

THE AMERICAN

APWU

Postal Worker

May/June 2018



WINNING in the Streets



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Photo by Rob O'Neal

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PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

Rising Up in West Virginia & Beyond!

In late February, 37,000 West Virginia teachers and school employees went on an inspiring nine-day strike – and won! As we go to press, similar strikes are going on in Oklahoma and Kentucky.

The strike was fueled by low pay (WV teachers' salaries were ranked 48th out of the 50 states), no pay raises in four years and rising health insurance premiums. These conditions were, in part, created by 2006 bipartisan (Democratic and Republican) supported corporate tax cuts that drained needed money out of the state treasury.

At a time when corporate power holds far too much sway over the working class, when collective bargaining rights are under attack (witness the setbacks in workers' rights in Wisconsin), when the Supreme Court is expected to ban "fair share" fees for public sector unions, and when divisions have been created between private and public-sector workers, how did these education workers win?

- **Unity of teachers and all school workers:** Members of all three unions representing teachers and school service employees united – the American Federation of Teachers-WV, WV Education Association and WV School Service Personnel Association.
- **Statewide Solidarity:** Education workers in all 55 WV counties walked off the job together.
- **Members led the fightback:** They educated and mobilized their co-workers, physically filled the State Capitol and maintained job actions. It was a "bottom up" uprising.
- **United front with parents and community:** Reminiscent of the magnificent 2012 Chicago teachers' strike, workers linked with the community to demand quality education. Striking workers helped feed the children who were missing school meals. Thousands of parents and students joined picket lines and large rallies at the State Capitol.
- **Workers refused to be confined by the "law":** It was unlawful to strike, and the workers had no legal "right" to collective bargaining. When "collective

begging" at the state house failed, education workers seized the initiative, withheld their labor and engaged in collective bargaining right from the picket lines.

- **Keeping their eye on the prize:** Workers were advised by some politicians and even some union leaders to return to work with only a tentative deal. Yet, they wisely stayed out until promises were legislated in writing.
- **Building on history:** West Virginians have a rich union history centered around powerful mine workers' struggles. This pro-union culture helped build the unity of the workers and the community.

All these factors culminated in victory. The education workers won an immediate 5 percent pay raise and a freeze on any further increases in health insurance premiums. In solidarity, they won these same provisions for all state workers.

Important lessons learned: Workers can claim their rights "in the streets," even when not "granted" by law. Workers do best when trusting each other, rather than heeding voices telling us to "play it safe." Workers can build on our marvelous history. Workers can force whichever political wing of corporate power (Democratic or Republican) holds the reins to respond to our united action. Workers can build powerful unions when we mobilize and take ownership of them – and our destiny. Workers can unite with the community, fight "city hall" and win!

In the historic 1970 postal strike, militant postal workers carried out similar illegal job actions. These too were propelled from the "rank-and-file." This most important event of our postal labor history laid the basis for the many substantial gains in our union contracts and the rights and benefits of postal workers.

Both strikes underscore the truth of the inspiring words of our labor anthem, "Solidarity Forever":

*"When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun;
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,
For the union makes us strong!"* ■

Florida Postal Workers Protest STAFFING SHORTAGES



On Feb. 19, members of the Florida Keys Area Local held an informational picket in front of the main post office in Key West, shining a light on the severe slashes to staffing and service that are causing mail delays and hazardous working conditions.

Along with members of the local branch of the National Association of Letter Carriers, APWU members also circulated a petition demanding an end to the cuts, collecting signatures in front of both post office locations in Key West.

Florida Keys Area Local President Omayra Cruz said that post offices across the area are not being properly staffed, which leads to temporarily closed post offices, long lines when offices are open, mail not being delivered on time and carriers working dangerously late at night. Since 2016, there are eight fewer clerk positions in post offices throughout the Keys and many vacant positions are not being filled.

"It's not just us, we know it's nationwide," Cruz said. The APWU and NALC Florida Keys locals, "are two small locals at the end of US 1, but we are loud and we want everyone to know that we may be at the end of the road, but we are here."

The Florida Keys Area Local is utilizing the signatures they gathered at the event to continue to put pressure on decision makers and influential individuals to increase staffing, and therefore service to their community. Cruz said

the local plans to hold more demonstrations, including in Big Pine, Summerland and Marathon.

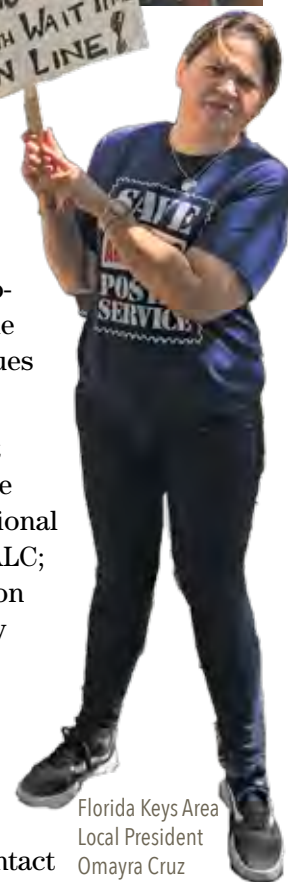
APWU member Bruce York

APWU Rallies on Service, Staffing Cuts

The Florida Keys picket garnered dozens of headlines, and the story was read by millions of people, serving as a voice for postal workers everywhere. This recent protest was another in a string across the country (reported on in previous issues of *The American Postal Worker*).

What made the Florida Keys protest successful was the willingness of the APWU local to conduct an informational picket; an alliance with the local NALC; consistent, yet creative, messaging on service and staffing; visual solidarity with Save America's Postal Service T-shirts; and the ability to organize terrific media coverage.

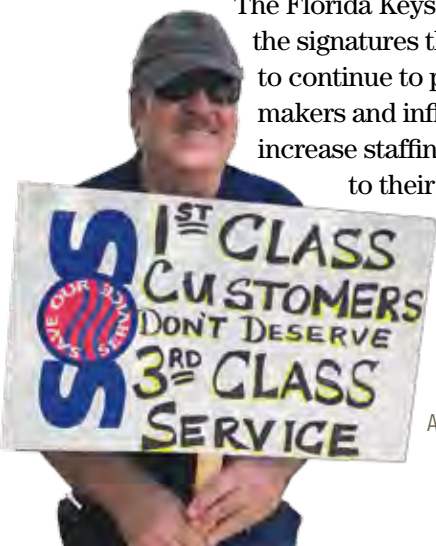
If local or state organizations are interested in conducting an informational picket on this issue, please contact the APWU National Clerk Craft Division for assistance, 202-842-4220. ■



Florida Keys Area Local President Omayra Cruz

With Collective Action, Workers Win

In the beginning of April, the Key West post office announced they will be hiring additional clerk and carrier positions. "The protests about short staffing in Key West were heard," said President Mark Dimondstein. "It's very positive that more clerks and letter carriers will soon be on the job. This is a step in the right direction to get postal customers the service they need and deserve."



President Dimondstein and Northeast Region Coordinator Dirzius Visit Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands

APWU Members Highlight Challenges after Catastrophic Hurricanes

President Mark Dimondstein and Northeast Region Coordinator John H. Dirzius visited Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in February to talk with APWU members affected by Hurricanes Maria and Irma. The purpose of the trip was to hear first-hand what was on the minds of our members five months after the hurricanes devastated their homes, lives and work sites.

During a large meeting with the Puerto Rico Area Local and numerous workplace visits, President Dimondstein and Coordinator Dirzius also took the opportunity to share updates on current issues confronting the APWU, including the upcoming contract negotiations and issues surrounding the Postal Support Employee (PSE) conversion to career process.

National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) President Fredric Rolando and NALC National Business Agent Larry Cirelli were also in the Caribbean talking with their members. The unions came together whenever possible.

Kept Mail Service Going

The National officers recognized and thanked APWU members for their courage in keeping America's public Postal Service open and functioning. Immediately after the hurricanes – when their homes were severely damaged, or in some cases destroyed, and many people had no electricity or water – most postal workers came back to work as soon as possible to get the mail out. Workers set up tents to sort mail so the public could go pick up needed supplies, checks, packages and letters from loved ones.



A home in Puerto Rico severely damaged by Hurricane Maria

“It was so impressive to see that, despite the personal hardships of our members, postal workers continued to carry out their mission to serve the Puerto Rican and Virgin Island people,” said President Dimondstein. “While much of what our members do is behind the scenes and we are often the ‘hidden heroes,’ our work was vital in bringing some normalcy back to the devastated islands and their communities.”



MVS members of the Puerto Rico Area Local (PRAL) with (far left) Northeast Region Coordinator John Dirzius, (back row, fifth from left, L-R) PRAL MVS Director John Peroza, PRAL President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle and President Mark Dimondstein.

Back row, L-R: Coordinator John Dirzius, Puerto Rico Area Local member Michael Marcial, Puerto Rico Area Local President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle, President Mark Dimondstein, members Jose Ortiz, Jesus Cabrera and Janet De Jesus. Front row, L-R: members Ana Ruiz, Ana Alvarez.



Met with San Juan Mayor

While in San Juan, the union met with the city's mayor, Carmen Yulín Cruz, to thank her for her strong, public stance that the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico need full assistance and help from the federal government. The APWU also thanked Mayor Cruz for her strong support of unions and her public opposition to the privatization of the island's electrical services.

Mayor Cruz warmly received the APWU's leadership. She had an outstanding sense of the value of the public Postal Service and how it affects her communities. She graciously accepted an invitation to be a speaker at the APWU's 24th Biennial Convention in August.

Saluted Local Leaders

President Dimondstein and Coordinator Dirzius also saluted the Caribbean APWU local leaders – Puerto Rico Area Local President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle and Virgin Islands Area Local President Becky Simmonds – for their

exceptional leadership during this difficult time.

González-Del Valle and Simmonds worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of their members, going well-beyond the duties of a local union president, to help their sisters and brothers. Not only did they assist their own members, but they also went out of their way to check in on the families of APWU members in the states. These leaders were always available for joint daily conference calls with the National officers and postal management. On the calls, they had their agenda items ready to be discussed to help restore our jobs, our members' standard of living and our postal services.

"It is said that when times are tough, a leader's true colors are revealed," said Coordinator Dirzius. "Our local presidents are shining stars and their collective efforts are greatly appreciated by so many."

A neighborhood in Puerto Rico severely damaged by the storm



APWU Locals Came Together

As reported in the January-February 2018 issue of *The American Postal Worker*, dozens of APWU locals and state organizations from across the United States sent money and supplies to their sisters and brothers in the Caribbean.

"Throughout the APWU, many of our members, locals, and state organizations opened their hearts after the hurricanes," President Dimondstein said. "Such generosity was clearly appreciated by the members of the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico."

There is still a great deal of work that must be done to restore normalcy back to the lives of our members. The APWU continues to play a major role in working to improve these conditions and to make certain that our Collective Bargaining Agreement is enforced and honored. ■



(L-R) Coordinator Dirzius, members of the Virgin Islands Area Local, President Dimondstein and Virgin Islands Area Local President Becky Simmonds.

MARCHING IN MEMPHIS: 50 Years Later

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., union activists and allies gathered together in Memphis, TN for three days of events, including a celebration of King's "Mountaintop" speech on April 3 and a spirited rally and march on April 4. The march was from AFSCME Local 1733's current office through downtown Memphis to the Mason Temple – the site of King's final speech.

APWU members from the Memphis Area Local attended the *I AM 2018* event, along with President Mark Dimondstein, Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy, Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Powell, and Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard, as well as APWU representatives from the Chicago Local, Saint Louis Gateway District Area Local and Dallas Area Local.

Dr. King Killed While Championing Labor

Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968. He was in town for the second time to walk the picket line with the city's sanitation workers, who were on strike for safer working conditions and for union recognition.

The workers – all black men – wanted to organize with AFSCME, but Mayor Henry Loeb refused to



The APWU delegation during the march.

recognize the union. The tragic death of Echol Cole and Robert Walker – who were crushed to death by a malfunctioning truck on Feb. 1 – was a catalyst for the workers, who had complained about unsafe conditions countless times. They walked off the job Feb. 12, 1968.

The April 4, 2018 march culminated months of demonstrations held across the country, and a multi-day conference, as part of the AFSCME-led *I AM 2018* campaign.

President Dimondstein Speaks at Commemoration

President Dimondstein was one of the labor leaders who spoke at a rally to kick off the march. "We are honored to join with you on this hallowed ground on the 50th anniversary of the historic Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike for social and economic justice and to reflect on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a crucial



President Dimondstein speaking at the *I AM 2018* rally.

Photo courtesy of AFSCME

part of which is that 'All Labor Has Dignity,'" President Dimondstein said. "This courageous and victorious strike, deep in the segregated south, provides inspiration and valuable lessons as we face the many challenges of today – profound challenges that did not start with, nor will end with, the current administration in Washington."

Speakers noted that the labor movement has made strides in the past 50 years, but there is still much more work to do. President Dimondstein talked about adversities we face today, such as "new Jim Crow laws" against the right to vote, rising white supremacy and fascism, mass incarceration, scapegoating immigrants and endless war.

We must focus on "defending Social Security and Medicare, protecting public education, public postal services and the common good... The struggle for justice continues today against a system rigged in favor of the Wall Street rich, and the unity of labor and civil rights is as critical as ever," Dimondstein said.

"The Memphis sanitation workers helped chart our successful path forward – courage, unity, struggle, organization – combined with confidence that workers can fight 'city hall' and win!" he concluded. ■

Feb. 18, 2018

Dear Editor Mark Dimondstein,

My name is Susan Nichols and I am sending you this [letter and photograph at right] on behalf of the group of Laborer/Custodians to whom it refers. We would urge you to print this because 1) it underscores the power and importance of the Union, and 2) in recognition of the enormous effort put forth in this case to win back these jobs. It was a long and labor-intensive process on the part of, particularly, Maintenance Craft Director Erik Bojarski. He, and President Frank Resetarits, truly changed our lives for so much the better. They deserve a recognition – as does the Union.

*Sincerely,
Susan J. Nichols*

Dear Editor Mark Dimondstein,

I sure hope you can find room to print this material because it's all about the most important thing – jobs. Hard-won union jobs.

In 2015 I was hired, along with a number of others, as a PSE Laborer/Custodian at the Buffalo P and DC. In 2016, our jobs were suddenly terminated. We all left jobless and very disappointed – pretty certain the jobs were gone for good. The local APWU Union President Frank Resetarits reassured us that the Union would be working to get our jobs back, believing we were wrongfully let go.

In 2017, our jobs were RESTORED! Furthermore, we were brought back as career employees. This was a life-changing situation for the lot of us. For the months and months we were gone, the Union was hard at work. Due largely to the diligent and determined effort of Maintenance Craft Director Erik Bojarski, as well as Local President Frank Resetarits, we were all brought back. Jobs restored. And that's what a Union is all about, isn't it? JOBS.

Recently, we celebrated the one year anniversary of our return to work with much gratitude – and cake! Thank you APWU, and especially Erik and Frank, for our Union-won jobs.

*The grateful Laborer/Custodians
Buffalo P and DC*



Buffalo Local Maintenance
Craft Director Erik Bojarski

Union Negotiated Pay Increases *COLA for Career Employees, Pay Raise for PSEs*

APWU members are receiving pay increases this spring.

Career employees received a **25 cent per hour** cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase effective March 3, in accordance with the 2015-2018 Collective Bargaining Agreement. The increase is the result of a rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W), and it appeared in paychecks dated March 23, 2018 (Pay Period 06-2018). It will total **\$520.00 per year**.

This is the sixth cost-of-living increase under the 2015-2018 contract.

APWU COLA benefits “underscore the importance of collective bargaining rights,” said President Dimondstein. “It is because APWU members have joined

together in a union, and negotiate together, that the contract includes COLA and raises based on the CPI.”

The COLAs are in addition to general wage increases.

PSE Raise

On May 26, Postal Support Employees (PSEs) will receive a **21 cent per hour** pay raise. The increase will be reflected in June 15, 2018 paychecks.

PSEs are not eligible for COLA increases, but they receive five general wage increases under the 2015-2018 contract.

Updated Pay Scales

Updated pay scales are available in this issue and also at apwu.org/resource-types/pay-scales. ■

MEMBERS

OPWU SUPPORTS STRIKING EDUCATION WORKERS



(Back L-R) OPWU District 6 Vice President Earl Smith, Tulsa Area Local Secretary-Treasurer Cynthia McNeilance and Tulsa Area Local President Charley Mose with teachers showing signs.

Teachers and public service workers in Oklahoma, inspired by their colleagues in West Virginia, went on strike April 2 to take a stand for themselves and their students.

Over the last decade, education funding in the state decreased by 30%. This reduction has led to deplorable conditions in schools, a severe cut in classes offered, a shortage of textbooks and other materials, and teachers not receiving a pay increase for ten years (their salaries ranked 49th in the country).

Thousands of teachers and education workers rallied in front of the State Capitol in Oklahoma City during the strike. As in West Virginia, students and parents were firmly behind the workers in their fight for the future of education in their state.

APWU Oklahoma Postal Worker Union (OPWU) members joined the strikers outside the State Capitol in Oklahoma City on April 10.

At a tent set up outside the State Capitol building, APWU members distributed 600 bottles of water, 400



Tulsa Area Local Secretary-Treasurer Cynthia McNeilance (right) speaking to strikers. Also pictured is OPWU President Ashley Cargill (top left), and OPWU and Oklahoma City Area Local Vice President Janice Pickup (bottom).



Oklahoma City Area Local President Koquise Edwards and OPWU District 6 VP Earl Smith handing out pizza to strikers.

granola bars, 60 boxes of pizza and over 2,500 stickers to teachers and their allies.

“The teachers also enjoyed the more than 300 PayDay candy bars we handed out and hope they will soon see a ‘PayDay’ for themselves, their students, and our education system,” OPWU President Ashley Cargill said.

“It was an amazing experience and it was heartwarming to be able to support our teachers, as well as show our solidarity and encourage them through this difficult time,” she added. “We will not give up in this fight and we will continue to be there for them however we can.”

At the end of the nine-day strike, teachers walked away with their heads held high. Governor Mary Fallin signed a bill that increased revenue for education by \$450 million, funded by the first major tax hike in the state in nearly 30 years. It also secured a pay raise of \$6,100 on average for teachers and \$1,250 for school professionals. Education workers plan to continue their fight at the polls, to secure the additional \$150 million for education the strikers wanted.

IN ACTION

PORTLAND OREGON AREA LOCAL MEMBERS JOIN INTERNATIONAL WORKING WOMEN'S DAY MARCH



(L-R) Portland Oregon Area Local steward Teresa Oller, Oregon State AFL-CIO Organizing Director Alma Raya and Portland Oregon Area Local Legislative Director Daniel Cortez attended the city's Women's Rally and March on International Working Women's Day, March 8.



Greater Connecticut Area Local members met in early March for a workshop on mobilization and education for our upcoming contract struggle.

OHIO RETIREES ATTEND LOCAL WORKING PEOPLE'S DAY OF ACTION EVENT

(L-R): Cleveland Ohio Retiree Chapter President Bruce Jackson, Ohio State Retiree Chapter President Charles Walton and Ohio State Retiree Chapter Vice President Tony Crump attend the



Working People's Day of Action event on Feb. 24 in Columbus, OH. Not pictured is Columbus Ohio Retiree Chapter Treasurer Leonard Thomas.

APWU MEMBERS SUPPORT UE'S CONTRACT CAMPAIGN IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Portland (ME) Area Local President Scott Adams, Portland (ME) Area Local Vice President Don Clark and Manchester Area (NH) Local member John Taddeo attended a contract campaign rally to



support United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE) members at the National Visa Center in Portsmouth, NH on Feb. 22.



Coming Together to Battle Workplace Harassment

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

We are all aware of the surge of workers mobilizing against sexual harassment, and their stories and experiences have been both sad and inspiring. The APWU has joined with other national unions to come up with ways the labor movement can work to create the conditions at work that will put an end to harassment and hostile work environments.



Recently, some APWU National officers (myself included) joined other union officers and staff to talk about what it means for unions to be part of the solution to ending workplace harassment. Speakers from organizations like the #TimesUp campaign and the

Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC) made it clear that legal fights alone will not end harassment – change must happen in the culture of a workplace. That change, we all know, is neither easy nor fast, but it can happen.

The Postal Service has an Anti-Harassment Workplace Policy addressing harassment based on "race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity including transgender status), national origin, age (40 or over), mental or physical disability, genetic information or uniformed (military) service." However, too often, supervisors and managers fail to live up to the policy.

**"A HOSTILE WORKPLACE HURTS ALL OF US
AND TOGETHER WE CAN HELP TO
STOP HARASSMENT IN ITS TRACKS."**

Harassment hurts all of us, but together we can help bring it to an end. It requires more than just the victims of harassment to be brave and speak out. We need to show support for victims and confront problems. I encourage you to speak up, report and write statements when you witness sexual and other harassment, and hostile management actions against our co-workers.

Based on what we hear, a hostile work environment continues to be a significant problem in the Postal Service. Illegal discrimination is not the only thing creat-

ing hostile work environments. The stress, constant change and unreasonable work demands generated by understaffing also contribute to a workplace harmful to employees. These challenges you face at work are why we are pushing to end all forms of harassment.

Every worker deserves dignity and respect. At work, there should not be any discrimination or harassment. Together we will be the voice for decency and fairness, creating an environment in which we can work together safely and honorably. ■



Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy at an American Federation of Government Employees rally.

Courtesy of AFGE

Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee Appointed

With contract negotiations set to begin in early summer, President Mark Dimondstein has announced the names of union members who will serve on the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee. In accordance with the APWU Constitution, each member of the National Executive Board names one person to the committee; a 14th member, appointed by the president, is a member of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force.

The APWU National Negotiations Committee (NNC) has full authority to negotiate the terms of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement and the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee provides input to the NNC. The rank and file committee must also approve any tentative agreement before it can be sent to APWU members for a ratification vote.

Contract negotiations are set to begin on June 26. The current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires on Sept. 20, 2018.

The appointees are:

Ashley Cargill – President, Oklahoma Postal Workers Union (appointed by Mark Dimondstein, President)

Tiffany Foster – Executive Vice President, New York Metro Area Postal Union (appointed by Debby Szeredy, Executive Vice President)

Doris Orr-Richardson – President, Florida Postal Workers Union (appointed by Elizabeth Powell, Secretary-Treasurer)

Scott M. Hoffman – President, Boston Metro Area Local (appointed by Vance Zimmerman, Industrial Relations Director)

Sandra Munoz – Executive Vice President, Broward County Area Local (appointed by Clint Burelson, Clerk Division Director)

Roscoe Woods – President, 480-481 Area Local (appointed by Steven Raymer, Maintenance Division Director)

Fred Wolfmeyer – President, Saint Louis Gateway District Area Local (appointed by Michael Foster, Motor Vehicle Service Division Director)

Arrion Brown – Support Services Director, Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area

Local (appointed by Steve Brooks, Support Services Division Director)

Daleo Freeman – President, Cleveland Area Local (appointed by Sharyn Stone, Central Region Coordinator)

Arthur "A.J." Jones – President, Eastern Montgomery County PA Area Local (appointed by Mike Gallagher, Eastern Region Coordinator)

Robert Johnson – President, Greater Connecticut Area Local (appointed by John Dirzius, Northeast Region Coordinator)

Yared Wonde – President, Dallas Area Local (appointed by Kenneth Beasley, Southern Region Coordinator)

Timothy Maynard – President, San Fernando Valley Area Local (appointed by Omar Gonzalez, Western Region Coordinator)

Aulby L. Gillett – Clerk Director, San Angelo Local – Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force (appointed by Mark Dimondstein, President)

The Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee first convened on April 24. ■

BUILDING OUR FUTURE – A Challenge, A Priority!

On March 2, 13 APWU members participated in a day-long focus group to test the curriculum being developed by Rutgers University's Labor Education Center for the union's ongoing efforts to build an APWU broad-based educational program, known as the APWU National Institute.

The APWU National Institute would include week-long training sessions with modules for new member orientation, trainings geared to members and stewards, and special segments

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

"The training was well received by our group," said Northeast Region Coordinator John H. Dirzius. "It was a unique experience to focus not only on building the APWU, but also the skills to help rebuild the labor movement."

"Our group had lots of energy, gave excellent feedback on the curriculum and made our day productive and enjoyable," added Eastern Region Coordinator Mike Gallagher.

APWU's focus group included members based near the education center: Mike Ferrara, Mount Vernon (NY) Local President; Zora Dudley, Mount Vernon (NY) Local; Rick Slater, North Jersey Area Local Executive Vice President; Jamille Way, North Jersey Area Local; Joe Shevlin, Red Bank

(NJ) Local President; Howard Polner, Central Jersey Area Local Secretary-Treasurer; Anthony Moya, Central Jersey Area Local Editor; Michael Congo, Wilmington DE/Malcolm T Smith Area Local; Brian Pigott, New Jersey Mid-State Area Local Clerk Division Director; Karen Greenfield, Philadelphia BMC Local; Lisa Ray, Philadelphia BMC Local; John H. Dirzius, Northeast Region Coordinator; and Mike Gallagher, Eastern Region Coordinator.



What Does It Mean to Be a 501(c)(5) Organization?

How Unrelated Business Income Can Jeopardize Tax-Exempt Status

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

IRS 501(c)(5) status provides exemption from federal income tax to labor, agricultural or horticultural organizations. APWU affiliates are 501(c)(5) organizations and provided tax-exempt status. Tax-exempt status refers to federal income tax exemption under the Internal Revenue Code. APWU locals do not pay income tax on dues collected nor taxes on the interest earned on investments. However, they must pay sales tax for purchases and payroll taxes for employees.

What is the difference between non-profit and tax-exempt status?

Non-profit status is a state law concept. Non-profit status may make an organization eligible for certain benefits, such as state sales, property and income tax exemptions. Tax-exempt status is generally considered a federal IRS category.

As a tax-exempt organization, it is important a local consider the nature and extent of all their business activities to avoid the loss of their tax-exempt status. If the IRS determines that the percentage of your local's income from business activities – unrelated to your local's specific exempt purpose – is excessive, APWU affiliates can jeopardize their tax-exempt status.

What is Unrelated Business Income?

Unrelated Business Income (UBI) means APWU affiliates may not receive income from a regularly carried-on trade or business not related to the union's mission. Locals need to be aware of what constitutes UBI and how it should be assessed. Locals will be required to pay taxes on income that is not substantially related to an organization's tax-exempt purpose.

The following components, collectively, are required to meet the criteria of UBI: **Trade or business, regularly conducted, and not substantially related to the organization's exempt purpose or function.**

Trade or business is any activity to obtain income, including selling goods and/or performing services, with the intent of generating a profit.

Regularly conducted are activities that show frequency and continuity, comparable to activities of a non-exempt provider. For example, maintaining an ongoing activity with established business hours and permanent employees is considered "regularly conducted."

Not substantially related to the organization's exempt purpose or function is activity not related enough to the affiliate's exempt purpose. It does not contribute significantly to accomplishing that purpose, even if the profits generated provide it support.

It is important that locals find ways to increase their local budget by expanding their membership. This can be achieved by merging with Members-at-Large (MALs) in your area and organizing non-members. Both examples increase your local budget without jeopardizing your 501(c)(5) tax-exempt status and keeps your local out of the unfortunate circumstance that unrelated business income can cause for your local. ■

Convention 2018 Resolutions

In accordance with the APWU Constitution and Bylaws, resolutions must be received by Monday June 4, 2018, to be printed in the convention booklet. There will be no exceptions.

Resolutions are accepted from local or state affiliates, or from Members-at-Large (MALs). Resolutions from local or state affiliates must be submitted online by a form that is accessible to presidents, secretaries and secretary-treasurers on the Members Only website (apwumembers.apwu.org).

MALs are the only individuals who may submit resolutions under their own signatures. Resolutions from MALs must be sent directly to Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell. They must be typed, double-spaced and submitted individually (one resolution per page) to: 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20005.



CONVENTION REMINDER

The 24th Biennial APWU National Convention will take place Monday, Aug. 20 through Thursday, Aug. 23, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, PA.

Locals are encouraged to make hotel reservations and travel arrangements as soon as possible. Everything you need to make your hotel and travel plans can be found at www.apwu.org/convention.

Let Your Voice Be Heard

In accordance with the APWU Constitution and By-laws, each local and area local is entitled to representation at the National Convention based on one delegate – and one vote – for each 25 members or fraction thereof. Each local is entitled to at least one vote.

State organizations are entitled to one delegate and one vote for each 25 members or fraction thereof in the states who are not part of a local. Each regional organization that is organized in place of a state organization, and where no state organization exists, is entitled to one vote for each 25 members or fraction thereof of the unrepresented members. No local, state or regional organization shall be represented by proxy.

Each national officer holding an elective office shall serve as a delegate with the right to speak and one vote. The convention can authorize members-at-large (MALs) to vote, provided not more than three attend the convention. If more than three attend, the convention can apportion one vote to every three MALs. Five elected Retiree National Convention Delegates, one from each region, shall be seated at the National Convention. Each will have a voice and a vote.

APWU locals and state organizations are urged to send their full quota of delegates. MALs also are encouraged to attend. **Local, state, and regional organizations are reminded that they must adhere to the requirements of applicable federal laws when electing delegates.**

Resolutions

June 4 is the deadline for the submission of resolutions for publication in the convention book. Resolutions are accepted from local or state affiliates, or from

members-at-large (who are the only members permitted to submit resolutions under their own signature). Resolutions adopted at craft division meetings, either during an off-year or immediately prior to the National Convention, are also accepted.

Resolutions received after June 4 will be referred to the appropriate committees and will be presented at the National Convention as addendums, provided they have been properly authorized and signed, and provided they do not deal with subjects otherwise covered by the Screening Committee.

For more information, visit www.apwu.org/convention. A resolution form can be viewed online on the Members Only website. ■

National Officers Attend AFGE Rally



APWU Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Powell (center) speaks at an AFGE rally. Also pictured (L-R) is AFGE Bureau of Prisons Council President Eric Young, AFGE District 14 National Vice President Eric Bunn, AFGE Bureau of Prisons Council National Representative Robert Swanson, AFGE Local 1978 President Michael Guerrissi, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and AFGE President David Cox with other speakers, AFGE officers, and staff.

On Feb. 13, APWU National officers and staff attended an American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) rally against staffing cuts and efforts to privatize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell spoke at the rally.

"We know for a fact that there are thousands of positions that need to be filled to fully staff the VA and Congress has done little to nothing to address the issue," Secretary-Treasurer Powell said. "Your fight is our fight. We join you in telling Congress – **no privatization, no cuts to veterans' pay, no cuts to health care, no cuts to retirement and definitely no cuts to workplace protections!**"



INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR VANCE ZIMMERMAN

Say 'No' to the Latest USPS Survey

“Are you engaged?” Those are the words the Postal Service is using to get you to take their newest survey. The 2016 *Postal Pulse* survey showed the USPS what we already knew: Your work environment is not good; your supervisors treat you poorly and morale is low.

So, what has the Postal Service done in the last year? Have things improved since the survey was first put out and found that the USPS ranked low in every category? The USPS created “Ambassadors” to go and train managers, so they could then train supervisors to “engage” the employees – and that “engagement” would make the workplace better.

The reality is, the steps the Postal Service took to make the workplace “more engaging” are meaningless. You still have difficult supervisors and you are having more demanded of you, putting your health and safety at risk. Staff is being reduced, people are being excessed and morale is being decimated.

Management now is trying to get you to become “more engaged” – meaning they want you to return their surveys. They have pitted you against each other by giving awards and cute designations to units that return all their surveys. Don’t do it!

The *Postal Pulse* and Employee Engagement initiatives are not your friend. Participation in these programs will not fix the issues. Postal management has not listened to your direct pleas to your supervisors, either in your grievances or in meetings at the local, area and national level. Only collectively, demanding compliance of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and speaking in one voice, will we force management to change their ways. Stand united – and do not be fooled by these “wolves in sheep’s clothing” initiatives created to divide us.

Postal management promised not to use the survey against us – but they already are by pitting work units against each other, giving those who have at least 75% participation a sticker as a reward or throwing a little party for the units who “participate.” In the past, man-

agement surveys have been used against us in contract negotiations and interest arbitration. With 2018 being a negotiation year, it is possible the survey results will be used against us at the bargaining table.

They ask people to join focus groups and participate in management-initiated events to make the work place more “engaging.” These are not sanctioned nor approved by the union. They were not negotiated and use of them violates the union’s right as the sole representative of the bargaining unit employees under Article 1. Don’t do it!

We have a negotiated grievance process and a negotiated labor-management cooperation process in place to address these issues. Management needs to start following our contract, dealing with the grievances already filed and making sure the hostile frontline supervisors are dealt with. Your union knows the “pulse” of those we represent. If a local supervisor or manager cannot see the problems without a survey, then they are part of the problem. ■

Get Fired Up and Ready to Go!

Don’t forget that contract negotiations open June 26! We have been continually preparing for them since early 2017. Make no mistake, these negotiations will be challenging, but we are prepared to go in and fight. You deserve a good contract and we will be doing all we can to deliver you one.

However, these are challenging times. Public perception may not be on our side because of unfair, and sometimes inaccurate, media coverage. Hopefully, you are participating in our contract campaign. When called upon, we need you to wear a sticker, a T-shirt or maybe attend a rally. Whatever you can do to show management we are united in our fight for a good contract is welcome.

Our contract campaign can generate leverage and help change public perception. So, are you *Fired Up and Ready to Go*? Because we are *Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow*.

Solidarity!

USPS

Safety Ambassador PROGRAM

The APWU was informed on Oct. 26, 2017 of the Postal Service's intent to roll out a new program called the *Safety Ambassador Program*. The Postal Service intends to replace the safety captain program, and any other local safety programs, with this "standardized" and nationally controlled program. **The American Postal Workers Union does not support, agree with or endorse this program.**

The USPS claims this program "will focus on employee engagement, training, communication, hazard identification/abatement, and accident reduction." Having a safe workplace is every worker's right and you must fight for that right! However, the *Safety Ambassador Program* appears to be nothing more than an end-around our currently negotiated joint union-management safety procedures.

THE APWU BELIEVES STRONGLY THAT YOUR WORKPLACE MUST BE A SAFE PLACE TO WORK.

We have multiple issues with the program including, but not limited to, the following:

- Rather than encouraging that safety hazards be reported on PS Form 1767s, the USPS encourages "verbal" reporting of hazards, where there would be no record or tracking.
- Ambassador selection would be at the sole discretion of the installation head (manager, postmaster) without any union input. Many locals have elected officers and appointed officials who are responsible for safety. We have reports from the field that management has instructed those making selections to specifically avoid using union representatives and "agitators."
- Ambassadors are supposed to be "volunteers." However, multiple reports from the field are showing employees are being forced to become Ambassadors.
- Local Safety and Health Committees are not part of the program.
- Ambassadors would participate in creating Job Safety Analysis (JSA), which is currently the function of Article 14 Safety and Health Committees.
- Ambassadors will be observing their co-workers, telling them they are being unsafe, providing feed-

back and coaching to them, as well as reporting back to the supervisors on their co-workers' actions.

- Ambassadors will be trained on the use of the USPS Safety Toolkit, which again is in the purview of the Safety and Health Committees.

The APWU has initiated an Article 19 appeal to arbitration on the implementation of this program. We believe the USPS has violated Article 5 *Prohibition of Unilateral Action* (past practice of safety programs and failure to negotiate), Article 14 *Safety and Health*, and Article 19 *Handbooks and Manuals ELM Chapter 8*. Questions on the dispute should be directed to the Article 14 officers at headquarters, Lynn Pallas-Barber and Terry Martinez.

We request that any local or state organization that has Safety and Health Committees immediately file a grievance that the program is a violation of Article 14 – the negotiated Safety and Health Committee processes – as well as Article 1 *Union Recognition* – the APWU is the exclusive bargaining representative for those we represent. Safety programs are a subject of bargaining and the union must be included.

Grievances should also be initiated where employees have been involuntarily required to act as ambassadors. No one is required to be an ambassador and they can decline the offer to be one. Any grievances on this issue held, pending the Article 19 appeal, must be held at Step 3 only, to provide better tracking.

The APWU believes strongly that your workplace must be a safe place to work. We believe bargaining unit member participation is important to a safe workplace, but the APWU must also be included. As an individual and in groups, you should be able to feel that you can act through using 1767s, workroom floor actions and filing grievances. You should not have to go through a management-appointed intermediary in order to have a safe workplace!

As the Postal Service remains the most dangerous place to work of all federal agencies in the country, we must fight for our rights to have fair, reasonable and successful safety programs. The *Safety Ambassador Program* does not fit that description, as it was fully developed and implemented by management while completely ignoring your union. ■

CONTRACT ACTION TEAM

Liaisons Appointed

They Are Fired Up and Ready to Go Assist Local CATs!



Front (L-R):
Janalee Banks, Wanda Harris, Ahlona Miranda, Angela Ellington.
Back (L-R):
James Donohoe, Arrion Brown, Jennifer Lemke, Larry Guarnero.

To assist local and state organizations with developing strong grassroots organizing and activism in support of the APWU's upcoming contract negotiation fight, President Mark Dimondstein appointed the following Contract Action Team (CAT) Liaisons:

- Janalee Banks – Provo (UT) Local;
- Arrion Brown – Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local;
- James Donohoe – Boston Metro Area Local;
- Angela Ellington – Dallas Area Local;
- Larry Guarnero – Portland OR Area Local;
- Wanda Harris – Miami Area Local;
- Jennifer Lemke – Toledo (OH) Area Local;
- Ahlona Miranda – Greater Kansas City Metro Area Local.

The appointees arrived at the Tommy Douglas Conference Center in Silver Spring, MD on Feb. 27, excited for the “train-the-trainee” boot camp covering the elements involved in a contract campaign. During the

two-and-a-half-day training, the liaisons learned how to “Build Worker Power through CATs.”

Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth “Liz” Powell opened the first official day of the training with inspiration, speaking on the important role that the CAT Liaisons will play in the success of a contract campaign.

Highlighting lessons learned from the 2015 Contract Campaign and how to build on those accomplishments, President Mark Dimondstein expressed the new expectations for the APWU's 2018 Contract Campaign. “The success of 2015 Contract Campaign and the *Stop Staples* campaign are proof that when we take a stand and fight, we can win!”

After explaining the negotiation process and possible outcomes, Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman warned of the challenges involved and provided strategies to win.

The liaisons left the training *Fired Up and Ready to Go!* They hit the ground running, contacting locals and states in their areas to see how they can help while they are *Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow!* ■

Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local CAT Commemorates 1970 Postal Strike

The Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local's (NCSMAL) CAT coordinated a commemorative day of action on March 19 for the 1970 Great Postal Strike. For the day, participating members wore 2018 Contract Campaign or other APWU gear.



NCSMAL members (L-R) Julio Mercedes, Derrick Williams, Gary Ledford and James Higginbotham

Current Operating Services members James Higginbotham and Gary Ledford both recalled how, "it seemed like the entire country shutdown," during the strike. These memories are a testament to the strength of dedicated, organized postal workers who, at great risk to their careers, illegally went out on strike.

Reinvigorating that level of dedication and energy in our membership today is one of the NCSMAL CAT's goals. "So many are unaware of the sacrifices workers made back in 1970 to secure bargaining rights for all postal employees," NCSMAL President Dena Briscoe said, adding that she hopes this demonstration inspires others to get involved.

The NCSMAL CAT reached out to community allies, including the Democratic Socialists of America's Metropolitan DC chapter, who supported the commemoration.

The NCSMAL CAT said they are looking forward to initiating future actions such as this to build solidarity among the membership. Member involvement "is important in getting the best contract we can," said NCSMAL Executive Vice President Ray Robinson.

CATs in Action



The Manchester (NH) Area Local's first Contract Action Team meeting. Members of the Boston Metro Area Local were also in attendance.

The Dallas Area Local CAT called its members to action! To publicize this, the union bulletin board was redesigned to get members *Fired Up & Ready to Go!* The contract negotiation process affects all workers, and therefore the need to keep members informed of important events and actions is vital. (L-R) Dallas Area Local steward Margarite Jinadu, Northern Texas CAT Coordinator Katina Range, Dallas Area Local Vice President & CAT Coordinator Charles Tillman and Dallas Area Local steward LaShun Daniels.



Canada Post Stops Planned Service Cuts

Workers and Allies Continue Advocating for Restored Door Delivery

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), along with community allies across Canada, have consistently advocated for door delivery; keeping post offices open; new and expanded services, including postal banking; and the “greening” of Canada Post.

Despite public support for postal services, at the end of 2013, Canada Post announced a cost-cutting plan that included eliminating door delivery. They began making increased use of community mailboxes – delivering to cluster boxes that serve an entire neighborhood.

Community mailboxes came at great costs to the public – especially to seniors and people with disabilities – and at a cost to the environment, as many mail recipients drive to their mailboxes, which can be located far away. Many residents experienced increased mail thefts. Others had to trudge through snow or found snow had blocked access to the boxes entirely. Some cluster mailboxes were located on busy roads – where it was unsafe to stand or park – and others were not handicap accessible.

According to the CUPW, between 2014 and 2015 Canada Post ended door delivery for 830,000 homes. When the cuts were announced, CUPW and their allies jumped into action, launching a campaign to “Save Canada Post.” Along the way, they learned that Canada Post’s claims of mail decline were misleading and many rely on the postal service.

CUPW made Canada Post an election issue in 2015. That same year, Liberals in Parliament and the Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau were elected “on a promise to restore door-to-door and to consult on a new vision for Canada Post,” said CUPW National President Mike Palecek.

A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service is a broad coalition of national, state and local organizations including the NAACP, Vote Vets, Jobs with Justice, National Council of Churches and Rainbow PUSH. These groups have come together to take a stand against the unprecedented assaults on the Postal Service including efforts to dismantle and privatize it. To join A Grand Alliance, visit www.AGrandAlliance.org.

In 2016, the government began a review of Canada Post. CUPW contributed recommendations at the beginning of this process. One of them was that Canada Post end its plan for community mailboxes and restore door delivery to homes that lost it. CUPW also urged the government to outline a vision for Canada Post that addresses climate change and expands service into postal banking.

Mr. Trudeau: we deliver, when will you?



CUPW calls on Justin Trudeau to deliver on his promise to restore door delivery in this ad.

The Canadian government delayed releasing the review for more than a year, finally doing so at the end of January 2018. The government declared the service cuts would no longer continue. However, they stopped short of agreeing to restore door delivery for the more than 800,000 homes that no longer have access.

While the government touted that they were “putting service to Canadians front and center,” Palecek said that with their review, the government “breaks the promise to restore door-to-door and gives the crown corporation little direction on some major issues.” (A crown corporation is an enterprise owned by the state, in this case, Canada.)

Public Services Minister Carla Qualtrough did not make a decision to restore postal banking. She did, however, order the board of directors to review sources of revenue in posts around the world. In many other countries, banking services are often important revenue generators.

In response, CUPW thanked supporters for helping stop the service cuts. They also declared they will continue fighting for the future of the public postal service during contract negotiations, which begin in December, and by working with allies. ■



Did you know?

Your Post Office Receives **ZERO** Tax Dollars

FACT: The United States Postal Service (USPS) receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

FACT: The Post Office is established in the U.S. Constitution. The public Postal Service is part of the fundamental infrastructure of this nation – binding it together.

FACT: The United States Postal Service delivers to every address in the country – 157.3 million addresses – no matter who we are or where we live. In contrast, private delivery companies go where they can make a profit.

FACT: The Postal Service is consistently the most trusted U.S. government entity. It rates highest among young adults.

FACT: While letter mail volumes have been declining, a lot of mail remains. The Postal Service processes and delivers 493.4 million letters and packages each day.

FACT: Package volume is increasing. In these days of rising e-commerce and on-line shopping, the public Postal Service is as needed and relevant as ever.

FACT: The U.S. Mail is the most secure and private form of communication.

FACT: Financial hardships for the USPS were manufactured by the 2006 “Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act.” This Congressional action forced the Postal Service to “pre-fund” future retiree health care costs 75 years into the future. No other agency or company faces this financial drain. The unfair burden is directly responsible for the reduction in the hours of operation, staffing, mail speed, and the quality of postal services.

FACT: Congress should fix the problem they created by passing postal reform legislation that ensures the public Postal Service remains vibrant for generations to come.

A GRAND ALLIANCE
TO SAVE OUR PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE
www.AGrandAlliance.org

Fighting Back with Street Parties



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

Understaffing is the main reason service to our communities is decreasing and stress on the job is increasing. It is the reason the mail is delayed, the lines are long and overall service is deteriorating. Understaffing is the cause of most of the violations regarding supervisors doing craft work, crossing crafts, overtime, holiday scheduling, leave requests, staffing on the machines, etc.

The most enjoyable and effective solution to fight understaffing is educating the public about what it is and how it affects service to the community. It is surprisingly fun and empowering to tell our story to the public. The action can be small, with just a press release or media appearance, to large, like collecting signatures on petitions and informational picketing – street parties. These actions shine a light on the reasons service to the community is deteriorating.

Moreover, an event in one community can receive media coverage and then be amplified and spread nationwide. Imagine the added results if there was an informational picket every week by postal workers in different communities across the country.

Now is the time to publicly expose understaffing for the following reasons:

1) More Power Required to Stop Contract Violations

The Clerk Craft has been successful recently in winning large monetary settlements of \$56 million, \$36 million and \$49.9 million, for violations of the contract at the highest levels of the Postal Service. However, despite these awards, the Postal Service continues to blatantly violate the contract at all levels of management. While we must increase our efforts to aggressively challenge management through the grievance procedure, it is clear we need to bring more power to the fight in order to change things.

2) Lobbying the PRC

The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) will rule on the important issue of the caps on postal pricing insti-

tuted in the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA). These unreasonable postage caps, the disastrous prefunding of retiree health care and the discounts to large mailers, significantly contributed to the inadequate revenue and the USPS cuts in staffing.

Recently, the PRC proposed a very small improvement in the current pricing system. Not surprisingly, large mailers are still lobbying against the proposal to keep their profits high. We cannot match the financial lobbying power of the Fortune 500s, but can lobby the public who can then influence decision-makers.

3) Stopping Cuts in Service and Disruption to Workers

The Postal Service is still planning consolidations, reversions and excessing, despite the poor service to our communities and the adverse impact on postal workers. By informing the public about the understaffing and its effect on service, we can slow and/or stop further cuts in service and disruption to employees.

4) Supporting National Negotiations

There are millions of Americans who rely upon and love the public Postal Service – and many who will become postal workers in the future. Historically, unions that achieved successful contract improvements had substantial public support. It is up to us to engage the public in the good fight for a better contract, better service and better jobs.

You do not have to be a steward or officer to participate. You just have to care about your job and the future of the Postal Service, and stand up at the same time as your fellow workers. Given the reasons described above, the number of postal workers who decide to step up will be a major factor for the future of the Postal Service and our lives as postal workers.

To make it easier to organize, the Clerk Craft will assist local and state organizations conducting public events (small or large) with background information, organizing support and media coverage. ■

MS-1 Settlement Reached



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

On Feb. 27, 2018, the USPS and the Maintenance Division reached a resolution regarding the MS-1 Handbook revisions that were remanded to the parties by Arbitrator Goldberg in case Q10T-4Q-C 14171644. The MS-1 Handbook is titled *Operation and Maintenance of Real Property* and it “prescribes the policies, procedures, and practices governing the operation and maintenance of USPS buildings and leased space.”

There are also other Maintenance Management Orders (MMOs) that can apply and the USPS intended to issue newer versions in place of some of the language from the MS-1. The principle purpose to Maintenance Craft employees was the procedures for the staffing of the “Building-side” occupational groups. These were primarily Building Equipment Mechanics (BEM), Level 9. Some of the identified work could also be attributed to Maintenance Mechanic, Level 7 (MM-7) employees. The method of staffing these positions and the duty assignments is similar to other staffing requirements in Maintenance, such as for custodial, mail processing or field maintenance.

First, an inventory of equipment and work tasks must occur. Then, using the MS-1, frequencies and work performance standards are applied. The result is an amount of work time needed to meet maintenance requirements, provide for safety and health of occupants, and protect the USPS investment in the property. The APWU’s views very seriously take umbrage with management’s budget driven approach, which results in the degrading of our work locations and detrimental impacts on employees and customers when building equipment is not maintained and cared for properly. We waged a years-long battle with the Postal Service on this issue and the February 2018 resolution provides completion on this round.

While the Arbitrator did make some definitive rulings in his Sept. 13, 2017 award, he also decreed that, “The issues of whether the revisions to the MS-1 dealing with (a) preventative maintenance time allowances and frequencies, and (b) space adjustments and miscellaneous work time allowances violated Article 19 are remanded to the parties.”

We had several meetings with the Postal Service on this remand and went through each and every line item in the various staffing forms utilized in the MS-1 – a tedious yet important task. The input from the BEM group of unionists we utilized leading up to, as well as their expert testimony at, the hearing was of great assistance.

In the end, we addressed the remanded items and the implementation of the new process. The February agreement provides that the staffing allowances and frequencies are agreed upon and will be incorporated into an updated MS-1 and applicable MMOs.

Critically, the settlement provides, “The APWU will be provided the final draft(s) for review and concurrence prior to publication.” Not only is this an important protection against any last second deviations, which would lead to another round of dispute processing, but it also ensures that the new procedures and staffing are NOT yet released.

We also went beyond the explicit remand in securing a one-year moratorium, stating that, “There will be a 1 (one) year transition period during which staffing adjustments which impact employees will not take place.” Not to be redundant but a provision also provides, “... **any** excessing of employees will not occur until at least 1 (one) year from the date of signing of this settlement” (emphasis added).

The final item addressed is the handling of pending grievances in the field. Grievances can be resolved or go forward, depending on the local fact circumstances.

A copy of this settlement is available on the Maintenance Craft page of the APWU website, apwu.org/departments-divisions/maintenance.

Please be sure to communicate with your local Maintenance representatives, as well as your National Business Agents. Looking forward to seeing many of you in Pittsburgh, PA at the National Convention.

Importantly, don’t forget to say “Hi” to your steward. ■

'Keep on Truckin' Baby'



Assistant Director Javier Piñeres and Director Michael Foster

New USPS cargo trucks and spotters were scheduled to begin deployment in April. The Postal Service conducted the First Article Testing (FAT) on the Ottawa Spotters and the Peterbilt 18' and 24' cab-over and cab behind engines. The spotters were tested in Ottawa, KS and the cargo trucks were tested in New Carlisle, IN.

The purchase of these vehicles is scheduled to be one-for-one replacements of the present spotters and cargo trucks. In the opinion of the MVS operators who drove them daily, the replacement is long overdue. The normal replacement cycle of postal vehicles is eight years for trucks and 12 years for trailers. Many of these vehicles have over 1,000,000 miles, which is virtually unheard of in intra-city transportation, or the Postal Service.



MVS Director Michael Foster (fifth from right) and Assistant MVS Director Javier Piñeres (far left) with MVS members and USPS representatives in front of newly tested cargo trucks.

According to Article 39.3.B, the union has the opportunity to participate in the FAT and submit our observations within 14 days (copy of the Cargo Truck letter can be found on apwu.org).

Various authorized APWU MVS Craft representatives from around the country participated in the FAT by observing and driving the new vehicles at both locations. Their overall opinions were that these trucks are a vast improvement over the present fleet and, with proper training and upkeep, should serve the USPS and our customers for years to come.

Among the issues that the APWU representatives brought to the Postal Service's attention for the spotters were:

- Replace the bracket for the Glad Hand holders,
- Replace the ¼ fenders with full flexible fenders,
- Concern with the spacing between the mud guard and the rear tire,
- Set the air cut off to 130 PSI (it is presently set at 120 PSI).

The testing for cargo trucks was a more in-depth process. For the first time, cameras and pictures were not allowed because these tests were conducted on the NaviStar testing grounds. In the past, the union has always been allowed to take pictures of postal equipment.

We identified the following issues with the cargo trucks:

- No cargo lights in the cargo area,
- Rear area of the box is missing the two-foot diamond plate (the drivers may slip and lose balance),
- Fill floor gap drain channel at rear door to prevent equipment wheels from getting stuck,
- Cab-over model will cause some discomfort for our larger drivers.

With the purchase of the new vehicles, the union hopes that someone in authority at USPS headquarters realizes the value of the PVS operators to the Postal Service and will abandon their efforts to contract us out.

Thanks to the participants of both FATs.

- Sal Zapien, San Jose Area Local
- Rico Cameron, Detroit District Area Local
- William Drew, Boston Metro Area Local
- Michelle Elliott, Chicago Local
- Dennis Spriggs, Flushing (NY) Local
- Dave Cook, St. Paul Area Local
- Louie DeLillo, Greater Connecticut Area Local
- Tiwana Rogers, Detroit District Area Local ■

PS Form 50 Personnel Actions



Director Steve Brooks

I am writing this as an attempt to inform APWU officers and employees at all levels across the country of problems that continue to exist. These problems can cost employees thousands of dollars. I am talking about the untimely processing of PS Form 50s.

PS Form 50s are personnel actions generated due to some type of change in employee status. PS Form 50 actions are generated by the Human Resources Share Service Center (HRSSC) in Greensboro, NC and are initiated by local HR personnel, supervisors and managers. When a change to employee status is necessary, it is the responsibility of the local USPS representative to complete the appropriate online form and submit it to HRSSC for processing.

It is critical that this notification take place in a timely manner. If HRSSC is notified after the official, effective date of change or incorrect information is submitted, a PS Form 50 may not be generated in a timely manner.

When an employee is converting from a Part-Time Flexible (PTF) or Postal Support Employee (PSE) to a full-time career employee, it is imperative that the PS Form 50 is processed the same pay period in which the conversion is effective. Every time a PS Form 50 is generated in a pay period after the effective date, it has the potential to cause an employee to be paid incorrectly.

These actions have generated a large volume of work for the bargaining unit payroll technicians and specialists at Eagan Accounting Services. The employees in Eagan receive a copy of each PS Form 50 that is processed by HRSSC on a daily basis. During a typical pay period, between 25,000 and 30,000 PS Form 50s are processed. It is the Accounting Services bargaining unit employees' responsibility to review each PS Form 50 and determine whether or not some type of payroll adjustment is necessary.

Management representatives across the country do not seem to care whether or not their employees are paid correctly. This is evident in the fact that they take no action when asked to review an employee's hours

after a late conversion to career action takes place. Many newly converted PSEs are unfamiliar with the fact that when they become a career employee, they are guaranteed a bid schedule. They are entitled to holidays, overtime, out of schedule and so many other rights that they were not afforded as a PSE. They are entitled to these benefits as of the effective date of that conversion, not as of the date that the PS Form 50 was generated.

**UNION OFFICIALS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL
SHOULD WORK WITH EVERY EMPLOYEE
CONVERTED TO FULL-TIME
TO ENSURE THEY ARE PAID THE
APPROPRIATE PREMIUMS.**

As an example, when a late conversion to career PS Form 50 is processed, and an employee at Eagan receives a copy for review and processing, they follow a process to attempt to make the change. They must review the employee designation code, salary, hours paid, leave earning status and credit hours for accuracy. The technicians and specialists know that due to this late action the employee, at minimum, must have their pay adjusted according to the change to full-time.

Unfortunately, too often, Eagan does not receive the required information from postal management. What this means is the Accounting Service worker assigned is unable to make the appropriate adjustments to hours that the employee may be entitled to.

So, I write this to inform employees converted to career positions, to review their pay and approach management with the hours and pay they should have been entitled to. Union officials at the local level should work with every employee converted to full-time to ensure they are paid the appropriate premiums. Management often takes the easy way out and does not advise Eagan to make any adjustments to hours, so employees lose out on pay. ■



Northeast Region Coordinator John Dirzius

There's More to Being a Member than Just Paying Dues

As I proudly travel the Northeast Region and speak with workers, I always ask if there are any new members, newly hired Postal Support Employees (PSEs) or recently converted PSEs. I ask those questions knowing that 25 percent of postal workers have been hired since 2011 and over 54 percent are eligible to retire.

A few hands always go up and that's great. However, collectively we need to make certain that each time that question is asked, more and more hands proudly go up in a "fist pump" of union pride and solidarity, as our future is in the collective hands of our new members. We need to see more new members at our training sessions, more activists attending union meetings, more new delegates at state and national conventions, and everyone participating in our rallies and demonstrations. Your involvement will determine our future.

The task of empowering our members, educating our members and developing new leaders must be a priority for all of us if we are to maintain our status of an outstanding labor union. The strength of any labor union is measured by the active involvement of its members. The days of letting someone else "do it" were never acceptable and with today's serious challenges, this attitude can no longer be tolerated.

Being a good union member is more than just paying dues and asking others to resolve your

grievance, negotiate your contract, protect your standard of living and fight to keep America's postal services strong. Your involvement is absolutely required.

The journey to become a union activist is as simple as attending your next union meeting. Organize your meeting by spreading the word among your co-workers and ask them to get their co-workers to attend, as well. Social media is a great tool to get our message out.

As we mobilize around a new contract, work with your local Contract Action Team (CAT) and get everyone to wear a union T-shirt or contract campaign button on a scheduled day every week. That small gesture sends a strong and important message to management: *We are union strong and united.* Take a picture and share it on social media to show your solidarity.

Organizing any non-members in your local is one of the most important roles anyone can play. Tell them: *The APWU has negotiated a strong contract that protects our members with a good living wage, health benefits, job security and a pension once we retire.* There is absolutely no reason why any postal employee should be a non-member.

If you are ready, the next step is to become a union steward or run for an elected position in your local. Don't worry, there are all kinds of trainings available to hone your skills and knowledge. Taking that next step is what is important and vital to our continued success.

To put it in sports terms, we must fill the APWU's "bench" and the first step is your involvement. I can assure you, if you ask my fellow Regional Coordinators, Sharyn Stone, Omar Gonzalez, Mike Gallagher and Kenneth Beasley, their response would be the same. Get involved today! ■

Gracias a Nuestra Familia en Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Area Local President Juan Carlos González-Del Valle, Northeast Region Coordinator John Dirzius, Puerto Rico Area Local Human Relations Director David Pabon and President Mark Dimondstein in Puerto Rico. The award (pictured) was presented to Coordinator Dirzius during the APWU's recent visit to the Caribbean. It was a recognition and appreciation from the Puerto Rico Area Local's leadership and membership for the APWU's efforts, our immediate support and active involvement when Hurricane Maria devastated our members' homes, their lives and their work sites. *See p. 6 for more info.*



APWU Reaches Monetary Settlement with USPS on POSTplan Staffing Violations

On Feb. 9, the Clerk Craft reached a \$49.9 million settlement with the USPS on POSTplan staffing violations. The monetary settlement follows a ruling by Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg that the Postal Service violated his previous award of Sept. 5, 2014 and a subsequent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated Sept. 22, 2014.

The dispute was initiated after the Postal Service failed to honor their agreement that after Dec. 22, 2014, the “POSTplan” Remotely-Managed Post Offices (RMPOs) open 4 or 6 hours a day would be staffed with bargaining unit clerks, and Level 18 offices would be staffed with career employees. Long after the agreement, Postmaster Reliefs (PMRs) were still working in 4- or 6-hour RMPOs across the country and Level 18 offices reported still using PSEs instead of career employees.

“Our goal is for management to abide by their contractual obligations in the first place. When they don’t, it is best if management addresses the problems as quickly as possible, in this case to properly staff the POSTplan offices,” remarked President Dimondstein. “Unfortunately, neither happened, and I congratulate the Clerk Craft for insuring that these management violations have consequences as a deterrent to future violations.”

The money from the settlement will be distributed among Clerk Craft employees to be identified by the National APWU. The Postal

Service is required to cooperate and provide information necessary for the union to identify employees eligible for payment. Updates on the implementation of the settlement agreement will be provided to local/state organizations and the membership through the APWU website, apwu.org.

“It is important we have arbitrators willing to rule that monetary payments and other strong remedies are necessary to address willful and/or repeated violations of the contract,” said Clerk Division Director Clint Burelson. “It is even more

important that the membership work together to develop the leverage to win grievances at the local level and ideally prevent violations from occurring in the first place.

“Many thanks go to Assistant Clerk Division Director Lynn Pallas Barber,” Burelson continued, “who served as the case officer for the grievance, provided testimony at the hearing, and developed the leverage to secure the \$49.9 million in remedy. Thanks also go to Assistant Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks for his assistance in negotiating the final settlement.” ■

APWU and Postal Service Extend Moratorium on Private Retail Outlets

In an effort to protect against further contracting out of retail operations and defend the integrity of customer service and our jobs, the APWU secured a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the 2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement that imposed a moratorium whereby the Postal Service could not expand any Village Post Offices, Contract Postal Units or Approved Shipper outlets.

As part of this MOU, with the exception of the *Stop Staples* campaign, the APWU agreed that we would refrain from challenging the existing USPS “business relationships” through the same type of activism used in the *Stop Staples* campaign. That campaign ultimately led to the cancellation of the Approved Shipper program in Staples stores across the country in February of 2017.

During this moratorium, the union and management agreed to enter into discussions to address the future of retail operations. The Clerk Craft officers have met several times with the Postal Service to discuss the issues involved.

The moratorium initially expired in July 8, 2017 but was extended through the end of 2017. On Feb. 7, 2018, President Mark Dimondstein and USPS Vice President of Labor Relations Douglas Tulino extended the MOU until Sept. 20, 2018, thus protecting more retail jobs from potentially being lost to these programs until the expiration of the current union contract. ■



FROM the FIELD

Below are quotes from various APWU local and state publications throughout the country.
All the publications listed are part of the Postal Press Association.

"The union is you, me and the co-worker next to you. The union is all of us. We, as officers, have a job to represent, but without you as members standing up and standing behind the officers, there is no power in the union. If things are not the way they should be, or you feel something more needs to be done, then the union needs you to stand up for that. The officers can solve some things with class action grievances but if you want to see change, it requires UNITY and all of us working together to get the change you deserve and want."

— Mike Mize, Michigan Postal Workers Union President,
Auto City Flint Facts

"What is the role you play as a union member?
... Each of us has something to contribute to the union; whether you are a steward, an officer or a member. Sometimes you may feel as though you are not important to the United States Postal Service. However, you should always feel as though you are an asset to the union."

— Turnette Chestnut, North Carolina Council
APWU District 2 Representative,
The Tarheel Postal Worker

"Many local managers and supervisors are quick to blame the union for the financial troubles of the Post Office. 'If the union wouldn't file all these grievances, we wouldn't be spending so much money,' they say. How unbelievably myopic! It is management's fault they have no money. Look at the way they run the business; constant violations of the contract, improperly staffing operations and the inexplicable mismanagement of work hours. Instead of blaming the union for money spent on grievance settlements, perhaps they should stop the violations! No violation...no grievance. No grievance...no payout. Seems simple enough to me!"

— Chad Beer, Lehigh Valley Area Local (PA) Clerk Craft
Director, *Lehigh Valley Visions*

"We cannot police the contract alone, and with dozens of offices in our local, we need you! We need employees to reach out to us with questions and concerns... Most of all, and more than ever, we need stewards. One of the best ways to get involved is to become an alternate steward. This will unlock the door to becoming more versed in the contract and understanding the process better. We have lots of issues that go on in these offices and unfortunately, if we don't know about the violations, we can't do anything about it. This can be a building block in turning your office around."

— Mike Weigandt, Toledo Area Local
(OH) Secretary, *Black Swamp Outrider*

"Upper management feels we are 'over-staffed.' For those of us who have worked for the Postal Service for any length of time the words 'over-staffed' are infuriating. At this point in time, lines at most of our post offices are more often longer than they should be which leads to insane wait times, annoyed customers, failed mystery shops, delayed mail, loss of repeat business and many other issues."

— Robert Rodriguez, Oregon Postal Workers Union,
District 3 Representative, *Oregon Stater*

"The best way to ensure the contract is followed in the first place is to be willing to stand up and say something! Familiarize yourself with the contract – know what order overtime should be called or how holiday scheduling should be prioritized. Knowing your rights makes us all stronger as a union. The union isn't some far away building in Washington or the local hall, it's all of us working together to build a better contract and support our rights."

— Monica Esquibel, Salt Lake City Area Local,
POWER Coordinator, *The Six-Bits*



Is Free Checking a Thing of the Past?

Bank of America, the country's second largest bank, ended its popular free e-checking account and is now requiring customers to maintain a minimum balance of \$1,500 or a monthly direct deposit of at least \$250. Customers who fail to meet those minimums will be charged a \$12 monthly fee.

Low-balance bank customers in New York spend an average of \$73 a year on maintenance and transaction fees, according to "Take it to the Bank," a 2015 report released by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. The Bank of America policy could double that burden.

The announcement came on heels of new federal tax legislation which is set to benefit Bank of America to the tune of \$3.5 billion. The bank's revenue in 2017 was \$93 billion, with a profit of \$21 billion. Brian Moynihan, Bank of America Chairman and CEO, earned \$20 million in 2017.

"Just weeks after getting a windfall from Trump's tax bill, Bank of America is insisting that it needs to hike

fees on checking accounts, a move that will hurt its most vulnerable customers and exacerbate inequality," Jennifer Epps-Addison, Co-Executive Director of the Center for Popular Democracy, declared in a press release from the New York City Comptroller's office. "This is an outrageous move that we will resist at all costs, and just one more example of why we need to insist on more accountability and oversight for banks and other financial institutions."

"Bank of America's decision is also one more argument for postal banking," said APWU President Dimondstein. "The working people of the United States need affordable, accessible financial services."

Taking Postal Banking to the Streets

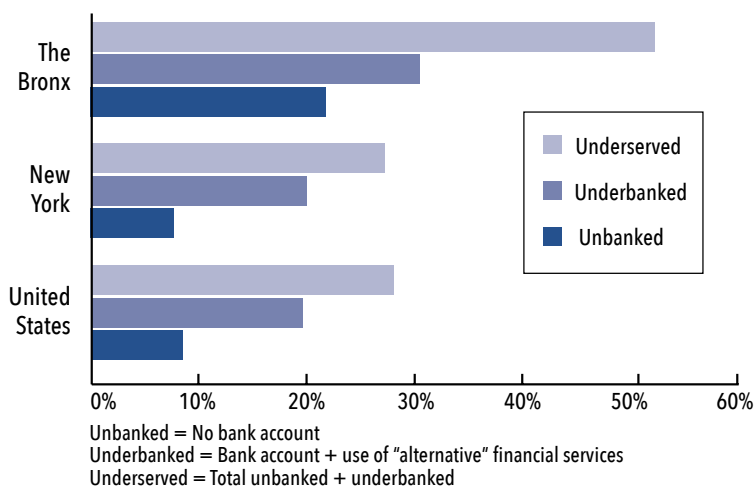
The Campaign for Postal Banking launched petition campaigns in three cities: Baltimore, MD; Bronx, NY and Cleveland, OH. APWU local leaders – Baltimore Francis Stu Filbey Area Local President Sherry C. McKnight, New York Metro Area Local President Jonathan Smith and Cleveland Area Local President Daleo

Freeman – are working with our sister postal unions, the local labor movement, and community and religious groups to collect signatures demanding that the USPS bring financial services to these areas now.

A shocking 21.8 percent of Bronx households do not have a bank account. An additional 30.5 percent have a bank account but also use at least one "alternative" or non-bank financial service, including money orders, check cashing, pawn shops, car title loans, etc.

"I'm fired up about the Bronx Campaign for Postal Banking," said Smith. "Postal banking is a win-win-win for the people of the Bronx, the New York Metro Area Postal Union, the APWU and the Postal Service itself. We need to get this done!" ■

Bronx Residents Underserved by Big Banks



Source: Caroline Ratcliffe, Signe-Mary McKernan, Emma Kalish, and Steven Martin, "Where Are the Unbanked and Underbanked in New York City?" Washington, DC: Urban Institute, September 2015.

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 include check cashing, bill payment, savings accounts and small-dollar loans. Postal Banking will benefit consumers without access to traditional banks as well as those who want a public option. The expansion of services would also strengthen our public Postal Service. To learn more, visit www.CampaignforPostalBanking.org.

Portuguese Postal Workers Hold One Over 4,000 Walk Out to Demand Reversal of Privatization

Over 4,000 Portuguese postal workers held a one-day strike in Lisbon on Feb. 23, demanding a reversal of the country's privatized postal services.

Members of the four different unions representing postal workers employed by the now privatized CTT – *Correios, Telégrafos e Telefones* or Post, Telegraph and Telephone – traveled from across the country to “fight so that the post office will once again be public [and] universal,” according to a press release by the National Syndicate of Mail and Telecommunications Workers (SNTCT). More than 70 percent of workers joined the strike.

In September 2014, in order to comply with the newly-formed European Union requirements for its bailout, the Portuguese government sold all the public shares of CTT, making it a private company.

As part of its privatization plan, the company announced that it will lay off 800 workers and close nearly 60 post offices this year. Workers also went on strike Dec. 21-22, 2017 over these issues.

On March 9, postal workers wrote up a resolution calling for a public postal service. The unionists then hand-delivered it to the Prime Minister at his residence.

In the resolution, postal workers charge that mail is only being delivered every two or three days – sometimes only once a week. In addition, CTT hired non-union workers “without [collective bargaining] rights, with very low training” to deliver and sort mail.

“CTT is the company that has an obligation to provide [quality] postal service nationwide. They’re not doing it!” SNTCT wrote in the resolution. “There is an urgent need to halt the degradation of CTT as a key company for the economy... and service to the people.”

Cornelia Broos, Head of UNI Post and Logistics, said, “UNI stands in solidarity with the striking

CWA Workers Win Contract After Three

After a three-week strike, 1,400 workers in the state of West Virginia and also in Ashburn, VA, reached a tentative contract agreement with Frontier Communication and returned to work March 28. The workers (primarily technicians and customer service representatives) are represented by the Communications Workers of America (CWA).

Their contract, originally set to expire Aug. 5, 2017, was then extended to Nov. 4, and again extended until March 3, 2018. With no fair agreement on the horizon, workers walked off the job March 4 and picketed in front of 47 retail locations.

On March 8, the national CWA set up a Striking Families Solidarity Fund. Strikers immediately re-

ceived an outpouring of community support with hundreds joining the picket lines, culminating with a large rally in Charleston, WV on March 24.

Workers said the strike was not over wages or benefits, but about good jobs and service.

Local 2006 President Ann Vogler explained in a statement, “We are happy to have an agreement that gives job security to 100 percent of the bargaining unit... The community outreach and support from the other unions has been wonderful.”

“I could not be more proud of our members,” said Ed Mooney, Vice President of CWA District 2-13 in a press release. “Going on strike is never easy. But they knew what was at stake for their co-workers and for their communities.



Striking workers in Ashburn, VA.

-Day Strike

workers in Portugal and supports their demands to renationalize the post. We believe that all people should have quality, universal postal service, and privatization puts shareholders and profits ahead of investment in services."

UNI Global Union is an international union association representing more than 20 million workers from over 900 trade unions around the world, including the APWU.



-Week Strike

Thanks to their strength and unity, our bargaining team has reached an agreement with Frontier that will ensure that they will continue to have good, family supporting jobs."

As this issue goes to press, CWA members were being briefed on the agreement and plan to hold a vote in late April.



Courtesy of CWA

Five Million Spanish Women Strike on International Working Women's Day



Photo courtesy of Fotomovimiento Flickr/Creative Commons

Women strikers filled the streets of Spain on March 8, seen here in Barcelona.

On March 8, International Working Women's Day, over 5.3 million Spanish women walked off the job for a one-day strike. The strike was organized by the grassroots group, The March 8 Commission, and was supported by the country's trade unions, as well as the mayors of Madrid and Barcelona.

In what organizers called a "feminist strike," it aimed to bridge the inequality gap between men and women and to stop the growing sexual violence against women in the country. In Spain, the gender pay gap is 19 percent for private sector workers and 13 percent for public sector workers, according to data from the European Union's statistical provider, Eurostat.

"Our identity is multiple, we are diverse," wrote strike organizers in a manifesto. "Today we claim a society free of oppression, exploitation and sexist violence... We do not accept worse working conditions, nor being paid less than men for the same work."

Wearing purple and chanting, "When we stop, the world stops!" women and supporters took to the streets of Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia and 200 other locations. Traffic was blocked in Madrid and Barcelona and protestors clogged railway lines in Catalonia. Students and protestors picketed universities and many female journalists did not go into newsrooms or studios.

Ana Reyes, a 37-year-old PR executive, told *Agence France-Presse* she was striking "in the hope that the importance of half of the population will be recognized and that it will bring about a real change."

Wearing a purple scarf and marching with her mother, Indira Bravo, 9, told *CNN* she was protesting "so when I am older, everyone is the same."

Burgerville Workers Union Poised to Become FIRST FAST FOOD BARGAINING UNIT

As this issue went to press, members of the Burgerville Workers Union (BVWU) Store #41, located in Southeast Portland, OR, were holding a vote to become the first fast food workers bargaining unit in the country.

Mark Medina, a union representative, told *Eater PDX* that he and the rest of the union are confident they will have a majority of union “yes” votes on April 22 and 23. If enough members vote “yes,” the National Labor Relations Board will officially recognize workers as Branch #41 of the BVWU. Members of the BVWU will have an opportunity to sit at the bargaining table with Vancouver-based Burgerville and negotiate wages, benefits and working conditions. Medina hopes other locations will follow suit.

BVWU is affiliated with the Portland general membership branch of the International Workers of the World. For the past two years, workers have been picketing the restaurant chain and campaigning for the right to organize, a \$5/hour raise, and dignity and respect in the workplace.

“More and more workers are choosing to fight,” BVWU members said in a press release. “We are inspired by garment workers in Cambodia, factory workers in China and our fellow fast food workers across the United States. Workers across the world are standing up and demanding better lives and winning respect.”

Medina added, “I’m excited that history is going to be made because some scrappy workers got together and were the forefront of their own movement. Poverty wages are awful. They are not good for people, not good for the community or for the economy and it’s high time we end this practice.”

For updates, visit www.burgervilleworkersunion.org.



Burgerville Workers Union members during their first action in 2016.

Campaign Workers Guild Organizes First Bargaining Unit

For the first time ever, political campaign workers organized a union.

The Campaign Workers Guild (CWG) represents non-management workers on both electoral and issue-based campaigns. The first bargaining unit was certified in late 2017 with congressional candidate Randy Bryce’s campaign in Wisconsin. As this issue went to press, eight other units have formed, including the first gubernatorial campaign, Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidate Erin Murphy in Minnesota.

According to CWG, campaign workers frequently work close to 80 hours a week, get paid far less than \$15 an hour, often receive no health benefits, and can face sexual harassment and hostile working conditions.

“Working from one election cycle to the next should not mean working from paycheck to paycheck,” said CWG’s mission statement. “It shouldn’t mean having to put up with unsafe housing and abusive bosses. And it should never mean staying silent about sexual harassment or racism out of fear of being blacklisted.”

Campaign work is unique. Workers are usually guaranteed a job for only a few months at a time. Since elections do not happen year-round in any given area, campaign workers are always moving. This makes organizing a union difficult.

Those who have worked on any electoral campaign or ballot initiative – even if they are not currently – are eligible to join CWG. Members can work in any department – digital, data, communications, operations, political, etc.

CWG is encouraging campaign workers to organize their units and has resources available on their website campaignworkersguild.org.

Janus v. AFSCME Q&A

During the last few months, there has been a lot of discussion in the news about the *Janus* Supreme Court case and how it will affect public employees, all workers and the labor movement as a whole.

Q: What is the *Janus* case about?

A: The *Janus* lawsuit against AFSCME claims that “fair share” fees are a violation of an individual’s “free speech” rights. The case is really not about free speech at all, but rather a blatant effort to weaken unions.

Q: What are fair share fees?

A: Fair share fees, in the states in which they are legally negotiated, compel non-members to, at minimum, pay their “fair share” of the costs incurred by the union and dues-paying members for bargaining union contracts and for representing the workforce. All workers benefit from the union. Everyone should pay their fair share.

Q: Do union contracts covering postal workers allow fair share fees?

A: No. The current federal law forbids the APWU and other postal unions from negotiating fair share fees. Every dues-paying member knows it is blatantly unfair for non-members to enjoy the benefits of unionization without paying for it. However, based on a 40-year-old Supreme Court ruling (*Abood v. Detroit Board of Education*), unions representing state and local public-sector workers, from city employees to teachers, have been permitted to negotiate fair share fees in many states.

Q: Are fair share fees an infringement on free speech?

A: Absolutely not. Fair share fees are simply fair. Any union member, or non-member, has full free speech rights to speak their minds and share their views. Union dues are not, and cannot be, used to directly support any candidates of any political party.

Q: How did this case get so far?

A: First, over past decades, the Supreme Court has increasingly become pro-big business and as a result,

less friendly to workers. Second, this case is not propelled by a disgruntled worker, but pushed and funded by corporate billionaires whose aim is to use the courts to “defund and defang” unions and further rig the system against working people.

Q: Do we know how the Supreme Court will rule?

A: There is little question that the majority of the Supreme Court is pro-big business and will rule to protect their corporate friends at the expense of workers.

Q: What will be the impact of such a ruling?

A: In the short run, public-sector unions may be weakened. The collective bargaining agreements, pay and benefits of workers will suffer. Benefits that public-sector unions are able to negotiate for the entire community – such as student-teacher ratios, public services and public safety – will diminish.

However, in the long run, a ruling in favor of *Janus* will not be the death of the labor movement. Unions can rebuild on a stronger foundation. The APWU and other postal unions prove workers can be well-organized and wage successful fights without fair share fees. Workers will readily join unions as a collective path to a better life. The West Virginia and Oklahoma teachers and education workers have shown that fair share fees have little to do with whether workers can succeed and win.

Q: Since the APWU cannot negotiate fair share fees, what does this case matter to postal workers?

A: An injury to one, is an injury to all. Wherever unions are strong, it strengthens postal workers. Wherever workers win good contracts, it helps the APWU win good contracts. Wherever wages rise, the entire community rises. Any blow that weakens unions, weakens all of us. ■



Judy Beard, Director

Vote for 'Issues that Can Unite Us' on Election Day

The AFL-CIO Convention last October called for a break with the politics of the “lesser of two evils” that currently dominate U.S. elections. The 2018 mid-term election is an opportunity to implement these words and focus around important issues, directed by APWU National Convention actions and principles of our APWU Constitution.

What are *some* of those issues that can unite us across the political spectrum?

- 1) Protection of postal and federal workers' benefits:** The White House proposed budget for fiscal year 2019 was introduced in February and is an assault on our pay and benefits (read APWU Web News Article 17-2018 for more details).
- 2) Health care as a human right:** “Medicare for All” works in countless other countries, providing better access to health care, lower costs and better outcomes, including life expectancy.
- 3) Union Rights:** Workers should be able to unionize without fear of harassment and retaliation for organizing a union.
- 4) Education for all:** Higher education should be available for all who want to obtain it – without economic obstacles or massive student loan debt.
- 5) Democratic rights:** Get big money out of politics. Voting rights are being diminished and restricted. Vote-by-Mail can be part of the solution of defending the precious right to vote.
- 6) Clean water, clean air and a livable planet:** All of us have a stake in a planet that can sustain future, healthy life.

Enemies of the labor movement disparage us for getting involved in politics. Those same critics waste no time – or money – buying political favors to enrich themselves, their corporations and their stakeholders. Look no further than the roughly \$56 million dollars spent on lobbying in the final quarter of 2017 to ensure the passage of the disastrous tax bill. No one will defend our interests unless we do.

The APWU encourages all of you to get more engaged, organized and mobilized in local and state issue-based ballot initiatives, electoral “referenda” and legislative actions such as raising minimum wages, paid sick leave, health care for all, Vote-by-Mail and funding of public services. ■

Legislative Priorities

(For a full list, please visit the Legislative & Political Department's page at apwu.org)

SUPPORT

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 756) – Solves the disastrous postal pre-fund mandate. The APWU supports this bill moving through the legislative process – it has advanced to the House Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees.

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2018 (S. 2629) – There are many positive elements in this proposed legislation that the APWU supports as a basis for further legislative action. This includes addressing the unfair and absurd pre-funding mandate for future retiree health care costs.

Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017 (H.R. 760) – Allows USPS to invest a portion of the Retiree Health Benefit Fund to better match medical inflation and significantly reduce future liabilities.

Medicare For All (H.R. 676 & S. 1804) – Ensures universal access to high-quality affordable health care for all Americans, regardless of employment, income or health care status.

Vote by Mail Act (S. 1231 & H.R. 2669) – Requires every state to provide registered voters the opportunity to vote-by-mail. By utilizing America's most trusted government agency, voting by mail can reduce election-related expenses and is proven to increase voter participation.

OPPOSE

The PAGE Act (H.R. 3257) – Strips union representation and protections from new postal and federal employees, making them “at-will” employees, subject to discipline or termination at management's discretion.

National Right-to-Work Act (H.R. 785) – Removes the requirement for employees to join a union/pay dues as a condition of employment. This would seriously reduce a union's collective bargaining power.



Anna Smith, Director

What Role Do You Play as a Union Member?

Every union member has a part to play in strengthening the APWU, not just officers and stewards. There is so much more to being a member than just paying dues. Consider for a moment what role you can play as a union member. You can assist with union activities and participate in them at every level of the APWU. There is a role for each of us – if you're not sure where to start, some things to consider might be:

- Become an informed union member by attending your local union meetings, reading your union publications and/or visiting local, state and national websites. An informed union member is one of the best assets the APWU has when it comes to defending ourselves against management's ignorance of our union contract.
- Assist in organizing efforts by welcoming new members in orientations or reaching out to those long-term non-members who you may be working next to on a daily basis.
- Participate in local rallies. This isn't just inclusive to APWU rallies. Our brothers and sisters in other unions need our support as much as we need theirs. The labor movement takes all of us supporting one another.
- Join or form a local/state legislative committee if you are interested in politics. Make calls to your local, state and federal legislators when called upon to support legislation that benefits postal workers and encourage others to follow suit.
- Take action by being involved in your communities and talking with your neighbors, friends and family. Ask if you can count on their support in protecting your job and the labor movement.
- Help with transportation to local meetings, events and rallies.

Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow

In the spirit of May 1, International Workers' Day, make the commitment to do the small task of asking one of your non-member co-workers to stand with you and join us in *Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow*.

All of us attended orientation when we started and many of us joined the APWU at that time, but orientations alone are not what is going to save our jobs and secure our futures. We all must be actively organizing. As we enter into our next round of contract negotiations, this is a great time to ask a non-member co-worker who has made the conscious decision to not join or has quit at some point, to stand with you now.

Even those who are content with the status quo need to understand that solidarity and involvement is necessary to preserve what we have. Benefits such as our wages, vacation and sick leave, seniority rights, overtime provisions, work hours, paid holidays and health insurance benefits are all on the table. The cold, hard truth is, without us being union and standing together, the Postal Service would not provide us with these benefits.

Through the growth of our union, our strength will become more imposing against management. Union power needs to be felt at every level of the USPS. Do not think for a moment that management does not look at whether the union membership is engaged and working together. They will take advantage of any dissension among us.

Take the time now to speak with your co-workers – members and non-members – about what is at stake. Make the commitment to be actively involved in protecting our jobs. ■



Speak to your local leaders or Contract Action Team to join in our *Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow* organizing campaign!



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

Things You Should Know About the U.S. Postal Service

As you are aware, the Postal Service delivers to residential and business addresses across the country. However, there may be many facts about the Postal Service you may not know. Listed below are a few:

- The Postal Service receives NO tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.
- The U.S. Postal Service employs more than 700,000 people and more than 113,000 veterans.
- The Postal Service has the country's largest retail network – larger than McDonald's, Starbucks and Walmart combined, domestically.
- The Postal Service processes and delivers nearly half of the world's mail – 47 percent.
- More than 200 federal laws protect the sanctity of the U.S. mail. These laws are enforced by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, one of the oldest law enforcement agencies in the country.
- UPS and FedEx pay the USPS to deliver hundreds of millions of their ground packages to residences.
- The Postal Service has more than 227,000 vehicles, one of the largest civilian fleets in the world.

Non-Traditional Mail Delivery Methods

The Postal Service moves the mail by many avenues, a few non-traditional delivery methods are:

- **Mule Train Delivery** – The Peach Springs Post Office in Arizona has walk-in freezers for food, destined for delivery to the bottom of the Grand Canyon by mule train.
- **Boat Delivery to Ships on the River** – The JW Westcott is a 45-foot contract mail boat out of Detroit, MI that delivers mail to passing ships and has its own zip code – 48222.
- **Dock-to-Dock Delivery** – In Magnolia Springs, AL, a 15-foot contract mail boat delivers to 176 dock-side mailboxes on a 31-mile stretch of the river.
- **Boat or Float Plane Delivery** – The Point Roberts Post Office in Washington state can only be reached

by car, driving through British Columbia, Canada. Only a boat or float plane can travel directly there.

- **Cave Delivery** – Stamp Fulfillment Services, located in Kansas City, MO, is located in a limestone cave, 150 feet underground. It is the Postal Service's only facility located in such a subterranean environment.

Facts About Postage Stamps

In 2016, the Postal Service received \$434 million in revenue from stamps and stamp products.

- Semi-postal stamps are First-Class Mail stamps sold by the Postal Service at a price above the cost of a regular stamp. These stamps raise money for causes designated by Congress.
- Four semi-postal stamps have been issued to date: Breast Cancer Research (1998), Heroes of 2001 (2002), Stop Family Violence (2003) and Save Vanishing Species (2011).
- The Breast Cancer Research semi-postal stamp has raised more than \$83.7 million.
- The Save Vanishing Species semi-postal stamp has raised more than \$3.6 million to support the Multinational Species Conservation Funds.
- The first woman featured on a U.S. postage stamp was Queen Isabella in 1893.
- The first American woman featured was Martha Washington in 1902.
- The first Hispanic-American featured on a U.S. postage stamp was Admiral David Farragut in 1903.
- The first Native American to be featured on a stamp was Pocahontas in 1907.
- The first African-American to be featured on a U.S. postage stamp was Booker T. Washington in 1940.

Regardless of geographic location, anyone can send a letter – for just 50 cents – to anywhere in the U.S., its territories and U.S. military worldwide. Send a letter or card today and support the greatest postal service in the world! ■

Resource: Postal Facts 2017



Sue Carney, Director

EEOC: DECISION IS FINAL National Reassessment Program Discriminated Against Injured Workers

In a huge win for injured postal workers who were subjected to the Postal Service's National Reassessment Process (NRP), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued its final decision in the class action discrimination complaint, *McConnell v. USPS*.

The decision, issued on March 9, 2018, rejected the Postal Service's request for reconsideration after finding the NRP discriminated against injured postal workers and violated their rights under the Rehabilitation Act.

The EEOC administrative judge ruled that under the NRP, managers violated the medical privacy of these employees and failed to provide reasonable accommodations – sending them home, reducing their work hours or changing their assignments. They engaged in disparate treatment against employees who were injured on duty. The USPS marked these workers and sought to compel them to retire. They harassed injured workers and created a hostile work environment.

This was the final administrative appeal available to the Postal Service in the case. Postal officials are required to comply with the orders listed in the decision. One order required the Postal Service to issue notice to all eligible class members informing them of their right to file a claim against the USPS. *Members of the class were required to file a claim within 30 days of receiving notice from the Postal Service in order to seek money, damages and other relief.* Letters were reportedly mailed by the USPS on March 19 and 20.

More than 130,000 individuals, many belonging to the APWU, may benefit from this decision, including survivors of deceased class members. Injured workers suffered substantial loss and endured unnecessary hardship for years at the hands of postal management under the NRP.

A significant number lost pay and benefits, including health care and life insurance. Many suffered foreclosures, evictions, repossessions of property, damaged credit, and had to rely on family, friends, food pantries

and other social services without an income to sustain them. They missed overtime opportunities, lost leave, and weren't able to make contributions to their retirement or receive matching funds. They lost creditable service time and witnessed their high three-average diminish. They were targeted and labeled. Many suffered embarrassment and humiliation, anxiety, stress and depression as a result of the process. Their lives were needlessly and wrongfully turned upside down.

Injured workers have a lot riding on this case. There is no way to forecast how damages will be calculated, but this decision could cost the USPS dearly if individuals are justly compensated based on their actual losses and provided other equitable relief for their hardships. There is still likely a long road ahead before settlements are determined, including the probability of more litigation on many individual claims.

If and when monetary compensation is received for lost wages, members should be wary to ensure the restitution does not create an overpayment with the Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP), the Office of Personnel Management, or the Social Security Administration before spending the money.

In addition, the Postal Service may begin to make return-to-work job offers, which should be carefully considered by recipients, even if retired or separated, based on potential sanctions that can be imposed by the Department of Labor if OWCP determines a rejected offer is medically suitable.

This decision is a big step towards justice for our injured brothers and sisters, and co-workers who were subjected to the horrors of NRP.

For more information and continuing updates, visit www.nrplclassaction.com. Class members with questions can call 585-272-0540, toll free at 877-272-4066, or consult an attorney of your choosing. The website and call center are administered by the law firms that successfully litigated the McConnell case. *The APWU makes no representation about the accuracy or quality of the information being provided by these firms.* ■



Nancy Olumekor, Director

How You Can Engage at Every Age

Every May, the Administration on Aging, part of the Administration for Community Living, leads our nation's observance of Older American's Month. The 2018 theme, *Engage at Every Age*, emphasizes that we are never too old (or too young) to take part in activities that can enrich your physical, mental and emotional well-being and celebrates the many ways older adults make a difference in our communities.

Participating in activities that promote mental and physical wellness, offering our wisdom and experience to the next generation, seeking the mentorship of someone with more life experience than us – those are just a few examples of what *being engaged* can mean.

No matter where we are in our life, there is no better time than now to join in and *Engage at Every Age* in our local, our chapter and our community.

APWU retirees are still *Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow*. This year, retirees can sign-up and join Contract Action Teams (CATs) in our APWU locals or states. CATs are the principal method of informing and mobilizing members and winning community support for our struggle to secure better postal services and good jobs.

There are many opportunities – and much need – for retiree members to get involved. As part of your state or local CAT, you will educate, motivate, mentor and organize members and the community by conducting outreach to potential allies beyond the Postal Service.

You'll explain why their support is needed, organize and share information through various methods on upcoming activities to publicize the issues, and develop new ideas for building support for APWU goals.

Another way you can *Engage at Every Age* is to make sure you are registered to vote and your chapter members, family, friends and neighbors are registered voters. Then we must educate ourselves and others on crucial legislative issues, and when necessary, persuade allies to vote for representatives who support issues of importance for retirees, as well as working families. ■

Retirees in Action



(L-R) APWU retiree member Yvonne Huntley, Alliance for Retired Americans President Robert Roach, Retirees Director Nancy Olumekor and Alliance for Retired Americans Executive Director Rich Fiesta at the Working People's Day of Action event on Feb. 24 in Washington, D.C.



APWU retiree member Byron Denton met Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA-3) at a town hall meeting in Williams, CA.

SAVE THE DATE: APWU Pre-Convention Retiree Conference

The APWU Retiree Department will sponsor the Pre-Conven-
tion **Retiree Conference on Saturday, Aug. 18 and Sunday, Aug. 19, 2018** at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, PA. Retiree members are encouraged to register on-line, or by contacting their local/state retiree chapter or the APWU Retiree Department for a registration form. We encourage you to register by Monday, July 16.



John Marcotte, Director

Opioid Abuse

Unfortunately, as we all know, misuse of opioids is an epidemic in America. Prescription drugs such as morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone and hydrocodone are all opioids like illegal drugs, such as heroin.

According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), “use of illegal opioids such as heroin and the non-medical use of certain prescription opioid pain medications such as oxycodone have risen to epidemic levels with rates that are continuing to soar. Deaths from opioid overdose have tripled since 1990. Further, in 2010, Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) estimated that approximately 2.3 million emergency department visits resulted from drug misuse or abuse; 51 percent of those involved nonmedical use of pharmaceuticals.”

Other facts provided by ASAM:

- In 2015, over two million Americans were abusing prescription pain killers and 591,000 were abusing heroin.
- Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States. Opioids are leading the way, with 20,101 deaths due to prescription pain relievers and 12,909 due to heroin, reported in 2015.

- A study found that as sales of prescription pain relievers increase, overdose and substance use disorder treatments for prescription pain relievers increase at the same rate or greater.
- Four-in-five heroin users started out misusing prescription drugs.
- In 2012, 259 million prescriptions were written for opioids. That is enough for every American over 18 to have a bottle of pills.

The American Academy of Pain Medicine recommends the following safety principles for individuals prescribed an opioid:

- “Never take an opioid pain medication that is not prescribed to you.
- “Never adjust your own dose.
- “Never mix medication with alcohol.
- “Always tell your health care provider about all medications you are taking.
- “Keep track of when you take your medication.
- “Keep medications locked in a safe place.
- “Dispose of any unused medications.” ■

Register for the 33rd Annual Health Plan Open Season Seminar



Registration for the 2018 APWU Health Plan Open Season Seminar is now open! You can go to www.apwu.org/events/category/national-events and register under the link provided. This informative training is being held in San Antonio, TX, right in the center of its famous Riverwalk. We fight hard to have our health benefits and every local, state and retiree chapter should understand the recent changes happening in health care and how it works. Register now to reserve your spot!

The Atrium in the Hyatt Regency San Antonio Riverwalk, the location of the 33rd Annual Health Plan Open Season Seminar.

A cartoon illustration within a circular frame showing four children participating in a food drive. A girl with orange hair in a pink shirt holds a jar of jam. A boy with brown hair holds a box. A boy with orange hair is putting a can into a cardboard box. A girl with black hair is holding a box. In the background, there is a mailbox and a sign for the food drive.

WE'RE
MAKIN' SURE OUR
LETTER CARRIER
GETS TO DELIVER
MORE THAN JUST
MAIL TODAY!

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF LETTER CARRIERS
**Stamp
Out
Hunger**
FOOD DRIVE

26TH ANNUAL
LETTER
CARRIERS'
FOOD
DRIVE

To: Local
Food Bank
with
♥

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Bill
and
JEFF
KEANE

SAT., MAY 12, 2018