Community residents and businesses should know these public meetings are important and require their participation.

Be prepared to contact politicians, community groups, businesses and individuals. Educate them about the proposal and the process. Time limits are short. Anyone making written comments to the Postal Service must do so within 60 days from the day it posted notice of its proposed action. Once the Postal Service posts its final decision, any appeal to the PRC must be done within 30 days.

## Doing the Heavy Lifting

The booklet *Organizing to Save the Post Office* is full of ideas and tools for analyzing proposals, suggesting alternatives and actions to publicly oppose closures. They include:

- Building alliances with politicians, businesses and community groups;
- Doing your own survey of residents;
- Circulating petitions;

- Writing letters to the editor to local papers;
- Making requests for information from the Postal Service;
- Setting up your own community meetings;
- Asking the Postal Service to meet - in addition to the public meeting - with various business, community groups and politicians.

## Available Resources

The Vice President's web page on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) has many other resources to help your fight against a closure in your community.

- If your post office is a historical site, there are additional considerations. Download *Preserving Historic Post Offices* for more information.
- The Postal Service may also be obligated to do an environmental impact study. Look at Handbook *RE-6 Revision: Facilities Environmental Guide and Handbook PO-101*.
- Use *Planning Town Hall Meetings* to set up a meeting in your community.

There are success stories. Not all post offices get closed or consolidated. Don't give up your right to a neighborhood post office in your city or town! ■

## Current Battles

The latest fights to keep post offices open are in Grand Island, Nebraska and Youngstown, Ohio. In both cities, postal management has plans to move a centrally located post office.



Grand Island, NE



## SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

# Your Local Election Committee

***“The election committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the election and shall decide all controversies arising out of the election process.”***

UNION ELECTIONS REPRESENT ONE OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR democracy. Union members have the right to nominate and vote for their leadership and those officers who will be placed in charge of protecting the rights of postal workers and the administration of the union.

### **The Law**

The right to elect union officials is mandated by federal law. The Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act reads, *“Terms of Office; Election Procedures (29 U.S.C. 481) SEC. 401. (b) Every local labor organization shall elect its officers not less often than once every three years by secret ballot among the members in good standing.”*

Local unions may choose to have elections every one or two years, but there must be an election at least once every three years. The frequency of elections should be addressed in the local’s constitution.

### **The National Constitution**

In order to comply with the legal obligation to have elections, the APWU adopted language in *The National Constitution and Bylaws* to assist local and state unions. Article 12 of *The National Constitution and Bylaws* of the APWU requires that every local “establish an election committee, no member of” which shall be a candidate for election while serving on such committee.

The election committee shall

be responsible for the conduct of the election and shall decide all controversies arising out of the election process. Locals will decide the number of committee members and how the committee is formed. The election committee can be either elected or appointed as per the local’s constitution. Members of the committee are expected to serve throughout the entire election process. If for some reason a committee member is unable to serve, he or she may be replaced, if possible. If for some reason there are not enough local members to form a committee, please contact the Secretary-Treasurer’s Department for assistance.

### **The Election Committee**

Election committee members are responsible for conducting your union’s election of officers, in accordance with federal law and your union’s constitution and bylaws. This committee should be in place as the first step of the election process.

Throughout the election process, election officials should be guided by three principles. First, you should



be fair and impartial, treating all candidates equally and avoiding any acts of favoritism or even the appearance of favoritism. You should maintain a businesslike relationship with all candidates, even if you work with or are personal friends with any of them. Second, you must follow the election provisions in your union's constitution and bylaws as well as any other union election rules, so long as they are not inconsistent with federal law. Finally, you should uphold American democratic traditions by protecting the right of every member in good standing to nominate candidates, run for office and vote by secret ballot for officers of your union. (*Department of Labor, A Guide for Election Officials*)

## ***“The committee should be in place as the first step of the election process.”***

The local election committee (LEC) should formulate election rules, post-election notices for the membership, update the membership mailing list, document acceptance of nominations and verify that candidates meet qualification requirements. The committee also prepares the ballot, collects or counts the ballots and certifies the election results (some committees supervise outside ballot companies who perform some of these duties).

If the local union will have members voting at a polling place, the committee would have to make sure that the polling place is open long enough to allow members an opportunity to vote, provide for absentee balloting and maintain the security of the ballots. Finally, the LEC would investigate and render a decision on any election complaints or grievances.

When investigating election complaints, the committee is looking for actions or conduct that would influence the outcome of the election. The use of union or employer funds, poor security of the ballots, improper nomination or election notice and use of local or national union logo on campaign material are some typical examples of actions or conduct that could affect the outcome of an election.

All decisions on election grievances must be in writing and if the grievance is denied, the written decision should provide the appeal procedures in Article 12 of the National Constitution.

## **ASK THE SECRETARY-TREASURER**

### **What do we do when we need to change the meeting quorum, but we can't get enough members to attend a meeting to change the quorum?**

Under *Robert's Rules*, official business cannot be conducted at a meeting unless there is a minimum number of members present at a meeting (commonly called a quorum). The quorum is usually in the constitution or bylaws of the local union and it will require an amendment to change it.

A dilemma occurs when the local cannot get a quorum to lower the quorum numbers. There is no alternate way to bypass the quorum requirement. Local officials and members will have to find a way to get the required number of members to the meeting or continue to call meetings where no official action can be taken.

## **Help Is Available**

The Secretary-Treasurer's Department can provide online training to assist local election committees. This training webinar lasts approximately two hours. It only requires a high speed internet connection, speakerphone and a space where the committee can comfortably watch a computer monitor or project an image. Additional committee resources are available on the APWU website at [www.apwu.org/issues/election-union-officers](http://www.apwu.org/issues/election-union-officers). ■



### **Powell Receives Award of Distinction**

Secretary-Treasurer Powell received the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' (CBTU) Award of Distinction on May 28 at their National Convention. Pictured (l to r) are: Robin Robertson, St. Louis Gateway Area Local; Christine Smith, retiree St. Louis Gateway District Area Local; Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell; Terry L. Melvin, CBTU President; Rosa Marshall, retiree San Francisco Local; Sharyn Stone, Central Region Coordinator; and Shirley Taylor, Clerk National Business Agent San Francisco Area.

# Save the Postal Service

By Jim Hightower, former Texas Agricultural Commissioner, Activist and Producer of The Hightower Lowdown newsletter. The publication is a signatory of A Grand Alliance.

**J**ournalism, which is supposed to help us make sense of our turbulent world, can't seem to make sense of itself.

In addition to “news” (which involves reporting on stuff that’s real) we’re now getting “fake news” (stuff that’s completely made up). But wait, the barons of corporate news are adding to today’s tumultuous stale of journalism by putting out feeds of “BS news” (stuff they know is untrue but reported as fact, because it advances their political agenda).

For example, the mighty *Washington Post* (owned by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, a laissez-fairlyland promoter of privatizing government functions) keeps publishing a load of BS to denigrate our U.S. Post Office. The paper’s latest pot shot was in an alarmist editorial declaring, “The U.S. Postal Service continues to hemorrhage red ink.” Embracing their owner’s anti-government ideology, the editors grumped that postal unions have made our mail service outmoded and insolvent, running up “a net loss of \$5.6 billion” last year.

That is pure bovine excrement and the editors know it. In fact, thanks to our amazing, innovative, and efficient postal workers, the nation’s public post offices racked up a \$610 million operating *profit* last year, and a \$1.2 billion profit the year before.

The \$5 billion in red ink that the paper’s editorial propagandists touted is a deliberate bookkeeping hoax created by Congress to make the public think that our Post Office is a hopeless money loser that should be privatized.

In 2006, Congress piled an artificial “loss” on the Postal Service by decreeing that it must prefund the health care costs of future retirees, seventy-five years in advance. That includes retirees who are not even born yet! No other agency and no other corporation – including Amazon – could survive if Congress added a \$5 billion a year fictitious loss to its books.

Yet, in a shameful piece of BS journalism, the *Post* intentionally ignored the facts.



***“Our public Postal Service literally delivers, and many of our post offices serve as treasured community centers.”***

What the *Post* should have covered was this: While a half-dollar hardly counts as money these days, there is an amazing half-dollar bargain on offer: A first class postage stamp. For fifty cents, you get the stamp, a penny in change, and so much more. Stick it on an envelope, drop your missive in a mailbox, and America’s phenomenal network of post office workers and letter carriers will deliver it in short order to your addressee in any of the 43,000 zip codes of this vast country, from New York City’s tallest building to a village on the floor of the Grand Canyon.

Our public Postal Service literally delivers, and many of our post offices serve as treasured community centers – two reasons that the U.S. mail service consistently ranks highest of all federal agencies in public support. So, naturally, it must be decimated and ultimately eliminated.

What passes for logic in the back rooms of our Koch-headed Congress and in the boardrooms of many predatory corporations is sheer poison. They keep demonizing anything public – especially

any public service that works and is popular – because the corporate powers and the Congress critters they buy in bulk are determined to privatize government. So these profiteers and, plutocratic ideologues constantly put out propaganda like the *Post* editorial, castigating the Postal Service as a massive, money-sucking, deteriorating, bureaucratic behemoth.

But here are a few facts they don’t want you to realize: One, this public agency provides affordable mail service to all, in every community; two, it does this *without a dime of taxpayer* money, financing its entire operation with the sale of stamps and services like bulk mail; and three, it provides hundreds of thousands of solid middle-class jobs spread throughout every zip code.

To help keep this public jewel out of the hands of a few greed-headed, price-gouging, low-wage, tax-dodging corporations, support “A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service.”

Find it at [www.AGrandAlliance.org](http://www.AGrandAlliance.org).



### Tell the Postmaster General

# Provide ATMs in Post Offices

Every day, people receiving public assistance pay a portion of their benefits in fees to access their own money. It could be Social Security Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income, Veterans Affairs benefits, refugee benefits, or one of many state and local programs.

These same people are often “underbanked” and get hit again with additional fees to pay bills, cash checks and obtain money orders. Millions of dollars that could be spent on food, transportation and utility bills instead go to bank fees.

The U.S. Postal Service could make a big difference for these families. In its most recent study on the road to postal banking, the USPS Office of Inspector General outlined the ability of the Postal Service to install their own ATMs in post offices and to use them to provide a surcharge-free network for accessing money stored on public assistance benefit cards.

### Killer Fees

In a 2014 report, the California Reinvestment Coalition (CRC) estimated that ATM fees cost California \$19 million each year. Approximately 450,000 families with children in California receive public assistance through the CalWORKs program, with the average family receiving \$510 per month.

The CRC, which strives to build an inclusive and fair economy by ensuring banks and other corporations invest and conduct business in California communities in a just and equitable manner, reported that, “having to pay fees for basic and necessary financial services erodes both our

CalWORKs spent on ATM fees in one month in California could buy

**a year of school supplies for 2,349 kids**



CalWORKs spent on ATM fees in one month in Alameda County could buy

**25,532 round trip bus rides**



CalWORKs spent on ATM fees in one month in Los Angeles County could buy

**co-pays for 90,000 prescriptions**

Photo from California Reinvestment Coalition

government's investment and the families' ability to thrive.” Every dollar is needed.

To the CRC, it doesn't make sense for public dollars - intended to help struggling families - to instead go to financial institutions. The CRC is working with the state government and financial institutions to find a way for CalWORKs recipients to access a reliable network of “fee-avoidant” or low fee and no-fee financial services, so families can save every dollar.

### USPS Can Do It

The USPS already has an agreement which allows them to partner with other federal agencies. This would allow them to offer access to benefits without a surcharge.

Legislation currently being considered by the U.S. House of Representatives would expand that to cover state and local agencies. This change would facilitate offering millions of families the choice to access their money without losing out to fees.

Postal Service surcharge-free ATMs will draw customers who will likely use other services such as check cashing, bill payment, money orders and international money transfers. Providing these services at post offices would allow families access to affordable financial services, while strengthening the Postal Service.

The Campaign for Postal Banking calls on Postmaster General Brennan to provide these services now.

### Campaign for Postal Banking

The Campaign for Postal Banking is a coalition of consumer, worker, financial reform, economic justice, community, civic, and faith-based organizations calling for low-cost, consumer-driven financial services via the Postal Service. Products and services could range from check cashing to bill payment to savings accounts to small-dollar loans. Postal Banking will benefit consumers who do not have access to traditional banks as well as those who would prefer a more public option. The expansion of services would also strengthen our public Postal Service. To learn more, visit [www.CampaignForPostalBanking.org](http://www.CampaignForPostalBanking.org).





## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR

# Know Your Weingarten Rights

WHAT DOES A GROCERY STORE CHAIN STARTED IN TEXAS IN 1901 HAVE TO do with you? That chain of grocery stores – Weingarten’s – ultimately gave us some of the most important rights we have as union members today. Weingarten’s gave us our right to have union representation in meetings with management.

The story from 1975 is an interesting one. The employee originally involved, Leura Collins, was not even disciplined in any fashion. After one of her co-workers accused her of taking money from the cash register, an internal investigator for Weingarten’s was asked to observe the store. Upon completion of the observation, he found nothing wrong.

At that point, the store manager told the investigator that Collins was reported to have taken a box of chicken home for which she did not pay full price. The manager and the investigator called her into an office for questioning, where she asked multiple times for representation by her union, the Retail Clerks Union. She was denied each time. Ultimately, it was determined that she did nothing wrong.

Collins did, however, report her experiences to her shop steward, leading to an unfair labor practice charge filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The NLRB found that Weingarten’s had violated Collins’ “mutual aid and protection” rights of Section 7 of the National Labor

Relations Act by denying her request for representation.

Weingarten’s appealed the ruling all the way to the Supreme Court, which was denied, thus affirming and establishing our rights to union representation in meetings with management where an employee feels their job might be in jeopardy or the meeting may lead to discipline.

### Know Your Rights

These rights are now known as *Weingarten Rights*. I know that many of you already know your rights, but it is never a bad thing to have a refresher on what they are. Many of you may also be new to the Postal Service, or to a union environment, and may not have stewards or officers located right in your workplace to remind you of these important rights. Not only are your rights to representation guaranteed by law, but they are also addressed in our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM) in Article 17.

*Weingarten Rights* are not like the much more widely known *Miranda*

*“Enforcing the contract and invoking your rights are not spectator sports. They require your participation and action.”*

*Vance Zimmerman*



*Rights.* Every time you watch a crime drama on TV you will see someone being read their *Miranda Rights*. Unlike *Miranda*, management is not required to inform you of your *Weingarten Rights* at any time. You are required to know and invoke these rights on your own.

So when can you invoke your *Weingarten Rights*? You have the right to request union representation (more commonly known as “request a steward”) whenever you reasonably believe a meeting may lead to discipline. Again, you must request the representation! Your shop steward cannot request it on your behalf.

There are a few times when representation is not required. One of the exceptions is when management tells you in advance that the meeting is an “official discussion.” However, if they start questioning you, the meeting is now an investigation and you are entitled to representation if you request it. Another exception would be when management is actually handing you the discipline (a “Letter of Warning,” “Notice of Suspension,” etc.).

You have the right to consult with your representation in private prior to the start of the meeting with management. The rights also allow your representative to participate in the meeting; to ask clarifying questions and actively help you. As the JCIM says, “The employee has the right to a steward’s assistance, not just a silent presence, during an interview covered by the Weingarten rule.”

When called into a meeting with management, requesting your rights can be as simple as saying, “I want my shop steward here.” You should ask

**Scan this QR code if you would like to read the decision that created the *Weingarten Rights*.**



before the meeting starts, “Can this meeting lead to me being disciplined?” If they answer “yes,” you need to request representation. You should learn this statement or carry it with you at all times:

*If this discussion/meeting could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I respectfully request that my APWU representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Until my representative arrives, I choose not to participate in this discussion.*

Your rights to representation extend to meetings with the Postal Inspection Service and Office of Inspector General Special Agents. They extend to interviews management may try to conduct over the phone or anywhere else off postal premises.

## Union Time

We are very fortunate to have rights under our CBA to meet with our stewards during work time – on the clock. Most private sector unions do not have this right. All of these things can take place on the clock: meetings with management, a pre-meeting consultation with your union representative, discussing contract violations and possible grievances

with your steward, as well as the actual steward filing and meeting on grievances.

Being able to do this on the clock is very important to our grievance process. It allows for your direct participation in contract enforcement and problem solving in the work place. It is not the union or steward’s responsibility to see every violation and act on it. You have a significant responsibility to your union and all your coworkers to help your stewards and officers by requesting time to report violations to the union.

Requesting union time and meeting on the clock with the steward is vital to our process! When you see a violation, you should request “union time” from your supervisor or manager. They are required to grant you time with a steward. It is management’s responsibility to arrange this time and to call the steward over or into the office – not yours.

It is not enough to just pass by a steward at your office, window or breakroom and casually say you may have seen a violation. You must request official time to meet with the steward. Break times are not appropriate for you to talk to a steward. Management should not be requiring it, nor should you be thinking it is okay to ask the steward to do union work on their breaks and lunches. Both you and your union representatives are entitled to breaks and lunches.

Enforcing the contract and invoking your rights are not spectator sports. They require your participation and action. Remember, if you are ever in doubt, always request representation. ■



## CLERK DIVISION

# A Significant Step Forward

THE APWU TOOK A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD IN HOLDING THE Postal Service accountable for violations of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), as a result of Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg's award in the dispute regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Clerk Craft jobs.

The decision provides a remedy for all employees harmed when the Postal Service fails to post duty assignments in a timely manner. As a national award, this ruling can be applied to all crafts in similar situations, such as the reversion (elimination) of a vacant duty assignment.

The dispute was in regard to the proper remedy when the Postal Service failed to provide the 800 administrative and technical jobs promised in the 2010 contract, as part of the Clerk Craft Jobs MOU. The USPS did transfer some work performed by Executive and Administrative Staff (EAS) employees to the Clerk Craft by providing the Mail Flow Controller and the Address Management Systems jobs in 2013; however, they then failed to provide the remaining 362 jobs.

The USPS kept telling the APWU that the remaining jobs were forthcoming all the way up to the day of the arbitration. During the arbitration proceedings the USPS made the amazing argument that management officials in the operations department told them

there were no jobs available, and if there were any, they would be going away soon.

However, despite the USPS argument that suddenly there are no longer administrative and technical jobs available, evidence provided by the APWU showed an increase in the number of these jobs performed by EAS employees – and a reduction in those same types of jobs performed by Clerk Craft employees – over the same time frame.

The arbitrator ruled that the USPS should have complied with the award no later than August 2013, and therefore back pay will start from then until the USPS posts the jobs.

Following the award, the USPS identified 362 administrative type jobs which should be posted for bid in the near future.

### Precedent Setting

It is the remedy for the failure to post those jobs by August of 2013 that is most important moving forward. In the past when the Postal Service failed to post a duty assignment in violation of the CBA, a common remedy was



# for Remedies



Assistant Director Lynn Pallas-Barber,  
Director Clint Burelson and Assistant Director Lamont Brooks.

out-of-schedule pay for the employee who ultimately was the successful bidder on the job after it was eventually posted. That remedy did not capture the harm to other employees who would have moved up to more desired jobs.

Moreover, the standard remedy was not strong enough to discourage the Postal Service from violating the CBA. USPS was making a calculated decision that it was in their interest to violate the CBA, partly because locals did not file grievances each time it was warranted. Even when the APWU grievance was successful, the standard remedy was not enough of a deterrent for the Postal Service.

In his award, Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg explained employees directly or indirectly affected by the Postal Service's failure to comply with the MOU "Subject: Clerk Craft Jobs" were entitled to relief:

*"One group of employees clearly affected by the Postal Service failure to comply with the MOU consists of those who would have successfully bid on one of the 362 administrative or technical positions at the time that position should have been filled. All such employees are entitled to be made whole in the amount of all pay and benefits they lost as a result of the lapse in time between the date they would have filled one of the 362 positions had the Postal Service*

*filled them in a timely fashion and the date on which they are actually awarded one of those positions.*

*Another group of employees entitled to remedial relief is composed of those who were indirectly affected by the Postal Service violation. As Mr. Burelson testified, this group consists of employees who would have been the successful bidders on the vacancies created by those employees who should earlier have been placed in an administrative and technical position. There may be more than one employee indirectly affected in this fashion since each vacancy filled later than it should have been may lead to another – all the way down to a PSE whose conversion to career status is delayed by the original violation – and the Postal Service shall be required to make each such employee whole for any loss in pay and benefits sustained as a result of that violation."*

The common understanding of relief is to make the bargaining unit whole, which most remedies fall far short of accomplishing. The award is a significant step in addressing all the harm done to the bargaining unit. Much appreciation goes to Assistant Clerk Craft Directors Lynn Pallas-Barber (lead case officer) and Lamont Brooks, as well as our APWU attorneys Mindy Holmes and Jason Veny.

## USPS Attempting to Eliminate Needed Jobs

The award came just in time to assist in the fight to address the Postal Service's recently aggressive "recommendations" to the field to revert vacant duty assignments based on unrealistic ideas of how many hours they would like to see worked in the installation, instead of utilizing the actual hours worked.

The Postal Service is using a dashboard complement tool that allows the user to see all the relevant local information on one page. However, that dashboard view also shows how ridiculous it is for management to revert a job when the local data confirms PSEs are averaging 35 hours a week and overtime is being utilized on a regular basis.

With Goldberg's award, the APWU can and should request compensation to all employees directly and indirectly harmed as a result of the Postal Service's decision to revert a job and, therefore, fail to post a duty assignment for bid.

It is important that the union fight back at the local, area and national level against attempts to squeeze workers and reduce service. Our success in stopping the Postal Service will depend on whether we are able to put enough pressure on them, so they make the calculated decision that it's not worth messing with the APWU. ■

# Selection from the In-Service

WE HAVE NOTICED AN UPTICK IN THE USE OF MAINTENANCE CRAFT in-service registers. This makes it a good time to point out the in-service register “pecking order” on page 280 of the 2012 Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM). It is entitled *Order for Filling Maintenance Craft Positions* and gives a specific process for how our posted duty assignments are awarded.

Our in-service registers are used after the in-craft Preferred Assignment Register (PAR) and Promotion Eligibility Register (PER) are exhausted. Aside from the possible application of an individual retreat right due to prior Article 12 action, the next step to fill the vacancy should be to check for a transfer request from a Maintenance employee, as explained in item 7 of the “pecking order.” Assuming there are no existing transfer requests by a current Maintenance Craft employee, or all requests are completed, the in-service register comes into play.

This register of applicants is made up of employees who have taken the Exam 955 and were found eligible on the review panel interview. The registers are for specific Maintenance Craft positions, which are authorized for the installation. These positions are covered under the Maintenance Selection System (MSS). Handbook EL-304 has a detailed section on this process and on establishing and maintaining in-service registers.

In-service registers may include bargaining unit employees from any

craft within the installation. There is a specific order of consideration depending on their bargaining unit.

Maintenance Craft employees are ranked first priority, although to be on the in-service register a Maintenance employee must not be on, or have applied for, the in-craft PER for that position. After Maintenance Craft employees, all other APWU-represented employees are listed as next priority. Employees with the least advantage and ranking on the in-service register are employees not in the APWU bargaining unit, who have been rated eligible for that position. Within these groups, eligible employees are ranked in score order. After the in-service register is exhausted, transfer requests from craft employees in other installations are considered.

### Detailed for Training

One more thing must be noted regarding the filling of vacant Maintenance positions, when a non-Maintenance employee is selected from the in-service register, that employee may be detailed to the



# Register



Assistant Director Idowu Balogun, Director Steven G. Raymer and Assistant Director Terry B. Martinez

position for training prior to the assignment's start date. Page 287 of the JCIM plainly states:

*Q: May an employee selected from an in-service register be placed into that position prior to the date (PS Form 50) of the new assignment?*

*A: Yes. An employee may be detailed to the position for training purposes for up to a two-week period ending with the reassignment.*

This means a couple of things have occurred. The primary thing is that the individual is in fact selected from the in-service register.

If it is needed to get the person working in the duty assignment as quickly as possible, there can be a detail created solely for training

purposes. The detail into the position occurs for no more than two weeks and must end on the Form 50's effective date.

If the detail exceeds that specific two-week period, it would be a violation of Article 7, as this is a cross-craft assignment. It would likely violate Article 38.6 by enrolling a non-Maintenance employee into a job related Maintenance training opportunity. Additionally, it would adversely impact the individual's proper seniority standing, rate of pay, and step assignment; their ability to move via the PAR and PER as they are not in the craft until the effective date of the Form 50; volunteering for other training opportunity and a host

of LMOU issues, most notably with overtime assignments.

Similar to the hiring process off the entrance register, selections from the in-service register require a Form 50 to be processed and the employee must be assigned into the position title for which they were selected. Yes, there may be an issue to be addressed if there is a failure of subsequent training, but that does not change the fact that the reassignment must take place before the employee is permitted to work in a vacant Maintenance Craft duty assignment (outside of the possible up to two-week detail).

As always, contact your local Maintenance Craft representative with any questions. ■

## MS-1 HEARING

Six days of hearings went into national case Q10C-4Q-C 14171644 and we believe it went well.

The issue involved the extreme and drastic reductions proposed for building side staffing, which is primarily staffed by Building Equipment Mechanics (BEMs) and should be determined using the handbook MS-1.

The APWU pointed out the fallacy of management's plan to eliminate much of the BEM work and contract out anything that was left. At the hearing, the Postal Service opined that gaps in their identification of work to perform will be left up to "local customization." This is to be done by local management noting items they feel should be done and then providing justification for an exception to be approved by Area management.

Due to a 2006 national agreement, all staffing handbooks and

MMOs are covered under Article 19. Our presentation included testimony from a union safety specialist and four BEMs from around the country, as well as Assistant Director A Idowu Balogun (case officer) and Director Steve Raymer (who testified on rebuttal).

Our approach was two-pronged. We challenged both that the USPS violated the fair, reasonable and equitable criteria contained in Article 19 and that the USPS engaged in a "work and/or time measurement study or system" in violation of Article 34. We also contended that the USPS was not yet ready to implement their concept, which is cutting hours and jobs by not doing work and/or subcontracting it.

Go to [apwu.org/news/deptdiv-news-article/selection-from-the-in-service-register](http://apwu.org/news/deptdiv-news-article/selection-from-the-in-service-register) to read the USPS assumptions put into the record. Following the filing of briefs on June 16, the decision is in the arbitrator's hands.



## MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE DIVISION

# MVO/TTO Qualification Stan

THE APWU AND THE POSTAL SERVICE FINALIZED A SETTLEMENT ON May 9, 2017 resolving national case A19V20021, concerning the 2002 changes made to the Motor Vehicle Operator (MVO) and Tractor-Trailer Operator (TTO) Qualification Standards. The union filed an appeal to arbitration in 2002 in response to unanswered questions and concerns with the changes that had been made, including increasing the experience requirement from one year to two and the elimination of the language, “those who pass the Postal Service road test on a tractor-trailer will be considered the meet the six month requirement.”

It was the APWU’s position that the Postal Service’s changes went far beyond their claim that the only revisions to the MVO and TTO Qualification Standards consisted of “removing outdated language.” It was also our position that the elimination of this language made it virtually impossible for an MVO with no prior TTO experience to be promoted to TTO.

The settlement affirms that the subject changes to the Qualification Standards will remain in effect, but significantly it provides clear guidance as to the circumstances under which an MVO may be awarded a TTO position, including the providing of TTO training per the language in Article 39.1.B.9. The terms of the settlement are as follows:

- An MVO may bid for a TTO position with a valid commercial driver’s license, air brakes certification for relevant work vehicles from their state of residence, and two years of general driving experience with at least

one year full-time, or equivalent, of driving 7-ton trucks and/or buses with a minimum of 16 passengers;

- At least six months of the required driving experience must be operating a tractor-trailer;
- An MVO who holds a state license to operate a tractor-trailer and qualifies for a certification on a Large Truck Skills Course will be considered to meet the six month requirement;
- When tractor-trailer assignments are established, MVOs who are not qualified to drive tractor-trailers will be given on-the-clock training, starting with the senior MVO (Article 39.1.B.9 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement);
- An MVO who obtains the proper state issued permit to operate a tractor-trailer may receive USPS training in accordance with Article 39.1.B.9 to prepare for the state licensing test. An MVO who then qualifies for certification on a



# dards Settlement



Assistant Director Javier Piñeres and Director Michael Foster.

Large Truck Skills Course as part of this training will have met the six month qualification;

- In addition to these guidelines for MVOs looking to bid on a TTO position, the settlement reaffirms that it is not the policy of the Postal Service to require the tractor-trailer driving test for an MVO position, as is stated in the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM). The question asks, “Are Motor Vehicle Operators required to have a Class A commercial driver’s license?” The MVO qualification standards do not have any requirements for the applicants to be TTO qualified.

The intent of this settlement is to enable interested MVOs without the six month’s experience to be trained and to further have the opportunity to exercise their right pursuant to Article 39.1.B.7.b and seek a promotion to TTO. This settlement provides guidance to the local parties to establish training practices and procedures.

## PSE Salary Exception Issues Resolved with Recent MOU

Postal Support Employee (PSE) salary exception issues have been ongoing causes of concern and disputes for the Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) Craft. Different Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been issued throughout the past several years in an attempt to correct the numerous oversights and missteps occurring when

a PSE is converted to career status.

On March 10, the APWU signed an MOU with the Postal Service that remedies the situation where Motor Vehicle Service PSEs who had been granted a salary exception were converted to career status within the same craft, but to a lower level and received a starting salary rate in accordance with the June 6, 2014 MOU “Re: Resolution of Postal Support Employee (PSE) Salary Exception Issues,” and its April 3, 2015 addendum.

The MOU protects both newly-converted PSEs and established career employees by achieving the following:

- Restores the salary rate of Level 8 PSEs who were converted to a career Level 7 position within the Motor Vehicle Service Craft and subsequently forced to take the Level 7 salary rate.
- Upgrades the salary rate of any Level 7 MVS employee who is senior to the newly converted PSE but is receiving a lower salary rate.
- Preserves the principle of step progression.
- Rescinds any Letter of Demand that was issued to a PSE receiving a higher rate of pay based on their salary exception after being converted to career.
- Resolves national dispute HQTV20160071.

The parties agreed to address any issues as a result of this MOU at the national level. If local management is not in agreement or compliance with

the terms of this MOU, local officers should bring this to the attention of the national MVS Directors.

This MOU should provide stability and equitable pay for all employees impacted from the salary exceptions and the conversion to career.

## MOU Signed on the Implementation of 110 Routes Das Award

On May 17, 2017, the APWU and the Postal Service signed an MOU on the implementation of Arbitrator Das’ award in Case Q06C-4Q-C 11182451, on the 110 HCR routes to be converted to PVS.

This MOU achieves the following:

1. The Postal Service will convert 110 routes from HCR to PVS service no later than Sept. 1, 2017.
2. The Postal Service will begin the staffing process and any necessary hiring immediately. It will give the APWU written notice concerning the transfer of routes, identifying each route and stating the date on which a transfer was completed and the postal employees assigned to the route, and PS Form 4533’s.
3. If for any reason, any of the routes identified in Exhibit A cannot be converted by Sept. 1, 2017, the Postal Service will notify the APWU as soon as reasonably practicable of the reasons therefore. The parties will discuss possible alternatives.

This MOU does not modify the Arbitrator’s retained jurisdiction. ■



## REGIONAL COORDINATORS

John Dirzius, Northeast Region; Kenneth Beasley, Southern Region; Sharyn Stone, Central Region; Omar Gonzalez, Western Region, and Mike Gallagher, Eastern Region.

### NORTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR

John Dirzius

NEW YORK  
NEW JERSEY  
CONNECTICUT  
MAINE  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
MASSACHUSETTS  
RHODE ISLAND  
VERMONT  
PUERTO RICO  
VIRGIN ISLANDS

# Building Our Future – A Challenge, A Priority

AS A PROUD MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION SINCE ITS BIRTH in 1971, I have witnessed first-hand our development and growth into one of the largest and most aggressive unions in the labor movement. Over these past 46 years, our collective efforts have improved the standard of living of APWU members, all postal employees and workers in general.

We negotiated contracts improving wages, hours and working conditions for our members. Most recently, we negotiated provisions that provide a career ladder for non-career postal workers. We fought hard to keep management from performing our work and returned contracted-out work to our crafts. As members, we need to take great pride in our collective efforts; however, we must always look to the future to improve our advancements as postal workers and work to build the labor movement for future generations.

Empowering and educating our members, as well as developing new leaders are paramount challenges that must be priorities for the APWU. Working under a collective bargaining agreement is no longer the rule, but the exception. Organized labor only represents approximately 12 percent of the workforce, both public and private.

It is important to note that 25 percent of postal workers have been hired since 2011 and 53 percent of postal workers are eligible to retire. We need to reach the new generation of postal workers joining the USPS.

### What It Means to Be Union

Today, the vast majority of workers in the United States do not work under a labor contract. They are “at will” employees, subject to the whims of management. Most young workers have limited union knowledge or experience.

We see this in our newly hired Postal Support Employees (PSEs). For many, it is their first time entering a unionized workplace. While the APWU continues to be successful in organizing our new PSEs as members, we collectively need to do more to educate these new members on what it means to be union and the importance of being a union activist.

It is our responsibility to show them what a labor union is, where our strength comes from, who the APWU belongs to, what collective bargaining is and what we mean by union solidarity.

There is no question that the APWU does a great job of training our leaders to provide our members with first-class representation. Our training is outstanding when it comes to contract enforcement, grievance writing,



arbitration and union administration. At the national level, we have week-long training sessions, training at conventions and training at the All-Craft Conferences covering a wide-range of important topics. Our officers provide training at the regional level, at our state conventions and at the local level.

That's great, and that kind of training should continue. However, as President Dimondstein stated in his 2016 Installation speech, the APWU must develop a "big picture" educational program to empower workers; to understand our history; to learn from our past; to organize the unorganized; to fight privatization; to understand politics and economics; to practice union solidarity everywhere and to rebuild the labor movement.

### Developing an APWU National Institute

I have had the honor and pleasure to work on building the APWU's broad-based educational program

with other officers, staff, educators and activists. Our mission is to provide education at all levels of the APWU, in order to develop and promote an organizing model of the union that empowers members, educates members, develops future leaders, strengthens the APWU and builds up the labor movement.

Our concept is to create an APWU National Institute which would include week-long training sessions – with modules for new member orientation, trainings geared to members and stewards, as well as special modules for meetings and conferences. The week-long sessions would include assignments and projects, follow-through and mentoring.

The concept is to employ several different training methods to include popular education: short films/videos, song, theater, booklets/literature as well as cartoons and white board animation. We would include communication as an

element of education by utilizing social media, digital communication, app technology, texting, online modules and union newsletters.

Training topics would include organizing unionism, grassroots leadership skills, history, income inequality, privatization, who controls our destiny, collective bargaining, diversity, social and political roles of labor unions, and the culture of resistance.

Any undertaking of this magnitude takes time, energy and money to fully implement. There are issues to resolve, hurdles to cross and curriculum to build; however, it is a challenge that must be accepted. My fellow Coordinators Sharyn Stone, Omar Gonzalez, Mike Gallagher and Kenneth Beasley also support these goals of empowering our members, educating our members, developing labor leaders, and building and strengthening the APWU and the labor movement for future generations. ■

## TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

On April 29, Barre Local (VT) members, President Dimondstein, Northeast Regional Coordinator John H. Dirzius, New England National Business Agents, APWU members from across New England, and other labor and community supporters joined together for an informational picket at the post office in Barre, Vermont to get the message out that, "Enough is Enough."

Their collective voices commanded dignity and respect, coupled with shouts demanding the APWU's contract be honored, and echoed in the streets of Barre. The activists clearly pointed out that APWU members want to provide the best public postal services to customers, without long lines at retail windows and late deliveries.

Management in this office is guilty of refusing to bargain in good faith, targeting local union officers for enforcing the contract, retaliating against employees injured on the job, embarrassing employees in front of customers and general unprofessional behavior. Special recognition to Barre Local President Nancy Rowell and Montpelier Local President Paul Montague for their courage and hard work. Job well done!



**President Dimondstein, Northeast Regional Coordinator Dirzius and Barre Local President Nancy Rowell with APWU members and supporters at the Barre, VT informational picket.**

# Postal Reform Scored by Congressional Budget Office

*Reports a Positive Financial Impact of H.R. 756 on Federal Budget*

**O**n June 1, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published its report on the Postal Service Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 756). It is standard practice for the CBO to “score” pending legislation introduced into Congress in order to report its impact on the federal budget. They estimate that H.R. 756 would result in a savings of \$6.2 billion over the next ten years.

These savings are technically “off-budget” because the USPS’ cash flow is recorded in the federal budget (in the Postal Service Fund) as “off-budget.” The cash flow for the Postal Service Retirement Health Benefit Fund (PSRHB) is “on-budget.” The net “on-budget” cost of the legislation is only \$0.2 billion.

“The score for H.R.756 has improved since the last version of the bill in the 114th Congress,” said Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard. “We are encouraged by the positive

changes that have been made in the legislation and will seek continued improvements as the bill moves forward.”

The bill is now off to two House of Representatives’ committees: Ways & Means, chaired by Kevin Brady (R-TX-8) with ranking member Richard Neal (D-MA-1) and Energy & Commerce, chaired by Greg Walden (R-OR-2) with ranking member Frank Pallone (D-NJ-6).

In both committees the bill must be approved in order to be voted on by the full House of Representatives. Then the legislation will move to the Senate for a similar process.

The APWU continues to support H.R. 756 in its present form and is working with legislators to make improvements. This legislation is crucial to ensuring a robust future for America’s public Postal Service.

Be sure to check the Postal Reform Legislation page on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) regularly for updates and information about H.R. 756 and H.R. 760.

## COPAMATIC CONTRIBUTORS ON THE RISE!

In the current political climate, it is not the time for union sisters and brothers to sit on the sidelines. APWU members know the necessity of making our voices heard. If the APWU is going to succeed in winning on our legislative priorities, we must step up to do our part and stand united NOW.

APWU COPA, our union’s Committee on Political Action, is an important way we can join together to support our allies and fight back against those who would destroy our jobs and our future.

Recognizing the urgent need for a robust COPA fund, thousands of union activists across the country are giving automatically – and the ranks of automatic COPA contributors continues to grow.

The COPA excitement is being felt at APWU local meetings and state conventions nationwide. At the Nebraska State Convention this last May, a whopping 1 out of every

3 delegates became automatic contributors. This is just one example of the hundreds of APWU members signing up.


In just the last year, the number of APWU members giving to COPA through *Ten to Win* payroll deduction has doubled! We plan to double it again in 2017. The number of APWU retirees choosing to give through their Office of Personnel Management (OPM) annuity also continues to climb.

### SIGN UP TODAY

There’s an easy, automatic contribution method that works for everyone who wishes to give to COPA.

Active postal workers can set it up from their postal paycheck with a *Ten to Win* form. Retirees can sign up on their OPM form to give *COPAmatically*.

Call 202-842-4211 or message [apwucopa@apwu.org](mailto:apwucopa@apwu.org) today to be sent the COPA signup form that works for you!

**COPA**  **YES!**  
**COPA – Give COPAmatically**



# Attend the Legislative Conference Oct. 1

On Oct. 1, the APWU Legislative and Political Department will be hosting the first Legislative Conference and Training in conjunction with the All-Craft Conference. The theme of this year's conference is *Building Political, Union and Community Power*. This all-day conference will consist of several workshops geared towards a variety of legislative and political areas, as well as a general session and regional breakouts.

It is a priority for the Legislative and Political Department to fulfill all our constitutional commitments, including "provid[ing] training on legislative issues at the All-Craft Conference." While the Legislative and

Political Department is constantly lobbying the government to pass legislation in line with the APWU's legislative priorities, we are also working to address the resolution directives passed at the convention. During the conference, we will be exploring those directives.



## Workshops

There are six two-hour workshops and two all-day workshops available. All-day classes are scheduled

from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., are first-come, first-served and have an attendee cap. They are *Assembling Your A-Team Member Mobilization Workshop* and *How Runaway Inequality is Harming Working People and our Communities*.

Each two-hour workshop will be offered twice, once from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., and again from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants will select two of the following classes:

- *One-on-Ones With Your State Representatives & Congressional Officials*
- *The Interlinking of Congress and the Postal Service*
- *APWU Engaging to Win Local, State, and Federal Elections*
- *The Corporate Plan to Take Away Our Rights - Learning from our Past to Fight for our Future*
- *Make Digital Media Part of Your Political Strategy*
- *Reshaping Democracy at the State and Local Level: Changing Laws to Win Economic Power*

All registered participants will then join the conference's general session at 2:30 p.m., with Regional Breakouts afterwards.

Go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) for the workshop descriptions and to register. Join us and learn tools and strategies that will make your legislative and political efforts more successful. ■

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 756) received a score from the Congressional Budget Office on June 1 (*see page 32*). As the bill moves to the two committees with joint jurisdiction (Ways & Means and Energy & Commerce) we are keeping a close eye on its progress and staying active in our lobbying efforts.

There is concern that the process will be stalled because the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz, left Congress on June 30. This is not the case. Once a bill is referred to committee neither the sponsor or co-sponsor can withdraw it, and the House may act on the legislation even if the primary sponsor leaves.

Since announcing his decision, Chairman Chaffetz and

the original co-sponsors have all expressed their continued commitment to advancing postal reform.

On June 13, Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-SC-4) was appointed Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, by the full-House Republican Conference acting on the recommendation of the 32 member GOP Steering Committee. President Dimondstein and I look forward to meeting with the new chairman and working under his leadership to advance and improve the bill.

As we meet with members of Congress, we are hopeful H.R. 756 will continue to successfully advance through the legislative process.

# POWER: The APWU Women's Committee

**A**PWU POWER (Post Office Women for Equal Rights), the women's committee within the American Postal Workers Union, was founded in St. Louis, Missouri on April 28, 1979 and incorporated into APWU's National Constitution in Detroit, Michigan in August 1980. APWU POWER's Steering Committee consists of five APWU POWER Coordinators, one from each region, who are elected at the Biennial National Convention and assist POWER committees at local and state levels.



- Donating to the Postal Employees Relief Fund (PERF) to aid postal families.

## 'Sisters Helping Sisters Fund'

APWU POWER's "Sisters Helping Sisters Fund" was established in 2005 following Hurricane Katrina to help women and children who were left homeless due to the disaster.

It was expanded in 2006 to give hope and encouragement to women and children in homeless shelters, fleeing domestic violence. The program is funded by donations received from postal workers. Since its inception, the fund has donated over \$56,000 to families, charities, and domestic violence agencies, including \$15,000 to the Postal Employees Relief Fund. ■

## Still Necessary

In the United States, women make up nearly 50 percent of the workforce and approximately 48 percent of the USPS. Although women pay the same percentage of APWU dues, they hold fewer elected offices at the local, state and national levels. APWU POWER assists women in obtaining the knowledge and skills needed to

level the playing field and has opened doors for women from across the country through educational seminars, workshops and regional conferences.

As a result, POWER sisters have become actively involved in their local and state unions and the political process. APWU POWER has donated over \$150,000 to COPA (the union's political action fund) and is one of APWU's largest contributors.

## Community Involvement

APWU POWER's involvement in community activities include:

- "Adopting" postal union families left homeless due to natural disasters;
- Making yearly monetary contributions to domestic violence agencies;
- Contributing Christmas gift bags to female troops unable to travel home for the holidays;
- Donating books, clothing, toiletries, etc. to schools, homeless shelters, and senior citizens' homes;

## Attend APWU POWER's 18th Biennial National Convention

**When: Thursday, Aug. 24 through Sunday, Aug. 27, 2017.**

Delegates should arrive on Wednesday, Aug. 23 and depart on Sunday, Aug. 27. Workshops will be held on Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Regional Caucuses are on Thursday, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

**Where: Hyatt Regency Baltimore** Inner Harbor, 300 Light Street, Baltimore, MD. Contact the hotel directly at 410-528-1234 or toll-free at 800-233-1234 for reservations. To secure the negotiated rate of \$140 per night (single/double occupancy) plus 15.5 percent tax, identify yourself as attending the POWER Convention and register by **Friday, July 14, 2017.**

**Register Online:** Delegates must register themselves online at [www.apwu.org/events/category/national-events](http://www.apwu.org/events/category/national-events) by clicking on APWU POWER 18th Biennial National Convention. The registration fee is \$100 for delegates and \$100 for each guest, which includes an Installation Dinner and a Reception. To register a guest, contact Joyce B. Robinson at 202-842-4225 prior to the Friday, July 14, 2017 deadline.

To obtain additional information about APWU POWER, contact the Research and Education Department at 202-842-4225 or the APWU POWER coordinator in your region:

Charlotte E. Hiatt, Central Region, [chachak@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chachak@sbcglobal.net)  
Michelle T. Boulware, Eastern Region, [michelleh715@hotmail.com](mailto:michelleh715@hotmail.com)  
Linda D. Terry, Northeast Region, [Lterry1@hvc.rr.com](mailto:Lterry1@hvc.rr.com)  
Betty James-Leaks, Southern Region, [bettywhyaskwhy@aol.com](mailto:bettywhyaskwhy@aol.com)  
Tracy A. Blakely, Western Region, [tracyablakely@gmail.com](mailto:tracyablakely@gmail.com)



# Get to Know the Non-Member

**A**s I travel across the country to state conferences and to conduct trainings, too often I hear more excuses for low membership than what is done to connect with non-members.

Who has felt at some point that a task was not attainable? Do not let negative thinking and doubts stop you from reaching out to other members and non-members.

## No Excuses

Below are some of the most common reasons I am told why some locals are not trying to organize. Do not let these stop you from strengthening your local.



### **“All of our non-members are long-term non-members”**

This is often not true. Do you know all the non-members in your local? If there was a random drawing, what would you be able to tell me about

them? Would you know how long they have worked for the USPS? Were they always in the same craft? What are their workplace issues? When was the last time someone approached them about the union and joining up?

### **“They will never join”**

Yes, there will be some employees who may never join; however, this does not mean that we stop asking. We should not close the door on them just because they say “No” once, twice or more. After a period of time, be it a month to a couple years, who knows what they will say. Perhaps something happened at work or home that would make the non-member more inclined to join.

### **“We have nobody who will help”**

Often we (as officers and stewards) say this is because we think no one else will step up. As we all know, people don’t line up to volunteer.

However, people don’t normally like volunteering for

something they don’t already know how to do. Have a one-on-one conversation with different members you think might help. Ask them if they can do a specific task. If you have 10 people who each do a small part, you can easily get a larger project done.

So, when it comes to organizing on the workroom floor, ask a member who works with a non-member to speak to them about the union and the importance of joining. The member might be surprised to learn that they have been working with a non-member and will happily offer to speak with them. Have membership packets ready.

***“Being a leader is not just about telling people what to do, but rather giving others the tools and guidance to be successful.”***

### **“Do not have time”**

There will never be enough hours in a day, but it is essential to make organizing a priority.

The more of us who stand together, the more strength we have. With more strength, more people want to join and more are willing to help. Having more volunteers leads to a larger pool of time to work on organizing, which makes it less time consuming. We do not get to skip a step in that cycle.

## Revitalize and Organize

Being a leader is not just about telling people what to do, but rather giving others the tools and guidance to be successful. The Organizing Department is working with local leaders on how they can revitalize the APWU presence in the workplace and empower the rank-and-file to reach out to non-members.

Something as simple as keeping your APWU bulletin board up-to-date and having regular meetings make an impact. Go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) to get the tools you need. ■



## Attacks on Veterans

**P**resident Trump's Fiscal Year 2018 budget plan levies an attack against our veterans who are elderly and disabled. His cuts aim to terminate Individual Unemployability (IU) benefits for veterans who are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits, under the mistaken notion that a duplication of benefits exists.

IU provides financial support to veterans who are unable to maintain substantially gainful employment because of their service-connected disabilities. On the other hand, Social Security retirement benefits are based upon lifetime earnings. Young and battle-torn, unable to work fulltime; post-military, these veterans had little or no earnings for most of their adult lives. As a result, they contributed little

**“Disenfranchising American veterans is not an American priority.”**

or nothing to Social Security, and will be left with little or no Social Security retirement benefit – proving the administration's justification meritless.

If passed, this budget will affect nearly every Vietnam-era veteran whose survival depends on their IU income. Haven't they already endured enough atrocity in war and at home?

They aren't the only veterans who will be affected; World War II, Korean War and others will suffer the consequences of this unconscionable action. Unemployable veterans have tripled to more than 300,000 since 2000. All are at risk of being left impoverished and homeless as seniors, if the Trump administration has its way.

This budget goes against the most basic military tenet, “never leave a fallen comrade behind.” Politicians, whether sitting on the left or right side of the aisle, or serving from the Oval Office, should never violate our nation's promise to those who sacrificed. Nor should our heroes from

yesteryears be discarded because there is a new generation of disabled veterans, and a rapidly expanding disability system that our government created when they sent our men and women off to war.

In response to public outcry, the White House marched out its supporters to vigorously defend its plans for 2018. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) declared that President Trump's budget “prioritizes American taxpayers over bureaucrats in Washington.” Disenfranchising American veterans is not an American priority.

Mick Mulvaney, White House Budget Director also stepped up to the plate, proclaiming, “This is what Trump promised.”

Many will recall a different set of promises. While campaigning, President Trump listed veterans as a “top priority.” He frequently stated, “Veterans aren't treated with the respect they deserve.” He pledged to “fire individuals who let vets down;” apparently all rhetoric. Who's abandoning veterans now?

“We look at spending differently,” Mulvaney trumpeted. “We are not going to measure compassion by the number of programs or people on them.” This is very evident based on where they are pinning \$46 billion in cuts.

Titled *A New Foundation for American Greatness*, the proposed budget is anything but “great.” In addition to dismantling veteran benefits, it guts domestic programs like student aid, food stamps and Medicaid. It slashes entitlements earned by federal workers - all while boosting military and border “security” spending. Neither a border wall nor military strikes in sovereign countries make us safer. To quote Stacy Bannerman, “A nation that does not take care of its war veterans has no business making new ones.”

We cannot permit these offenses nor stand idle while this administration shows its true spots and character. Their budget fails to honor our contract with veterans and flagrantly disregards the needs and earned entitlements of other Americans. They dine on lobster and steak with polished silver in fancy suits while their effort to balance the budget causes others to go hungry. That is not a solution. Silence grants permission and hoping this legislation is DOA will prove ineffective. Veterans have done so much for us. We must stand up for them.

— Human Relations Department ■



# The Combined Federal Campaign

**Your Participation Matters.** The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the largest and most successful annual, workplace charity campaign in the world. CFC donations made by postal workers, federal public servants and military men and women help millions of Americans and others around the world.

Over the years, we raised nearly \$5 billion and sustained more than 20,000 participating non-profits that offer a cadre of diverse services. Together, we have fed the hungry and provided safe drinking water, afforded services to children and the elderly, aided the blind and disabled, employed and housed veterans,

helped protect the environment and wildlife, shown compassion to abandoned animals, found cures and provided medical care to people afflicted by illness, prevented suicide, combatted domestic violence, responded to natural disasters, and so much more. Our work is important. Many depend on us.



**How It Works.** Every Postal District is granted a six-week period to host its annual fundraising campaign between Sept. 1 and Dec. 15. Fundraising periods usually coincide with the District's respective Local CFC. Search "OPM Campaign Locator" online to find yours.

Employees must be granted the opportunity to voluntarily participate on-the-clock, review the list of charities and make selections. We can donate as little as one dollar per pay period to the charities of our choice. Our donations are made bi-weekly through payroll deduction for one year.

**What's New?** PSEs can now give through payroll allotment. They will however, have to contact the Postal Accounting Service Center, 877-477-3273 option 1, to resume deductions after their 5-day break.

This season, retirees will also be able to make allotments from their monthly annuity payment for the first time in CFC history. Hopefully, this will give a big

boost to the total contributions that have otherwise been steadily declining since 2009. The logistics for retiree giving are still being processed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

But it's not all good. This year OPM is going paperless despite receiving a crushing number of objections from non-profits, benefactors and labor organizations who cited the cost-saving measures could be catastrophic to charities, especially smaller ones, like the Postal Employees Relief Fund that depend heavily on CFC contributions to survive. The USPS, the APWU, other postal unions and management associations are working together to confront this challenge.

**Additional Ways You Can Help.** Plan ahead. Find out who your Postal District Campaign Manager is and know when your district's fundraising period will occur so you can promote it. Volunteer to be a keyworker in your office. Locals should submit designee names and their contact information for consideration to the campaign manager - one per office, several per tour for larger facilities. Ensure your District is hosting a kick-off and that information is communicated to all employees, e.g. stand-up talks, USPS CFC video, PostalVision, signs visibly posted on workroom floors and in break areas, and LiteBlue postings. Locals should use union bulletin boards, websites, newsletters and meetings to inform members, and make sure opportunities are afforded to members to review charities and make donations on-the-clock. Make it fun and encourage participation.

**The Postal Employees Relief Fund** is our non-profit organization. It belongs to all postal workers. It is equally administrated by union representatives and postal officials. PERF depends on your generosity, overwhelmingly through the CFC, to help coworkers rebuild their lives after natural disasters and home fires strike. The USPS cannot promote any one particular charity during the CFC but locals can. Promote PERF.

**Show Some Love – Give - Every Little Bit Helps  
Support the Postal Employees Relief Fund  
Designate # 10268**

# Early Signs of Alzheimer's

The following is a partial reprint of 10 Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer's published by The Alzheimer's Association®. For the full article, visit [alz.org/10signs](http://alz.org/10signs).

**M**emory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of Alzheimer's or another dementia. Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. There are 10 warning signs and symptoms. If you notice any of them, please see a doctor.

**Memory Loss that Disrupts Daily Life** – One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's is memory loss, especially forgetting recently learned information. Others

is a sign of Alzheimer's. They may have difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast.

## **New Problems with Words in Speaking or Writing**

People with Alzheimer's may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue or they may repeat themselves. They may struggle with vocabulary, have problems finding the right word or call things by the wrong name.

**Misplacing Things** – A person with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places. They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. Sometimes, they may accuse others of stealing.



## SIGNS OF ALZHEIMER'S/DEMENTIA

- Poor judgment and decision-making
- Inability to manage a budget
- Losing track of the date or the season
- Difficulty having a conversation
- Misplacing things and being unable to retrace steps to find them

## TYPICAL AGE-RELATED CHANGES

- Making a bad decision once in a while
- Missing a monthly payment
- Forgetting which day it is and remembering it later
- Sometimes forgetting which word to use
- Losing things from time to time

include forgetting important dates or events; asking for the same information over and over; increasingly needing to rely on memory aids or family members for things they used to handle on their own.

**Challenges in Planning or Solving Problems** – Some people may experience changes in their ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills.

**Difficulty Completing Familiar Tasks** – People with Alzheimer's often find it hard to complete daily tasks. Sometimes, people may have trouble driving to a familiar location, managing a budget at work or remembering the rules of a favorite game.

**Confusion with Time or Place** – People with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. They may have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately. Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.

**Trouble Understanding Visual Images and Spatial Relationships** – For some people, having vision problems

**Decreased or Poor Judgment** – People with Alzheimer's may experience changes in judgment or decision-making. For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money, giving large amounts to telemarketers. They may pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean.

**Withdrawal from Work or Social Activities** – A person with Alzheimer's may start to remove themselves from hobbies, social activities, work projects or sports. They may have trouble keeping up with a favorite sports team or remembering how to complete a favorite hobby.

**Changes in Mood or Personality** – The mood and personalities of people with Alzheimer's can change. They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious. They may be easily upset at home, at work, with friends or in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

**What to Do if You Notice These Signs** – If you notice any of the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's in yourself or someone you know, don't ignore them. Schedule an appointment with your doctor. ■



# A Summer 'To Do'

Summer is upon us. With it comes vacations, picnics and long days filled with warm weather activities. While evaluating your family's health care may not be on the top of your list of summertime "to dos," now is the perfect time to see if the APWU Health Plan can better serve you, save you money or both.

## Why Now?

Open enrollment season is a massive time-crunch not only for you, but also for FEHB health plan providers and USPS Human Resources. On top of that, it is the time when the Postal Service's mail volume is highest for the busy

holiday season. Things can get difficult if you wait until later this year to make an informed decision on the most important benefit in the APWU Collective Bargaining Agreement. If you do not have either of the APWU health plans, now is the time to compare a plan that, as a union member, you own to the plan you currently have.

You need to compare apples to apples with coverage, deductibles, copays, out-of-pocket limits and premiums to be able to make the best decision for you and your family. The APWU Health Plan is committed to serving

our members because our members own it - not some Wall Street investment bank or stock holders.

## Need Help?

Many APWU locals have health plan representatives trained at our yearly seminars to assist you. These are your coworkers who have an APWU Health Plan, not some paid marketing employee of a corporation.

If you don't have a health plan representative in your local or you need further assistance, the APWU Health Plan is here to assist you. As director, I have committed our employees to give honest answers and straight talk concerning what our plans cover, costs and their availability. We want every member to have all the information necessary to make the best decision for their family.

Like all postal workers, I have watched as my health insurance premiums take a larger and larger part of my paycheck. We can no longer afford to blindly make a choice and hope we have adequate coverage, don't overpay or both.

Enjoy the summer, spend quality time with friends and loved ones, and also take the time to compare the APWU Health Plan's offerings to your current plan. It may be the most important thing you do this summer for yourself and your family. ■

## OPEN SEASON SEMINAR

It is not too late for local, state and chapter leadership to sign up to attend the APWU Health Plan Open Season Seminar in beautiful St. Louis, MO. Our members look to their union leadership for answers to many benefit and workplace issues, and health care is no exception.

Understanding how the FEHB program insurances work, this year's changes and the specific components of the APWU health plans will help you and benefit your fellow members.

The registration fee before July 15 is \$75. Late registration is \$100.

The seminar will take place at the Holiday Inn Express Downtown, St. Louis Convention Center,



811 N 9 Street. Room rates are \$119 per night and include all meals. There will be a reception Monday evening, full breakfast, lunch and dinner Tuesday and Wednesday and full breakfast Thursday. Parking will be at a reduced rate of \$10 per night.

Don't delay! Go to [www.apwuhp.com/events](http://www.apwuhp.com/events) for more information.

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◀ Show your APWU pride with the "Standing Up! Fighting Back!," exclusive T-Shirt.  
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## CHECK OUT THESE ITEMS

### Two-Tone Varsity Jacket



65/35 poly/cotton shell with 100% nylon lining; navy blue with tan sleeves and tan accents on knitted cuff and collar; kasha lined front slash pockets; embroidered APWU logo in matching color.  
**\$45.00**

Pro-style with structured mid-height crown; all cotton, sanded finish in khaki with navy blue visor; APWU logo embroidered in navy blue.  
**\$8.00**



### Two-Tone Navy/Khaki Cap

### Denim Button-Down Shirt



Long sleeve medium blue denim button-down shirt; APWU logo embroidered above left chest pocket.  
**\$33.00**

## American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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