

THE AMERICAN Postal Worker

APWU

January/February 2023

DEFENDING
DEMOCRATIC
RIGHTS

BUILDING
WORKER
SOLIDARITY

CONTRACT
NEGOTIATIONS
PREP

ENFORCING
OUR CONTRACTS

PROTECTING
POSTAL JOBS &
PUBLIC SERVICES

The Year Ahead

STOPPING
HOSTILE WORK
ENVIRONMENTS



ORGANIZING
UNORGANIZED
WORKERS

FIGHT FOR
BETTER STAFFING

EXPANDING
POSTAL SERVICES

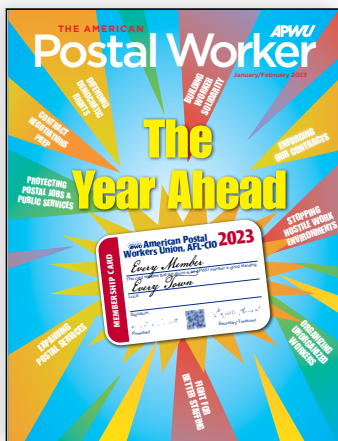


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ABOUT THE COVER:

APWU membership cards are currently arriving by mail. Our union membership cards represent our commitment to work together to continue to improve the lives of postal workers, our families, and our communities.

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PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

Together, Let's Keep Rolling the Union On!

It was a tremendous honor to be installed into office on November 16 with all of the elected national officers. I share a few of my edited remarks below, including a brief "12-point platform," as we look forward to the new term of office and the New Year. To view the full speech, visit: apwu.org/md-speech.

Working, organizing, mobilizing together with all of you, we are marching forward in building an activist, winning union. Think of our collective accomplishments just this year -- ratification of a solid new contract by a 94 percent "yes" vote, record COLA increases, historic and urgently needed postal reform, a successful "Building Union Power" organizing campaign, and our strong union democracy reflected in our national convention and national union election.

Postal workers proudly and successfully delivered democracy, moving a record number of mail ballots in 2020! In 2015, we stopped the downward spiral of concessionary bargaining and restored more career jobs; we protected jobs and services in the victorious "Stop Staples" battle and built A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service. We have converted 100,000 Postal Support Employees to career; rose to the safety challenges of the terrible pandemic; aggressively enforced our union contracts; campaigned for expanded services including postal banking; encouraged new and young workers to step up; strengthened the retirees' department; improved cooperation among the postal unions; practiced solidarity with other unions and workers; and built an impressive campaign in the critical fight against the Trump administration's privatization plans.

But we can never rest on our laurels. There will always be new challenges and ways to improve. As former APWU president Moe Biller always proclaimed, "The Struggle Continues..."

In addition to the vitally important daily struggles to enforce the union contract, some highlights of our coming work will include this "12-point" plan:

- Fight to defend our democratic rights in the face of rising authoritarianism, bigotry, and fascism. When the Nazi German fascists took power in 1933, one of their early actions was to ban unions and crush the workers' movement.

- In this context, fight to protect and expand voting rights. Voting should be made as accessible as possible. Vote-by-mail is a key ingredient.
- Work at all levels of the union to address the ever-increasing hostile work environment. No worker should face harassment and discrimination at work – period!
- Continue to organize the unorganized, both inside the post office and beyond. Fight to raise the living standards of workers throughout our industry, most importantly at Amazon.
- Create new union leadership education programs.
- Improve injury compensation training with our new program of OWCP resource assistants.
- Fight for all legislation that uplifts workers and the 99 percent. Movements move Congress, not the other way around.
- Win a new union made electric postal fleet and charging stations for the public – doing our part for a clean energy future.
- Continue the struggle to expand postal services – especially financial services.
- Protect jobs and services as we face the new management plans of network realignment.
- Build grassroots power as we prepare for, and engage in, the next round of collective bargaining.
- The fight against postal privatization remains paramount. No matter who sits in the White House, Wall Street is still Wall Street and they want our national treasure in their greedy hands. Our jobs, our union, and the people's democratic right to public postal services depend on us.

These bold goals, and more, will take immense struggle to accomplish. Principled unity and working class solidarity is key as we battle corporate greed, Wall Street privatizers, a perilous political environment, and anyone in management, from top to bottom, who vamps on postal workers, and chooses to undermine the public Postal Service.

Onward APWU Family! ■

On Congressional Action Against the Union Rights of Railroad Workers

(December 2, 2022)

The right to strike, the right of all workers to withhold their labor to improve their well-being, is a fundamental and vital working class right.

It was the Great Postal Strike of 1970 that laid the foundation for the standard of living, rights, and benefits we enjoy today as postal workers, including our right to collective bargaining.

While striking is hard on workers, it is a powerful weapon of last resort when workers face off against greedy, unscrupulous companies and their benefactors of Wall Street finance capital.

On December 1, Congress, at the urging of the White House and with bipartisan action, attacked and undermined the entire labor movement, and the right to strike, by imposing a “tentative agreement (TA)” on the country’s unionized Class 1 railroad workers. Members of four of the 12 rail unions, representing the majority of 100,000 railroad workers, had already democratically voted to reject the TA and were ready to begin strike action on December 9.

With great sacrifice, railroad workers, like so many essential workers, served the country keeping goods flowing through this pandemic. Yet these same workers have little control over work scheduling and are essentially on call 24/7. In essence, the rail corporations are maintaining their domination of these unionized workers in what amounts to the casualization of railroad workers. Shockingly, they do not receive a single paid sick day, and often face adverse consequences and discipline when they are off for sickness, or to care for sick family members. These quality-of-life issues of fair scheduling and paid sick leave were the core of the dispute between the unionized workers and management. Workers should be working to live, not living to work. As the TA failed to address these crucial issues, the majority of workers rejected it. The billionaires running the rail industry and funded by Wall Street, cut 45,000 jobs over the last six years, 30 percent of the workforce, creating massive and chronic short staffing, while raking in \$21 billion in profits so far this year! It is outrageous that these obscenely profitable railroads refused the workers’ just demands that Congress came down on the

side of the bosses and corporate greed and became strike breakers.

Many labor leaders claim that Joe Biden is “the most pro-union president.” While we appreciate that President Biden has expressed pro-union sentiments, strengthened the NLRB, nominated a pro-union Secretary of Labor, and signed the historic *Postal Service Reform Act*, the labor struggle in rail was a fundamental test of “Which Side Are You On,” to quote the old labor song. This Administration, the majority of the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives, and Senate failed the test by imposing a TA rejected by workers and without legislating paid sick time and fair scheduling. Unfortunately, the AFL-CIO’s top leadership failed to organize a united resistance to the Congressional action against the railroad workers, nor have they condemned Congress’ overriding the workers’ collective bargaining rights, along with their right to strike.

Negotiations, and the prospects of strikes, are about power and leverage. At a moment when the railroad workers had maximum power in relation to the supply chain and the need for their essential work, the White House and the Democratic and the Republican Party leaderships, put their fingers on the scale and tipped it in favor of corporate America at the expense of the workers and human decency.

It is unconscionable for any workers to have so little control over work schedules and receive no paid sick leave. The struggle for dignity and respect for railroad workers, and their justified quest for a better quality of life, will undoubtedly continue and the APWU stands with these workers and all workers seeking equity and justice.

Congress “justified” their anti-union actions by claiming that it was in the “national interest” to stop a rail strike. If they truly care for the national interests rather than the massive private profits and greed of Wall Street and the rail owners, then Congress should seriously consider nationalizing the railroads and running the essential rail network of our country as a national public treasure, similar to the public Postal Service – and afford full collective bargaining rights for the workers. ■

Ballot Propositions, Initiatives, and Referendums Give Voters a Voice

In November 2022, voters nationwide chose candidates to represent them in their respective local, state, and federal elections. In many states, those midterms were also a chance for the electorate to vote on ballot measures.

According to the Initiative and Referendum Institute, a non-partisan educational organization “ballot measures or ballot propositions are proposals to enact new laws or constitutional amendments or repeal existing laws or constitutional amendments that are placed on the ballot for approval or rejection by the electorate.” The voters decide on the issues, not the legislative body.

These ballots often allow voters to make decisions on issues that affect working class people, irrespective of partisan affiliation. In many states they represent some of our best chances of making significant gains for workers.

Raising Wages and Strengthening Worker Power

Several states, and the District of Columbia, passed ballot measures that raised wages or strengthened workers’ rights to collectively bargain.

Washington, DC Initiative 82 passed, which gradually phases out the lower minimum wage for tipped workers by 2027. The DC tipped minimum currently stands at \$5.35 per hour, compared to \$16.10 an hour for other workers.

Nevada Question 2 passed, setting the minimum wage at \$12 an hour from the current \$10.50 per hour beginning July 1, 2024.

Illinois Amendment 1 passed, adding the right to collective bargaining to negotiate wages, hours, and working conditions, while prohibit-

ing so-called “right to work” laws for private sector employees, which undermine workers’ ability to form and maintain unions.

Nebraska Measure 433 passed, raising the minimum wage from \$9 an hour to \$10.50 in 2023, increasing to \$15 an hour by 2026, with annual inflation adjustments thereafter.

Voting and Civil Rights are Up-For-Grabs

Several states held ballot measures related to voter access.

Alabama and Nebraska both voted to restrict access to the ballot. Arizonans, however, rejected a voter-suppression bill. Meanwhile, Connecticut and Michigan both approved measures to increase voter access to the polls.

Connecticut Question 1 passed, amending the state constitution to allow the legislature to establish early voting.

Michigan Proposal 2 passed, allowing voters to sign affidavits of identity if they don’t have an ID while voting or applying for absen-

tee ballots in-person. The proposal also allowed for nine days of early voting, provided state-funded return postage, and a tracking system for absentee ballots. It also set a minimum threshold for ballot drop boxes.

Arizona Proposition 309 was designed to make it harder to vote by mail or in-person. The proposition was defeated. It would have imposed stricter photo ID requirements for in-person voting and would have required mail-in votes to include an ID number, as well as the last four digits of a voter’s Social Security or voter ID number on the envelope.

States Say “No” to Slavery, “Yes” to Education, Transportation, and Health Care

Citizens of Oregon, Tennessee, and Vermont voted to prohibit the use of prison slavery: a loophole in the 13th Amendment that allows private companies to make profits from the slave labor of inmates.

Other Notable Measures

Massachusetts Question 1 passed, which adds a four percent surcharge tax on income over \$1 million to help fund education, roads, bridges, and public transportation.

Oregon Measure 111 establishes a right to access affordable health care, while **South Dakota Amendment D** expanded eligibility for Medicaid health coverage.

Overall, voters in 37 states, and the District of Columbia, decided on 133 ballot measures, illustrating that there are issues important to us all and that we, the people will still have our say! ■



Union Power in Peoria

**After a 53-10 "APWU Yes"
Vote, Workers Strike to
Defend Their New Union!**

An exhibition of true worker power, solidarity, and courage was on display recently from 10 Roads Express drivers in Peoria, IL. After a swift union organizing campaign and an overwhelming union election victory, with a 53-10 "APWU Yes" vote, drivers went on strike less than 48 hours after their victory. The strike was a powerful worker-led protest against the unjust retaliatory termination of one of the main union leaders, Donna Gramm, by 10 Roads Express.

Since mid-September, drivers concerned about worker harassment, unjust discipline, and the possible loss of full-time jobs, have been working with APWU lead organizer Rich Shelley and organizer Lori Cash to unionize their workplace. The drivers formed an organizing committee (OC), went through OC training, attained a super-majority on union authorization cards, and filed for a union election with the NLRB, all within two weeks of their meeting with APWU organizers. The speed of their organizing campaign was a testament to the workers' desire to unionize – one of the quickest campaigns in APWU history.

Donna Gramm, described by several coworkers as an outspoken woman, had previously led a petition effort to protest the company's unjust firing of another driver. That petition campaign, along with Donna Gramm's leadership skills on the petition drive, helped encourage the workers to form a union for job protection and to address their many concerns.

The drivers were confident they would be victorious prior to the vote count on Nov. 29, 2022. One driver accurately told a 10 Roads Express management official that he was "going to vote yes, and it was going to be a whoopin'." The overwhelming 53-10 vote count, in favor of unionizing, was a terrific victory and the drivers were ecstatic over the outcome.

The drivers faced their first test of their new union when management unjustly terminated Donna Gramm the next morning in clear retaliation for her union activity and the outstanding union victory. As part of the new and rising militancy of the working class, the drivers were not going to let their leaders and their newly formed union be attacked. They deliberated with each other and the APWU organizers, and "hit the bricks," withholding their labor in a one-day strike.

Along with due process for Ms. Gramm, the drivers were fighting for the respect of their union. According to driver Anthony White, "If the company feels that she violated company policy, they should take her back and give her due representation. If they feel they should investigate it, fine investigate it, as long as they do it in accordance to having a union, and we are a union right now..." The strike ended after the company agreed to apply "just cause" protection and a grievance procedure, up to and including arbitration, in relation to any discipline issued to Donna Gramm. Winning their major demand, the drivers returned to work with their heads held high, having taken a principled and victorious stand of union solidarity.

"The union vote and strike were resounding wins for these drivers and the entire labor movement, and are an inspiration to us all," said Support Services Director Arrion Brown.

"I congratulate the Peoria, IL 10 Road Drivers on their outstanding union victory and welcome them into the APWU," declared APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "Their powerful actions of union solidarity now set the foundation for building a strong local union and a strong contract campaign as negotiations for a first contract begin in the near future." ■

INSTALLATION OF NATIONAL OFFICERS: **Renewing Our Commitment to the Union in the New Year**

President Dimondstein's keynote speech

On Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022, the APWU held its Installation of National Officers at the MGM National Harbor Hotel in Oxon Hill, MD.

The ceremony was hosted by APWU Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth “Liz” Powell. It began with farewells to our outgoing officials, including resident officers, Southern Regional Coordinator Kenneth Beasley and Support Services Director, Steve Brooks. The evening continued with speeches from APWU President Mark Dimondstein and guest-of-honor Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14), a retired postal worker who also administered the oath of office to the 2022 installed national officers.

Lawrence praised postal workers, saying, “Everything I need to know about life, I learned in the Postal Service ... and really, the concept of service, because when you are a clerk sorting mail, you know every letter means something to someone, and you treat it with that respect.”

Lawrence then spoke about how she brought that concept of service from the Postal Service to her service on the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Reform, adding that, “I could continue to contribute, protect, and fight for my family - the Postal Service... And I just want to conclude my remarks to let you know how amazing you [postal workers] are.”

President Dimondstein concluded his speech with a challenge to the assembled audience and the membership beyond, saying, “I challenge us to find more ways to inspire and encourage members to become more involved in our union, to attend meetings, serve on union commit-



Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell hosted the installation



Rep. Brenda Lawrence administered the oath of office

tees, stand up for safe jobs, sign up non-members, wear union gear with pride, run for union office, welcome the involvement of young workers, lobby politicians, fight for postal banking, stand in solidarity with all workers, speak up and defend the public post office, and, regardless of our political persuasions, stand for unity in our common struggle for a better life.... We, the people, are the makers of history.” ■

Postal Vehicle Operator Pilot Program to Create **New Union Jobs** in Oklahoma City



A PWU and USPS leadership have signed a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Postal Vehicle Operator (PVO) Position Pilot Program that will establish and fill a minimum of 125 PVO positions in the Oklahoma City, OK area. The region does not currently have APWU-represented Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) operators, and the work has previously been contracted out to private sector Highway Contract Routes (HCRs).

The MOU, signed on Nov. 30, 2022, establishes a new career bargaining unit position titled, Postal Vehicle Operator, Level 6 and assigns the Motor Vehicle Services (MVS) Craft the work of transporting bulk quantities of mail in vehicles that do not require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

During the pilot, the Postal Service will make CDL training available for PVO employees who volunteer to be trained. Following successful completion of the training and receipt of a CDL, if a Motor Vehicle Operator and/or Tractor Trailer Operator position is established in the Oklahoma City installation, the CDL-required assignments shall be awarded, according to the provisions of Article 39 of the union contract.

"The Pilot MOU has the potential for the Postal Service to solve some of the challenges in recruiting, hiring, and retaining CDL Postal Vehicle Service operators. The MVS Craft continues to extol the benefits of having transportation duties performed in house by postal career operators instead of contractors. We look forward to working together and making this pilot a success," said MVS Craft Director Michael Foster.

National postal management and APWU national officers agreed to the job description and qualification standards for the new position that will be in effect during the pilot and any additional sites where this concept is determined to be feasible for expansion. The pilot will run for six months after implementation, unless there is a mutual agreement to extend it.

"This pilot program is an exciting development with potential to bring much more work into our bargaining unit and to grow the APWU," declared APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "I was pleased to have worked closely with MVS Director Foster to negotiate the MOU with management and appreciate management's willingness to begin to address the union's stance that much subcontracted work can and should, be brought back 'in house' and be performed by unionized postal workers." ■



Optimism and Action in 2023

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

I hope our future in 2023 will be blessed with optimism and action. Our continued growth will depend on how we work together to build our locals and states with union activists who are a force to be reckoned with. I know many of our employees will be in holiday burnout, enduring physical, mental, and emotional strain. The answer to getting help and resolving these problems is through union employee power and a collective union voice.

At APWU Headquarters, we want to provide you with the tools that can assist you to succeed. We are working very hard to provide the keys that unlock our members' hearts, that will give them the courage to want to help the union create a safe, committed, non-hostile work environment from our employer. We are tired of ill-equipped 204Bs, supervisors, and higher management officials that, once charged, are just sent off to other postal facilities to discriminate again.

We need programs and methods to help change our workplace to a place where we are recognized as needed, as important, and where there is respect for all workers. We need managers to be trained on how to work with people, and to realize that their workers are the backbone of what makes the Postal Service successful. We have to make sure that we are treated with value. We need higher managers to act when they have supervisors that can't or won't work with their employees; we need a management that is willing to staff as needed, to stop degrading postal services, and to provide the needed support to battle burnout, hostile, racist, and unsafe work environments. They must value the emotional well-being of all postal employees, nationwide, so that our employees will stop abandoning postal jobs.

There is a bigger problem on the workroom floor. In 2022, there were two shootings on workroom floors in Tennessee. Can you close your eyes and imagine you're at work and you witness five gunshots going into an employee standing nearby, happening before your very eyes? The state of employees' mental health, and lack of "supervisor people skills" training has been an issue for years! There are supervisors that get satisfaction from bullying an employee or a steward. It could

even be an issue of race. Maybe the employee has been going through a personal crisis, but no one at work has intervened and offered mental health support. Instead, management's response is to discipline employees.

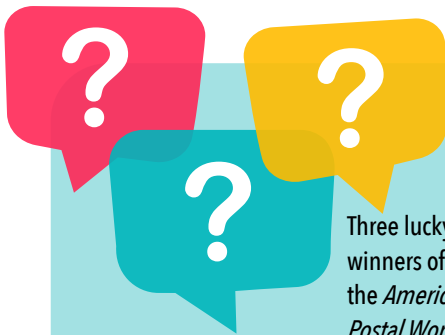
The USPS doesn't really provide much-needed cultural, diversity, or listening and civility training, nor do they truly monitor or provide ongoing programs. A standup talk is not a training.

LET US START THIS NEW YEAR BY CHALLENGING MANAGEMENT AT EVERY LEVEL FOR MORE INTERNAL EMPLOYEE SUPPORT FOR SAFER, NON-HOSTILE, WORK ENVIRONMENTS, AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE BETTER TRAINING, BETTER EXPANDED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS, EXPANDING POSTAL SERVICES, AND AN EMPLOYEE-CENTERED SUPPORT PROGRAM WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION OR JUDGEMENT.

The USPS still doesn't understand the true cost of a workforce in crisis or the importance of maintaining a fully supported and mentally strong workforce. The negative impact of an unsupported workforce greatly effects productivity, retention, creativity, engagement, performance, and absenteeism.

Let us start this new year by challenging management at every level for more internal employee support for safer, non-hostile, work environments, and programs that provide better training, better expanded mental health programs, expanding postal services, and an employee-centered support program without fear of retaliation or judgement.

As I wrote earlier, we can make a difference if each of you help get co-workers to stand up together, and volunteer to make a change on your workroom floor. It takes union employee power! What angers you at work, most likely angers many others. Stand together with the union and fight back! ■



APWU January-February QUIZ

Three lucky winners of the *American Postal Worker*

quiz will receive a \$50 coupon for the APWU store so that you can gear up and show your APWU union pride. To enter the quiz, email your answers to communications@apwu.org, together with your EIN by Feb 3, 2023. Winners will be randomly selected among those who correctly answer the following:

1. Every year, on the third Monday of January, Americans observe a federal holiday honoring the birth and life of civil rights icon Martin Luther King, Jr. What year did the holiday become effective for APWU-represented employees?
2. In 2022, a new law was enacted that repealed the unfair USPS healthcare prefunding mandate, guaranteed six-day delivery, and provided a prospective Medicare integration. What was the name of the new law?
3. What is the name of the campaign to expand postal financial services, which could bring simple, low-cost, financial services to lower-income people as a public service?

The lucky winners from the November-December 2022 edition of the *American Postal Worker* were:

Jessica J. Reggi, Long Island Area Local
Matthew C. Penttila, Central Massachusetts Area Local
Anna White, Erie Area Local

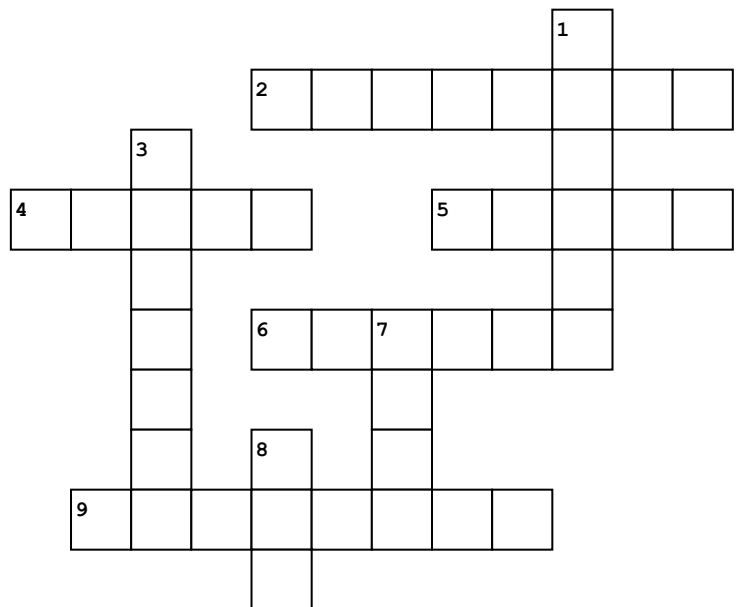
APWU CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

2. When do Americans celebrate Black History Month?
4. In 1912, textile and immigrant workers in Lawrence, MA staged a walkout known as the "_____ and Roses" strike.
5. What type of program temporarily tests new concepts, such as the recently announced Postal Vehicle Operator position?
6. What line should you never cross?
9. The USPS is one of the largest employers of _____.

Down

1. What type of measure adds, amends, or repeals existing laws by the will of the voters?
3. These standards are a "delivery performance goal for a mail class or product."
7. A payroll adjustment for inflation received by members two-times per year through the duration of the contract.
8. The "___ Cup Rebellion" was the name of recent strike by Starbucks employees.



ANSWERS: Across: 2. February; 4. bread; 5. pilot; 6. picket; 9. veterans
Down: 1. ballot; 3. service; 7. cola; 8. red

We want your feedback!

What do you like about the *American Postal Worker* magazine and what would you like to change? Is there a column you always read? Is there a regular feature that you'd like to see? We want to hear your feedback. Scan the QR code or visit apwu.org/magazine-surveys to take the survey.





SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

Starting the Year in Good Financial Shape is the Key

Every new year brings new challenges – nothing we are not able to handle, some larger than we would like. However, we prevail and persevere nonetheless. Starting the new year ensuring all financial and legal requirements are fulfilled is the key. It keeps local and state affiliates from potential penalties and fines.

Compliance with Legal Requirements!

Local and state presidents' and treasurers' responsibilities include ensuring compliance with all legal requirements from the Department of Labor (DOL), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and State Workers Compensation Insurance.

The DOL requires local and state affiliates to have a Constitution and Bylaws; a fidelity bond covering 10 percent of liquid assets (National APWU strongly recommends 100 percent of bond coverage); elections at least every three years for locals, and four years for state affiliates; electronically file annual Labor Management (LM) reports; retain financial records for the current year and the last five years; and to preserve and retain Executive Board and General Membership meeting minutes.

The IRS requires local and state treasurers to electronically file the annual 990 report (990, 990-EZ, 990-N, including Retiree Chapters that handle their own funds). When processing payroll for local and state officers, a form I-9 (Verification of Employment Form) must be completed, W-9 (Tax ID for independent contractors if applicable), W-2, W-3, W-4, electronically file Form 941 (Payroll Taxes Deposited), ensure appropriate state and municipal or county taxes are being withheld and deposited, electronically file form 940 (Federal Unemployment Tax Deposited), and when applicable, issue form 1099 for non-employee compensation.

Lastly, it is a legal requirement to obtain Workers Compensation Insurance for your state. Local and state presidents should contact Annette August-Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, if you need assistance or training on any of the legal requirements, or Secretary-Treasurer training.

Understanding the Dues Check Off (DCO)

Dues Check Off (DCO) is the report local and state affiliates receive every two weeks. The DCO is the local finance income report. After the required National Per Capita dues are deducted, the remaining balance is deposited into the

local or state bank account. It is important for local and state presidents and treasurers to review their DCO upon receipt. By reviewing it regularly, you are able to check for discrepancies, verify membership, as well as identify and understand the acronyms listed on the DCO. The following acronyms may appear on your DCO:

- TR LOSS— Member transferred out of the Local/State
- TR GAIN—Member Transferred into the Local/State
- CANCEL—Cancelled Membership
- NO DED—No Dues Deduction
- INCR—Increase In Dues Amount
- SEP—Member Separated
- NU EMP—New Member
- RET—Member Retired

If you need assistance with your DCO, send an email to: percapissues@apwu.org or call 202-842-8505. Local and state presidents can also participate in the DCO Pilot Program. This is a voluntary program that allows the local or state treasurers to administratively input new member forms locally and perform additional administrative functions. DCO training is required to participate in the pilot program.

Secretary-Treasurer's Conference and LM Report Training

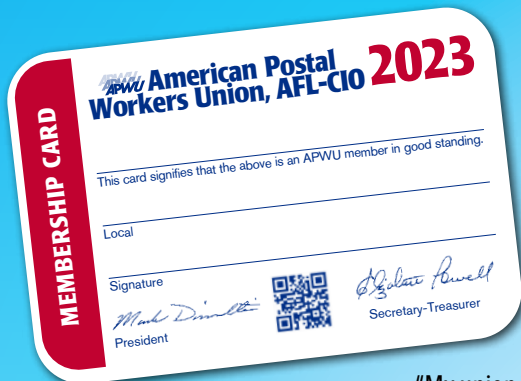
March will be a busy month for Secretary-Treasurer's training opportunities. Register early for the Secretary-Treasurer's Conference, as space is limited. We recommend that local and state presidents and treasurers attend at least one Secretary-Treasurer's conference per year. Dates and times for virtual LM report training will be provided to assist local and state treasurers to prepare to electronically file the required DOL LM reports. Please do not miss these training opportunities.

Mark Your Calendar!

March 31, 2023 is the deadline to electronically file DOL LM reports, and May 15, 2023 is the deadline to electronically file IRS 990 reports if your fiscal year ended Dec. 31, 2022. NO EXCEPTIONS! ■

Our Union Membership Cards

APWU membership cards are currently arriving by mail. As we start the new year, *The American Postal Worker* invites you to think about what that card means to you. We asked some of our members, and here are just a few of the answers we received. ■



"My union card is my voice. Together with my steward, workers like me can work with management to resolve our issues on the job, and secure better pay, healthcare, and safety."

Walter Jones,
Nashville Area Local



"My union card means I have chosen to make a difference in my workplace, community and stand in solidarity for all working class employees everywhere."

Jeanette Woods,
Nation's Capital
Southern MD Area Local

"My union card is my badge of freedom and stands for working men and women who are the backbone of our country."

Jim Ahear,
Florida Suncoast (retired)



"My union card means a lot to me; it means more and better opportunities for the workers like me, better pay and good healthcare. The card represents all of us, no matter where we work or what our job is, and I'm happy to be a part of such a great organization!"

Reginna Ross, South Carolina
Postal Workers Union



"My union card means that I have security on the job and a group of other members who will stand with me to fight for better wages and benefits."

Alexander Hubbard,
Birmingham Area Local

"Every time I go into a post office to mail a package or buy a book of stamps almost never do I ever walk out without letting the clerk at the window know that I'm a retiree. Most of the time I pull out my card and I show them that I'm a member of the local 380 and I ask [if they are]."

Manuel Padilla,
Albuquerque Local



"The card is a reminder of those who came before me and battled to get the hard-fought rights we have today."

Brian Hassett,
Albany Local Retiree

"It only makes sense that all employees would be members, considering all that unions do for the working class. Would you rather have a union or not is the question? No union equates to a company that has free reign over you, no Collective Bargaining Agreement and no protections for you."

Scott Vredenburg,
MVS Craft Director,
Sacramento Area Local

"My union card reminds me that all of my sisters and brothers have my back! My union card reminds me that the APWU always rises above any and all challenges we may face."

Sam Wood,
Albuquerque Local



Santa's Elves are Union Proud – Let's Spread the Word!

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHARLIE CASH

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season! I want to thank all of you for once again being the “elves” that brought millions of smiles to people around the world! I say world because residents of the United States rely on our services to send gifts to family and friends around the world. Those family and friends could be in the military, stationed in other countries, or just family around the world. As a teenager, I lived in Japan for two holiday seasons. It was from your work that I received a box of gifts from my family each year that made me feel at home. Never underestimate the work you do; you are the real elves and Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus!

IN NOVEMBER 2023, WE WILL SEE OUR FINAL GENERAL WAGE INCREASE OF THE 2021-2024 NATIONAL AGREEMENT. CAREER EMPLOYEES WILL RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL 1.3 PERCENT WHILE POSTAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES (PSES) WILL RECEIVE A 2.3 PERCENT GENERAL INCREASE (PSES DO NOT RECEIVE COLA). I LOOK BACK AT MY NEARLY 27-YEAR CAREER WITH THE POSTAL SERVICE AND AM THANKFUL I HAD A UNION CONTRACT THAT GAVE ME RAISES EVERY YEAR AND STEP INCREASES AS A CAREER EMPLOYEE. I NEVER HAD TO BEG OR ASK FOR A RAISE. I KNEW THEY WERE COMING NO MATTER WHAT.

As 2023 begins, I am excited for what it brings the APWU. Soon, we will know the results of the changes to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) that the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is based upon. Each career employee could receive an increase. Remember that the COLA is the proverbial “double edged sword.” If we get a large COLA, that means items like food, eggs, clothes, gas, and rent are costing us more and eating up more of our wages. If it is a smaller COLA, that means inflation has slowed. Slowing inflation is better for the workers of America and means

you are keeping more of your wages. When the numbers are announced in February, keep that in mind.

In November 2023, we will see our final general wage increase of the 2021-2024 National Agreement. Career employees will receive an additional 1.3 percent while Postal Support Employees (PSEs) will receive a 2.3 percent general increase (PSEs do not receive COLA). I look back at my nearly 27-year career with the Postal Service and am thankful I had a union contract that gave me raises every year and step increases as a career employee. I never had to beg or ask for a raise. I knew they were coming no matter what.

Many of you have worked for non-union companies in the past. I think about what it meant to me to work for a non-union company. Back in 1993, before I started at the Postal Service, I worked for a company that was non-union. Each year we went through “performance reviews.” This is where your supervisor gave you a review and told you what your increase would be. At this particular company, we were rated 1-5, and I received a five in all five categories. I thought I was going to get a great raise! After my review, I was informed that I would receive the largest raise anyone would get! I was so excited, but then immediately angered by what I was told. I would be getting a raise of 7 cents an hour! That ended up being an 0.008 percent annual raise. What an insult! From that day on I did the absolute minimum of what was required!

Working in a union environment is amazing and something we all should be proud of being a part of! In fact, American workers are unionizing faster than they have since 1965! Union favorability ratings are the highest they have been in decades. Workers from Starbucks, Amazon, and Delta Airlines Flight Attendants are all fighting to have what we have.

I challenge all of you to be get out there and support those trying to organize! My family would not be where they are today without good union wages and benefits. Every American worker deserves it! Remember, America is better when we say UNION YES!

SOLIDARITY! ■



Working Around Dangerous Machines

The Postal Service uses many different types of machines to process and ultimately deliver the mail. From basic conveyor belts, to Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) machines, and the variety of parcel sorting machines found throughout the processing network. These machines are all highly efficient at the tasks they were designed to perform. However, they can also be very dangerous to operate and be around.

The equipment used at the Postal Service often uses pulleys, belts, and very large conveyors. Make no mistake, no matter how small the belt or pulley looks, if you are not careful, you can get a small pinch at minimum; at worst, you could face an amputation or even become fatally injured. Every year, multiple postal employees are severely injured, lose a limb or digit, or even die.

But you can prevent these injuries by following some simple procedures:

- Never put your hands or fingers near moving belts, pulleys, or conveyors.
- When clearing jams from any piece of machinery, activate an emergency stop (E-Stop) to pre-

vent the machine from starting up while you or anyone else is clearing a jam.

- Always ensure you and all your co-workers are clear of a machine when starting it up. Always communicate with any machine partner when you are starting a machine to ensure safety of all operators.
- If a machine guard that prevents workers from getting near moving parts or pinch-points is not in place, bypassed, or otherwise does not adequately protect workers, **DO NOT OPERATE THE MACHINE.** Immediately call for maintenance to repair the guard. You cannot be required to operate a machine while it is in an unsafe condition.

- If you are a maintenance employee, always **LOCK OUT/TAG OUT** any machine you are working on. Management cannot demand you work on a machine while it is able to be energized, putting your limbs or life in jeopardy. It is never worth risking your life or limbs to save a few minutes in order to avoid locking a machine out.
- Always complete a PS-Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice when any unsafe condition is observed.

Safety is every employee's right. You have the right to come to work, do your job, and return home to your family and friends uninjured every single day. Remember, we all must Stand Up for Safe Jobs! ■

If you have questions about PS-Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice, need help completing one, or can't find one in your office, contact your local union representative. For more information on reporting hazardous and unsafe conditions, visit the APWU website at: www.apwu.org/1767



For information on using Form PS 1767 to document hostile work environments, go to page 22.

MEMBERS



Philadelphia Area Local Retiree Chapter members (in no particular order) Cynthia Nesmith, June Cohen, Clarissa Roberts, Jaqueline Armstrong, and Lynn DeShield phone-banking for union endorsed candidates in PA



Regina Favors, Detroit District Area Local with Congresswoman Haley Stevens



Diana Cline, Mid Hudson New York Area Local at a congressional and gubernatorial campaign event in Kingston, NY



Vickie Allen, Columbus Area Local Retiree Chapter, writes postcards to get out the vote

IN ACTION

APWU VOTES!

APWU members got active in the 2022 midterm elections, supporting our endorsed pro-labor candidates and encouraging union members to vote – and vote-by-mail! ■



She Anita Taylor,
Fayetteville Area Local,
canvassing to get out
the vote

Wanda Graibe,
Miami Area Local
canvassing
to get out
the vote

Teresa McClellan,
Charlotte Area Local
canvassing to get out the vote

Bindu Sancho (left) and Brittany Price (right) of the
Cleveland Area Local at the North Shore AFL-CIO Labor
Walk launch with AFL-CIO President Liz Schuler

Bulk Mail Technician and Mailing Requirement Clerk Position Qualification Extended MOU Now Includes Job Audits to Increase Clerk Craft Work & National Dispute Recognizing Higher Level Pay for MRCs



Assistant Director Lynn Pallas-Barber, Director Lamont Brooks and Assistant Director Sam Lisenbe

On Nov. 4, 2022, the parties agreed to extend the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Re: Bulk Mail Tech (BMT) and Mailing Requirements Clerk (MRC) Position Qualification.

This MOU originated during the COVID-19 pandemic and has been extended on several occasions, leading to the latest agreement, which continues it for one year from the signing of the agreement. The MOU establishes the required training for employees bidding to BMT and MRC duty assignments, including the number of hours for classroom training and on-the-job training.

For the first time, this MOU adds an agreement to jointly review the following positions to identify the work performed by each position and if work currently being performed by Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) employees should instead be performed by clerk bargaining unit employees:

- Bulk Mail Technician
- Mailing Requirements Clerk
- Supervisor, Mail & Shipping Solutions Center
- Mailing Standards Specialist
- Supervisor, Mail Entry

The joint review will be conducted by six BMTs and six MRCs, as chosen by the APWU, and EAS employees as determined by the Postal Service. The BMTs and MRCs who are selected will be released from their regular duties as necessary to “fully participate in the activities associated with the joint position review process.” In addition, any training and/or travel expenses will be consistent with the F-15 Handbook and the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM).

“The addition of the position review to this MOU is yet another reflection of the Clerk Craft’s commitment to capture as much work for our craft as possible,” explained APWU Clerk Craft Director Lamont Brooks. “We believe that many of the duties currently performed by EAS employees belong to the bargaining unit,” Brooks added, “And the review will also hopefully help to more clearly

identify the dividing line between Bulk Mail Tech duties and Mailing Requirements Clerk duties.”

Director Brooks has assigned Assistant Director Sam Lisenbe to take the lead on this joint-jobs audit and in-person training review.

The position review will begin no later than Jan. 27, 2023 and conclude no later than May 5, 2023. There will be joint bi-weekly status update meetings held via Zoom with the national parties’ representatives and the individuals involved in the appropriate review process.

The parties agree to continue discussions on any other EAS positions that may need to be included as part of the subject jobs audit.

Following the conclusion of the position review, the national level parties will review the in-person training program offered at the National Center for Employee Development (NCED), including the material content and schedule.

The MOU will expire Nov. 4, 2023, unless extended by mutual agreement.

APWU Challenges Mailing Requirement Clerks Rate of Pay

By the time you read this article, the APWU will have filed a national dispute making the assertion that all MRCs should have been paid at the level-8 rate of pay since at least March 16, 2019.

On June 7, 2017, the Postal Service notified the APWU of their intention to initiate a job analytic study of thirty-nine standard position descriptions and qualification standards. The Postal Service stated that the periodic job reviews help to ensure the continued relevance and alignment of selection assessment with job duties, responsibilities, and requirements. They further stated the subject process will consist of conducting job observations, surveys, interviews, and establishing focus groups of bargaining and non-bargaining employees. The APWU was never provided with the outcome of this study and their findings. ■

Welcome to National Center for Employee Development & Full Per Diem Implementation



Assistant Director Terry Martinez, Director Idowu Balogun and Assistant Director Jason Treier

In an effort to be proactive and understand firsthand how the union contract's per diem provisions were being implemented, APWU headquarters maintenance officers traveled to the National Center for Employee Development (NCED) on Nov. 8, 2022, to speak directly with students. The officers also met with the Postal Service to bring students' concerns to their attention and work towards resolutions.

During our site visit, we learned the following:

1. A lack of reasonable seating inside for students who chose to order food delivery and groceries.
2. Aramark chose to price 3 Squares buffet meals beyond the Government Services Administration (GSA) per diem.
3. Insufficient pre-arrival communication to students about how to acquire advance per diem.
4. Some employees were incorrectly advised that the usage of travel cards was mandatory.

After discussing our concerns about the lack of sufficient seating, the Postal Service said that students can consume delivery food in the Pony Express seating area (until it closes each day), outside in the courtyard area, or in their rooms. In addition, the Postal Service is reviewing the use of another seating area inside the hotel for students to eat food purchased outside the NCED. We will continue to monitor this issue and work towards an acceptable response.

Food choices and GSA Per Diem

You have choices of where and when to eat: The current GSA per diem for Norman, OK is \$59 (subject to change). You have the option to eat at the following locations:

GP 405, Hotel Building – Bar and Lounge. *Dine-in, a la carte. Dinner service only.*

Gift Shop, Hotel Building – Starbucks, *grab and go snacks, sandwiches, salads, and beverages. Open every day, breakfast, lunch, and dinner.*

Pony Express, Main Learning Center – Grab and Go marketplace *featuring salads, sandwiches, snacks, pastries, frozen items, bottled beverages, and coffee. Open Monday – Friday, breakfast and lunch only.*

Vending machines *with snacks and beverages are also located throughout the property.*

3 Squares Buffet, Hotel Building: *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.*

UberEATS, Door Dash, Instacart *will deliver food with a nominal delivery charge.*

The Postal Service intends to review and analyze trends over the next three months to consider implementing additional 3 Squares dining discounts (purchasing a meal plan for the duration of the training at a discounted rate).

The current per diem rates are set by the GSA, and that Aramark sets their own prices. Neither are negotiated by the unions. We believe that it is unacceptable for the 3 Squares buffet meals to be priced above the current per diem, and we will continue to meet with the Postal Service to get the issue resolved.

An issue that came up was that some postal officials incorrectly informed students that they were required to get receipts for all of their meals. This is not true. There is no dispute at the national level that receipts for food are either necessary or required in order to receive a full per diem. We urged the Postal Service to send out an update notifying management at the local and district level that food receipts are not required.

Another issue that arose was that some postal officials attempted to mandate that students receive and use a travel credit card for their per diem. This is also untrue. Travel credit cards are an option for the student, not a requirement.

If you have any per diem or other related questions, do not hesitate to reach out to your National Business Agents. Together, we can attempt to resolve any local or district issues expeditiously. Rest assured that we are addressing your concerns as they are being brought to our attention.

We wish you and your family a Happy Holiday Season! ■

Pay Anomalies Continue



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz

The best intentions often have unintended consequences. Past contract negotiations have resulted in various changes to the pay tables in Article 9 for various groups of employees. These achievements were intended to improve the wages and lives of our members, and in almost all cases, they do.

We continue to address pay anomalies that occur as a result of changes to the pay scale.

An anomaly is defined as "...a person or thing that is different from what is usual, or not in agreement with something else and therefore not satisfactory."

Pay anomalies occurred when the parties made Article 9 wage changes. And while it is often a tedious process that requires the involvement of economists and accountants, the anomalies were corrected. The most recent pay anomaly occurred as a result of changes to the level 8 pay table negotiated in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Due to the problems hiring and retaining Tractor Trailer Operators, the parties negotiated substantive changes. The elimination of Steps FF-AA and the adding of Step P resulted in a \$3.50 pay increase for some recently hired level 8 members who will reach level 8 Step P. The fact that the level 8 employees, who were in the double steps FF-AA, remained in the same waiting period until their next step increase, enabled certain junior employees to earn more than senior employees, thus creating the anomaly.

The parties reaffirmed the agreement that a junior employee should not normally make more than a senior employee in the same position, and continue to correct any pay disparities.

First Article Testing Cargo Trucks Model 548

The Postal Service purchased 447 additional Model 548 Cargo Vans. Modifications were made from cargo vans previously purchased. The union submitted recommendations, pursuant to Article 39.3. B, and included are some of the responses.

1. The safety chain on the lift gate needs to be larger to make it easier to fasten.

Response: We agree with this recommendation. This has been addressed with the manufacturer and production units will have a larger opening.

2. The yellow grab handle for the cab would be a beneficial option so drivers don't use the steering wheel.

Response: We agree with this recommendation. The yellow grab handle will be added.

3. Handles on the back of the truck should be larger. This would help with safety when raising the lift gate with large equipment.

Response: We agree with this recommendation. The handles on the back of the truck have been upgraded from 12 inches to 18 inches.

4. Please provide the safety program for the familiarization and operation of the cargo trucks.

Response: After review of the new cargo truck's operation manual, it was determined that it was unnecessary to develop a new safety program for the familiarization and operation of these cargo trucks due to their similarity with the existing fleet. Therefore, vehicle familiarization will be administered in accordance with Handbook EL-804, Safe Driver Program.

New Term of Office

Nov. 12 began the 2022-2025 term of office for all APWU National Officers. The Motor Vehicle Service Executive Council, which includes the Director, Assistant, and six Regional Business Agents, remains committed to protecting the rights and benefits of the craft, challenging the contracting of PVS, and VMF work, improving the CBA, and overall working conditions. These are your MVS elected representatives for this term of office.

- Michael O. Foster: Director
- Kenneth Prinz: Assistant Director
- Bruce Amey: Southeast Region
- Jerome Pittman: Western Region
- Dyrike Shaw: Southwest Region
- Garrett Langley: Eastern Region
- Rick White: Northeast Region
- Mark Krueger: Central Region

Welcome brother Rick, proud member of the Boston Metro Local. Welcome brother Mark, proud member of the Milwaukee Local.

The Motor Vehicle Service Division wishes everyone Happy Holidays, and Keep on Trucking. ■

New Year, New Officers, Same Commitment!



Director Arrion Brown

New Year's greetings to our Support Services and entire APWU family. I hope this article finds you and your family well.

Our APWU election has concluded and we have two new officers leading our division. Before I introduce our new officers, we must say farewell to our retiring officers, brother Steve Brooks and sister Judy McCann. They have both served our division with productive hard work and dedication over their tenures in office. We wish them both the best in retirement and thank them for their service to the division.

I am humbled and honored to have been elected Support Services Division Director. My name is Arrion Brown, and I was the Support Services craft director for the Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local. I will be serving our division along with our newly elected Support Services National Business Agent, brother Orlando Anderson of the St. Louis Gateway local. Brother Orlando has served as both the St. Louis Gateway Local and Missouri state Support Services craft director. Combined, we have the knowledge, experience, and dedication to continue serving our members with the hard work and dedication that we have become accustomed to by our retiring officers. We both look forward to representing our members and keeping our division strong.

In terms of occupations, the Support Services Division is the most diverse and complex division of the APWU. Our division represents Information Technology and Accounting Services Specialists (IT/AS) who work at four data centers in Eagan, MN; San Mateo, CA; St. Louis, MO; and Wilkes-Barre, PA. We represent private-sector truck drivers from Dallas, Ft. Worth, and El Paso, TX; Little Rock, AK; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, OK; Memphis, TN; Shreveport, LA; Des Moines, IA; Kansas City, MO; Kalamazoo, MI and our newly formed unit in Harrisburg, PA. Our division represents postal nurses across the country and in U.S. territories; Human Relations Shared Services Center workers in Greensboro, NC; mail-transport equipment service center workers in Temperance, MI; Operating Services workers in Washington, DC and Merrifield, VA; and Material Support Craft workers in Topeka, KS.

Nearly all of the occupational groups in our division are covered by separate bargaining unit agreements, except for our private-sector truck drivers who are covered under three different agreements. We are currently in negotiations for our new private-sector trucking unit in Harrisburg, PA, which would become our fourth contract for our division's truck drivers.

I AM HUMBLLED AND HONORED TO HAVE BEEN ELECTED SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION DIRECTOR. MY NAME IS ARRION BROWN, AND I WAS THE SUPPORT SERVICES CRAFT DIRECTOR FOR THE NATION'S CAPITAL SOUTHERN MARYLAND AREA LOCAL.

Brother Orlando and I look forward to the responsibility of contract enforcement for all of the groups in our division. We will also communicate extensively with local leaders and members prior to contract negotiations for each group to determine how our contracts can be improved. We are committed to providing a level of service that will keep our members proud.

In closing, a unique aspect of our division is the possibility for expansion. The Support Services Division can organize unions in any occupation or industry that has a relationship to the logistics of the Postal Service. At this moment, non-unionized workers have been galvanized, by both the pandemic and historic inflation, to organize themselves into unions that will fight for safe workplaces and secure wages. Successful grassroots union organizing initiatives have taken place at Amazon, Starbucks, Trader Joe's, and many other previously non-unionized companies, due to the pandemic and inflation. Our division will play a role in organizing the unorganized, as written in Article 2 section 5 of our APWU National Constitution and Bylaws, because we believe all workers should be fairly represented by a strong union when dealing with their employers. ■



Omar Gonzalez, Western Regional Coordinator

Monsters Do Exist...

...as evidenced by those that creep around postal work floors. This new year we re-focus on the harassment and bullying by postal monsters. It takes a postal village to take them on. Every part of our union must pursue these beasts!

They have no right to make your work-life hell. Article 3 of the union contract requires compliance with the contract, laws, and postal regulations. EL 801 1-2; ELM 811.24 requires bosses to maintain good employee relations and ELM 665.24 allows no tolerance of bullying, harassment, or intimidation by anyone at any level. Supervisors must manage their workplace and foster an atmosphere conducive to work, and to avoid behavior that could be interpreted as harassment, per Publication 552.

Why then, do postal monsters exist? Because we tolerate them and fail to pursue them to the bitter end.

Shedding Light on The Fiend

Monsters hate light. We must fully document the bullying, intimidation and harassment via **PS 1767**. Use it because the Administrative Support Manual (273.132) states, "... To assure postal safety...employees must also report any disturbances or improper conduct on the part of individuals on postal premises." Bosses may balk at the use of 1767s, but Chap 824 backs its use.

When you fill out a 1767, take a picture or a copy, submit it to the next level manager; copy the safety rep and union representative. The issue should be investigated within the tour of duty. If not, or if it is not abated, it should be grieved at Step 2.

Pursuing the Beast

Expect the monster to push-back against the use of a 1767. ELM 666.17 prohibits bosses from retaliation. Document harassment, bullying and mistreatment. Take notes and ask for help from co-workers. Ensure your officers pursue the matter at Step 2, per Article 14; then to the Safety Committee; then to arbitration. **But a grievance is NOT enough!**

File an EEO Complaint if harassed or discriminated against. Visit: efile.usps.com. Review the process at

eeoc.gov. Although you may seek representation, it is not required, do not give up! **But EEO is not enough!**

Contact your congressional representatives and request their help addressing the harassment. Give them the facts. Keep copies for use in other forums! **But Congress is not enough!**

Contact the OIG/Postal Inspectors, ask for an investigation and let them know the facts. Keep copies. If you use the "hotline" don't expect a response, especially if you call anonymously. Write to them with the facts reporting the misconduct. **But the OIG/USPSIS is not enough!**

See your doctor if the hostile environment is causing medical strife. Document medical attention received. Management acknowledges in Publication 552 (page 9) that some employees may suffer serious emotional and psychological harm from harassment. Document treatment, as it can be used in your EEOC complaint for compensatory damages. **But seeing your doctor is not enough!**

File an OWCP Stress Claim if you suffer emotional stress when carrying out your assignment under harassment or mistreatment. Abuse has to be proven to establish the relationship between the medical condition and work. This is done by documentation and a comprehensive medical report that establishes causal relation with what has occurred at work. Once all the required documentation is compiled, file a CA-2 Claim for Occupational Disease at: ecomp.dol.gov.

The Village Has to Commit

The union has to do its part to counter hostile environments. Employees begin the process, and representatives pursue the grievances and Safety Committee agendas. Business Agents elevate the appeals to arbitration and give them priority. Your Regional Coordinators Sharyn Stone, Tiffany Foster, AJ Jones, Yared Wonde and I are committed to assisting you. Your local union reps, the NBAs, and our national leaders document, pursue, and eliminate workplace harassment. **It takes a village to get rid of monsters! ■**



Judy Beard, Director

A Year in Review: A Look Back at 2022 and Looking Forward to 2023

New Year Message from Director Judy Beard

Happy New Year, union family! As the 118th Congress begins, I want to take a moment to reflect on some notable legislative accomplishments of the APWU in the last Congress.

We have proven that when we work together, we win. We fought for, and won, the passage of the *Postal Service Reform Act* (PSRA) of 2022. This law repealed the unfair USPS healthcare pre-funding mandate and added an obligation for transparency from the USPS regarding service standards. Additionally, the PSRA guaranteed six-day delivery and provided a prospective Medicare Integration, which goes into effect in 2025. Medicare Integration does not apply to those already retired, and both current and retired employees will remain in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHB). For a short time in 2021, we won up to 600 hours of emergency Covid leave and temporarily secured an expedited process for filing Covid-related workers' compensation claims for postal employees in the American Rescue Plan.

Most recently, we fought for, and won, \$3 billion for an electric fleet in the *Inflation Reduction Act*. In this new year, we will keep up the fight for pro-postal, pro-union legislation. From Federal Retirement Fairness for our PSEs to Social Security Fairness for our retirees, the struggle continues.

As you are aware, no changes would be possible without you, the members. We value your support and continued participation in the day-to-day local union business, as well as your participation in the broader political landscape. Without your participation, paired with your donations to our Committee on Political Action (COPA), we would not have such a strong voice on Capitol Hill. With a divided Congress, we are reminded of the importance of working across the aisle. We remain committed to maintaining existing relationships, and forming new ones, with members of Congress over the next two years, in order to deliver results.

As this article goes to press, congressional leadership are in talks to pass a bill to keep the government open past Dec. 16, when funds run out. In addition, Congress will try to pass bills to protect same-sex and interracial

marriage, and to reform the electoral count process to prevent another Jan. 6-type event. We are still fighting for Congress to vote on the *Social Security Fairness Act*, a requirement to track federal election ballots, and an extension of the OWCP Covid Presumption rule, which is set to expire on Jan. 27, 2023. For a list of our legislative priorities, please visit apwu.org, click "Our Union," then go to "Legislative & Political."

AS YOU ARE AWARE, NO CHANGES WOULD BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOU, THE MEMBERS. WE VALUE YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE DAY-TO-DAY LOCAL UNION BUSINESS, AS WELL AS YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE BROADER POLITICAL LANDSCAPE.

Election Results

In November, millions of Americans exercised their right to vote. We want to thank each of you for voting, initiating conversations, and getting others to vote.

Notably, Illinois voters approved Amendment 1, The Right to Collectively Bargain Measure. The state will now have constitutional protections for the right to collectively bargain for the "purpose of negotiating wages, hours, and working conditions, and to protect their [employees'] economic welfare and safety at work." This sweeping change comes on the heels of a right-to-work movement during the last governor's tenure just a few years ago.

Thank You

Thank you to every APWU member who participated in the midterm elections. Over fifty active, retired, and auxiliary members worked around-the-clock to educate voters on pro-labor candidates, critical ballot initiatives, and referendums. Additionally, thank you to every ballot monitor and alternate who helped ensure the voice of the American people was heard nationwide. Your oversight helped us identify problems and find solutions to ensure every vote was counted. ■



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

Burnout: Signs, Symptoms, and Prevention

The last few years dealing with the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused many people to become overwhelmed and experience burnout. However, many either don't recognize its symptoms or even know what it is. Burnout is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It can occur when people are unable to meet constant demands, sapping their energy, and leaving them feeling increasingly hopeless, powerless, or resentful.

How Can You Tell if You are Experiencing Burning Out?

The signs of burnout tend to be mental rather than physical. They can include feelings of:

Frustration, powerlessness, detachment, withdrawal, isolation, failure, irritability, and uncontrollable sadness. People experiencing burnout may find themselves snapping at people or making snide remarks, and are often depressed and might want to sleep all the time, or are often "too tired" to socialize.

What is the Difference Between Stress and Burnout?

A person is normally aware of being under a lot of stress, but people rarely notice burnout when it occurs. Burnout is often a result of unrelenting stress, but is not the same as too much stress. Stress involves physical and psychological pressures. Stressed people normally feel better when everything is under control. When people experience burnout, they may feel empty, devoid of motivation, and do not see any hope of positive change in their situations.

What Causes Job Burnout?

Many of us have days when we are bored with what we do at work, when our co-workers seem bull-headed, when dragging ourselves into work seems like a waste of energy, or when nothing we do seems to make a difference. However, when every day is a bad day, you may be experiencing burnout.

What Factors on the Job Leads to Burnout?

The following factors can lead to workplace burnout:

- Setting unrealistic goals for yourself or having them imposed upon you;

- Being expected to be too many things to too many people;
- Working under rules that seem unreasonably coercive or punitive;
- Boredom from doing work that never changes or doesn't challenge you, and
- Feeling trapped, for economic reasons, to stay on a job that you hate.

How to Prevent Burnout

Because burnout is often related to stress, many of the methods that are effective in countering stress can also help prevent burnout as well.

If experiencing symptoms of burnout, you should:

- **Know your limits:** Be realistic about how much of your time and yourself you can give, set limits, and communicate those limits to family members, and others;
- **Connect with a cause or a community group:** Joining a religious, social, or support group can give you a place to talk to like-minded people about how to deal with daily stress;
- **Practice healthy communication:** Express your feelings to friends and family members who will listen, understand, and not judge;
- **Cultivate positive relationships:** Poor relationships and isolation can contribute to burnout, but positive relationships can help prevent or reduce its onset, and
- **Learn to relax and blow off steam:** Play cards, go to a movie or go out to eat with a friend.

In summary, to prevent or recover from burnout, learn to cultivate methods of personal renewal, self-awareness, and connection with others, and do not be afraid to acknowledge your own needs. Identifying the causes of your stress, recognizing your limited control of any given situation, and taking care of yourself, emotionally and physically, can help you to avoid burnout. ■

Source: Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Lawrence Robinson at www.helpguide.org/

Union Veterans Heed the Call to Service



One of the most valuable contributions veterans bring to their respective organizations is the pride, self-discipline, and consciousness that result from their military service. The dedicated men and women who followed their internal call to service, or who came to the aid of our nation when called upon, are a valuable resource, not only to the

American Postal Workers Union, but to the entire labor movement.

Veterans often continue in a role of service within the Federal Government, after leaving active-duty, especially through jobs with the Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), or the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

The VA and the USPS are two of the biggest employers of veterans, and both of these federal agencies have long been the target of outside efforts to reduce their staff, downsize their operations, and outsource their work to preferred private firms. Privatization has gotten a big push from political appointees at these organizations who were overtly hostile to the official mission of their own agencies.

As a result, federal workers (many of them veterans) are mobilizing to defend jobs and services that benefit all Americans. Their ongoing alliances with other labor and community groups are key to defeating these bipartisan assaults on the VA and the USPS, both public service providers, irreplaceable by private sector alternatives.

About one-third of the 300,000 unionized staff members at VA hospitals and clinics around the country are veterans, including many healthcare professionals, clerical workers, custodians, and support personnel.

More and more veterans are becoming outspoken, and have become activists with the desire to build and enhance the dignity that all veterans have earned by serving their country. Many veterans are joining AFL-CIO-affiliated Union Veterans Council and Common Defense, a multi-racial, multi-generational, inclusive movement that empowers all veterans, along with a number of veteran organizations that people may already be members of.

These organizations provide a collective voice to veterans and encourage them to participate in the issues that matter to them. They offer an opportunity to continue the fight for the fundamental right to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and ultimately, justice for all. But these things can only be accomplished when veterans are willing to become activists and to get involved.

Veterans tend to be predominantly working-class, and many veterans serve within our ranks as union officers and stewards; so, getting involved in other grassroots labor organizations is a fairly common practice for them. As veterans, we should be forming coalitions with other groups concerned about our issues and taking leadership roles within these veterans' organizations.

If veterans' issues are going to be addressed, then our veterans need to find their voice and speak out on the issues that impact them the most – such as having good jobs that pay a living wage and provide a safe work environment or the necessary changes to the VA healthcare system for it to become sufficiently funded and fully staffed. These should be the top priorities of our list.

As we turn the page on the calendar year of 2022, we should be challenging ourselves as veterans to help unions and veterans' organizations reach their goals. Goals that ultimately help achieve the social and economic advancement of veterans. Remember, the unions' fight is the veterans fight, and as such, we should be getting involved by participating and volunteering – not only within the APWU, but in the many outside opportunities available to us as well. ■

Renew Our Commitment to APWU



Nancy Olumekor, Director

Legislative Priorities

The 118th Congress began on Jan. 3, 2023. We must keep up the pressure on our congressional representatives to achieve our legislative priorities and to protect our federal pensions, benefits, and the Postal Service. We expect Congress to protect our hard-earned benefits, which include our federal pensions (CSRS or FERS), Social Security, Medicare, health insurance and life insurance. We expect them to protect and preserve the Postal Service by supporting and passing legislation that accomplish these goals. Millions of federal, state, and local retirees are still waiting for Congress to pass legislation, such as *The Social Security Fairness Act*, that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

In addition, postal workers want Congress to pass legislation similar to *The Federal Retirement Fairness Act*, which would allow postal workers who began their postal career as temporary employees or Postal Support Employees (PSEs) to “buy back” time towards their retirement. Under the “buy back,” interested employees could make a deposit equal to what the government would have contributed had they been career, as calculated by the Office of Personnel Management, along with the corresponding interest rate. This would, once again, create parity between temporary and career employees, ensuring that they have equal access to retirement benefits.

Postal workers were formerly able to make additional contributions to their retirement benefits to make up for time lost when they were not career employees. However, on Jan. 1, 1989, this authority expired and was never reinstituted.

Continue to call your representatives in Congress at: (202) 224-3121, and write letters, postcards, and emails in support of our legislative priorities.

Older Americans Month

Celebrate APWU retirees during May, which is Older Americans Month. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy issued the first proclamation asking the entire nation to pay tribute to seniors for a month each year. Every president since then has carried out this tradition.

The APWU was built on the contributions of leaders who worked tirelessly to improve the working conditions for

postal employees. Retirees are the foundation of the union. Historically, the APWU's National Executive Board has adopted a resolution in support of Older Americans Month, which encourages all state and local organizations to recognize the contributions that countless APWU retirees have given to our union, the labor movement, and their communities.

This special month provides an excellent opportunity for all local and state organizations to host activities that celebrate and honor those who fought for the rights APWU now enjoys.

**CONTINUE TO CALL YOUR
REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS AT: (202)
224-3121, AND WRITE LETTERS, POSTCARDS,
AND EMAILS IN SUPPORT OF OUR
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES.**

Be sure to invite your entire membership to participate in this celebration of APWU retirees. This is also the perfect opportunity to organize a Retiree Chapter for retired members where one doesn't currently exist. Local and state organizations, as well as retirees, can obtain the guidelines for forming a Retirees' Chapter by visiting our webpage and contacting the APWU Retirees Department.

2023 APWU National Retiree Conference

The 2023 APWU National Retiree Conference has been scheduled in conjunction with the All-Craft Conference at Bally's Las Vegas, Oct. 2-4, 2023. Retirees' General Session meetings are tentatively scheduled, with the following workshops:

Alzheimer's Disease from A to Z; Chapter Newsletters, Conference Calls & Communications; CPR Training; Computers and You; Heart Health & Fitness; Legislative & Community Activism; Safety, Identity Theft, Fighting Fraud and Elder Abuse; and Senior Resources.

The Retirees Department will also conduct Retirement Planning, Disability Retirement, and TSP workshops. Additional information will be posted on the APWU website and you may contact the Retirees Department. ■



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

Start 2023 Off Right With a Commitment to Your Health

There are so many things that keep us busy every day, such as work, kids, family, and even illnesses, that it's sometimes difficult to think of anything else. We tend to put our health on the back burner while we look after those around us. With COVID-19 disrupting our lives, many of us haven't been back to the doctor for our annual checkups or yearly screenings.

DID YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU'RE ENROLLED IN THE CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION PLAN THAT AN ADDITIONAL \$25 IS ADDED TO YOUR PERSONAL CARE ACCOUNT (PCA) FOR EVERY ENROLLED FAMILY MEMBER THAT GETS THEIR ANNUAL PHYSICAL? SO IF YOU'RE A FAMILY OF FOUR, THAT'S \$100 MORE, JUST FOR SEEING YOUR DOCTOR!

The APWU Health Plan prides itself on providing our members with affordable options that work to keep you and your family healthy. After a very busy holiday season, let 2023 be the year that you make the change and promise to re-commit to looking after yourself.

THE APWU HEALTH PLAN PRIDES ITSELF ON PROVIDING OUR MEMBERS WITH AFFORDABLE OPTIONS THAT WORK TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY HEALTHY. AFTER A VERY BUSY HOLIDAY SEASON, LET 2023 BE THE YEAR THAT YOU MAKE THE CHANGE AND PROMISE TO RE-COMMIT TO LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF.

With your continued membership in the APWU and your enrollment in the APWU Health Plan, we make looking after yourself easy to do! Being enrolled in one of the APWU Health Plan's two plans, either the High Option, or the Consumer Driven Option, makes getting your annual checkups and screenings really easy, not to mention free! You heard that right, as long as you stay in-network, all of your preventive screenings are 100 percent covered! Everything from mammograms, colorectal screenings, and

TWO OF OUR APWU HEALTH PLAN BOARD MEMBERS, STEPHEN BROOKS AND KENNITH BEASLEY, RETIRED THIS YEAR. I WANT TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR MANY YEARS OF TIRELESS SERVICE TO THE MEMBERSHIP. YARED WONDE AND ARRION BROWN WILL BE STEPPING INTO THESE POSITIONS FOR THE UPCOMING TERM.

even diabetes screenings! Recommended immunizations are 100 percent covered when you stay in-network. The APWU Health Plan has you covered for whatever stage in life you are at.

Did you know that if you're enrolled in the Consumer Driven Option Plan that an additional \$25 is added to your Personal Care Account (PCA) for every enrolled family member that gets their annual physical? So if you're a family of four, that's \$100 more, just for seeing your doctor!

So, call your doctor today to schedule your annual check-up and to find out what screenings and immunizations you need to make YOU your absolute healthiest!

It's An Honor to Serve You

In November, I was sworn in for a second term. It has been such an honor to serve you all for the past three years. I thank you for your continued support.

Two of our APWU Health Plan Board Members, Stephen Brooks and Kennith Beasley, retired this year. I want to thank them for their many years of tireless service to the membership. Yared Wonde and Arrion Brown will be stepping into these positions for the upcoming term.

As the New Year begins, so does my second term as Director. As I reflect on my first term, I find myself thankful for the time I have spent collaborating with the Board, our Health Plan representatives, delegates, and the APWU members. I want to thank the Health Plan staff for everything that they do in support of our membership.

I look forward to my next term, and I am committed to ensuring that the APWU Health Plan continues to build on our tradition of excellence. ■



Luigi Morris

Amazon Ordered to Cease-and-Desist from Delivering Pink Slips to Unionizing Employees

A Federal Judge filed a “cease-and-desist” order against retail giant Amazon on Friday, Nov. 18, ordering the company to stop retaliating against and firing employees for engaging in legally protected union organizing activities. The order was in response to the 2020 firing of Amazon employee Gerald Bryson, who had protested Amazon’s lack of safety protocols in the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the court order, Amazon must stop “discharging employees because they engaged in protected concerted activity” and “in any like or related manner interfering with, restraining, or coercing employees in the exercise of their rights guaranteed to them by Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.”

“This is of huge significance,” said Amazon Labor Union lawyer Seth Goldstein. “This is a national cease-and-desist order. That means that wherever in the country they violate it, theoretically the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) can immediately seek a Contempt of Court order.”

In similar news, the NLRB recently made a claim that Starbucks had retaliated against union organizing employees at its Great Neck location in Long Island, NY, for signing union cards in February and voting in favor of a union in May. The claim stated that management fired lead organizer and shift manager Joselyn Chuquillanqui in July, and threatened to withhold promotional opportunities, hours, and benefits for other unionizing employees. The lawsuit was filed on the same day as the NLRB ruled that Starbucks violated labor laws by refusing to bargain with employees at one of its Seattle retail locations.

Starbucks Workers Serve Up Red Cup Rebellion

On Thursday, Nov. 17 more than a thousand Starbucks workers staged a national walkout at over one hundred Starbucks locations nationwide. The action, dubbed the *Red Cup Rebellion*, fell on a day that Starbucks has branded as “Red Cup Day,” which is an annual event where the coffee retailer gives out reusable, limited edition cups for the holidays. It is one of the most profitable days of the year for the coffee company.

In an effort to win customers over and to provide visibility to the workers’ struggle, Starbucks Workers United strikers handed out their own union-designed red cups adorned with the union’s logo on the picket line.

“The walkout is intended to get Starbucks to bargain with workers in good faith as the two sides try to hammer out a new contract,” said striking barista Josie Serrano of Long Beach, CA. Management has not previously bargained in good faith, according to the union, has retaliated against organizers, and have either walked out of, or been no-shows, to preliminary bargaining sessions.

Mental Health Clinicians for Staff and Patients

On October 20, nearly 2,000 mental health clinicians in Northern California ended a 10-week strike at Kaiser Permanente facilities after ratifying a four-year contract mediated by Sacramento, CA Mayor Darrell Steinberg.

The clinicians, represented by the National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW), voted 1,561 to 36 in favor of the contract, which is retroactive to Sept. 2021 and expires in 2025. The contract secured provisions that would increase and retain staff, alleviate workloads, reduce patient wait times, and provide extra pay for bilingual therapists.

The NUHW’s concerns about patient wait-times led to an investigation into possible violations of state law regarding timely access to patient appointments. The workers will now have two extra hours per week to focus on patient access, such as responding to correspondence and creating patient treatment plans. Additionally, therapists will also have 90 minutes to conduct initial mental health assessments of children, when previously allotted 30 minutes per assessment. ■



A Winter Win for Blizzard Workers in Albany, NY

Activision Blizzard workers in Albany, NY voted unanimously 14-0 to form a union with the Communications Workers of America (CWA). The vote on Dec. 2 was the second “CWA Yes” vote for Activision Blizzard Quality Assurance workers following the successful Raven Software organizing campaign in Santa Monica, CA in May 2022.

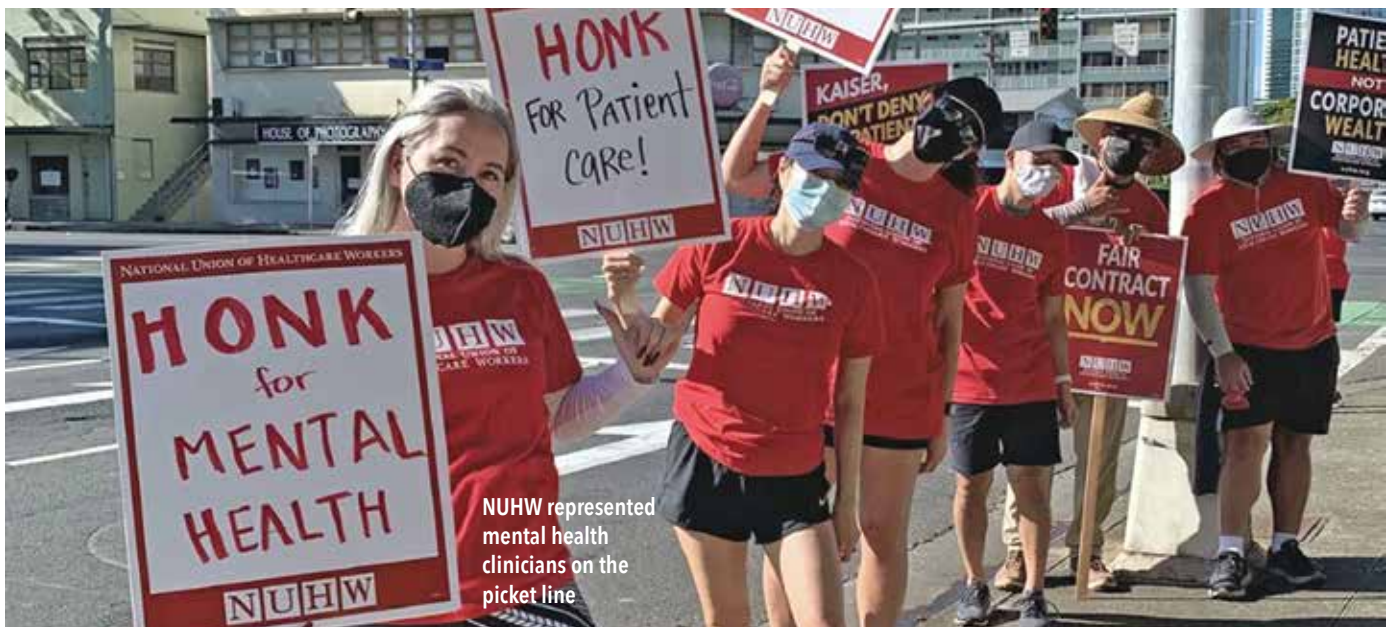
“It took an unbelievable amount of work and perseverance to move this fight forward,” said QA test analyst Amanda Deep. “With this victory, we’re advocating for ourselves and each other because we care deeply about our work and the games we make. Organizing has empowered all of us to fight hard for the dignity and respect every worker deserves on the job.”

Activision is currently in the process of merging with Microsoft, which signed a labor neutrality agreement with the CWA in June 2022.

“This agreement provides a pathway for Activision Blizzard workers to exercise their democratic rights to organize and collectively bargain after the close of the Microsoft acquisition and establishes a high road framework for employers in the games industry,” said CWA President Chris Shelton.

Win Good Contract After Ten-Week Strike

The deal also calls for the creation of five labor-management committees, with the purpose of making recommendations to behavioral health operations at the facilities.





FDIC Survey Highlights Unbanked and Underbanked Populations

Since 2009, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has produced a biennial report surveying the unbanked and underbanked population of the United States. Their most recent report, which tracks 2021 data, was recently released.

While the proportions of the population that are unbanked and underbanked declined since the last survey in 2019, an estimated 5.9 million households remain without access to a bank account. We can be encouraged by the decreasing rate of unbanked households, but the fact that millions of people in this country still lack a basic need should encourage us to continue our work. Postal banking, and simple financial services available at post offices, should remain a goal of everyone interested in reducing inequality and building a better society.

The FDIC survey also underscored that the country's history of social, economic, and racial divides still shapes access to financial services. The survey found that "unbanked rates were higher among lower-income households, less-educated households, Black households, Hispanic households, working-age households with a disability, and single-mother households."

The most common reason unbanked people cited for not having an account is that they "don't have enough money to meet minimum balance requirements." Others cited high fees, or a lack of trust in banks, as the main reasons for not holding an account.

We believe that expanded postal financial services could reach many of these people and bring them simple, trusted, low-cost financial services. Postal banking systems in other countries provide valuable financial services, with either much lower fees, or even without any fees at all. These services can be offered without minimum balance requirements because they are provided as a public service.

One interesting finding in the most recent study is that the COVID-19 stimulus funds may have helped move more households into "banked" status. Among those who were worried about fees or minimum balance requirements, the additional cash provided by COVID relief was sometimes enough to get them over their reservations about costly services. This, once again, underscores "the high cost of being poor" in American society.

Postal Banking and the New Political Landscape

After the 2020 elections, this column reported on some of the priorities for our campaign heading into the 117th Congress. For much of the past two years, in addition to the work to get the Postal Service to independently move on some pilots of modest financial services, we've spent much of our efforts focused on getting Congress and the Biden Administration to support these goals.

In both 2021 and 2022, House appropriators include language that would have compelled the Postal Service to roll out a robust pilot program of financial services, but our progress was stymied in the Senate both times.

Now, with a more conservative majority in the House of Representatives, we expect that the appropriations landscape may be more challenging in the Congress ahead.

Nonetheless, we will continue to press the Biden Administration to exercise all of its authority to advance postal banking forward in the next two years.

As we've reported before, the Postal Service is permitted to partner with federal agencies to provide necessary services to the American public. Such a partnership with either the Treasury or Federal Reserve could result in a postal-provided service to meet many of the needs of the unbanked and underbanked across the country.

The recently-passed *Postal Service Reform Act* also offers new opportunities for the Postal Service to partner with state and local governments. In the past few years, several states and cities have made advances in creating public banks. It's possible that partnerships at these levels could also result in new types of financial services, offered in conjunction with the Postal Service, that meet the needs of local residents. ■

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.

Looking Back: This Time in Our Labor History

"The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress."

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



On Jan. 15, 1929

Civil Rights icon Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born.

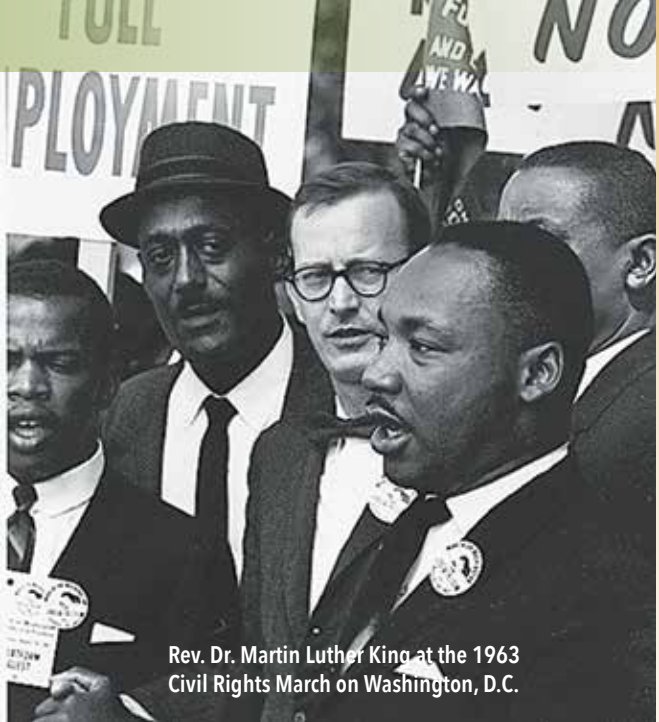
We recently observed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day federal holiday, honoring one of our nation's all-time great civil and workers' rights leaders. But winning the holiday to recognize King's legacy was a struggle in itself.

Legislation to recognize MLK Day was finally passed in 1983, after a multiple-year effort to overcome congressional opposition. Campaigners, including the King family and singer Stevie Wonder, collected six million petition signatures. Wonder's worldwide hit, "Happy Birthday" was both a celebration of King's life and a call to recognize his birthday.

King was a champion of working people and labor unions which he saw as integral to his work in promoting civil rights. At the time of his assassination in Memphis, TN, in 1968 he was supporting striking sanitation workers.

Despite federal recognition of the holiday, effective January 1986, postal management opposed observing a tenth annual holiday in the 1984-1987 union contract. The presentation was made at interest arbitration by then Executive Vice-President, later President, Bill Burrus, who spoke on behalf of the joint APWU-NALC bargaining committee. After a rousing presentation, it was included in Arbitrator Kerr's award, and the holiday was secured in the National Agreement.

"This annual holiday will serve as a reminder of a great American hero who was assassinated while supporting a peaceful union struggle in Memphis, Tennessee. It is a tribute to the struggle waged by Dr. King for freedom, justice, and equality for all people," wrote then-APWU President Moe Biller at the time.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King at the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C.

On January 11, 1912

23,000 textile workers in Lawrence, MA staged a walkout known as the "Bread and Roses" strike. The action, organized by the Industrial Workers of the World, protested factory owners' use of a newly enacted state law that reduced the work week by two hours to speed up production while also docking workers' pay.

Workers demanded a 15 percent pay increase, overtime pay, and a promise not to retaliate against the strikers. The workers spanned many traditional barriers to organizing in 1912, including language, nationality, gender, and age. On March 12, the owners met most of the strikers demands, improving pay and conditions for 275,000 textile workers in New England alone.

On January 25, 1937

Thirty-one boiler room engineers at the Kent Avenue Power Plant in Brooklyn, NY staged a lock-in at Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit (BMT) due to the firing of two worker leaders. Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 had been trying to organize the 505 workers.

The fired engineers, who both had more than ten years on the job, were given less than five minutes to leave the property for engaging in union activity. TWU president Mike Quill said that if the two workers were not re-instated by the next morning, the locked-in workers would pull the switches to shut down the entire New York City transit system. At that time, the Kent Ave. power plant was the only source of power for the whole subway system. By the next morning, management at BMT had reinstated the workers. Within two days, the entire power plant was fully organized. ■

APWU National Officers Take Their Oath of Office

