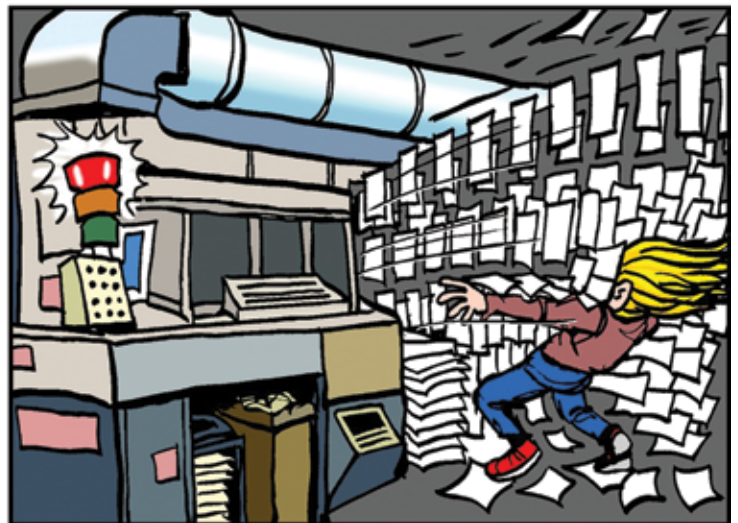
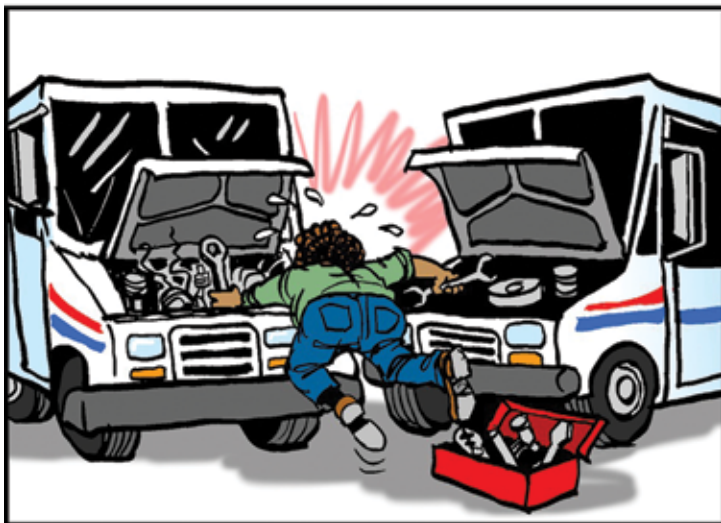
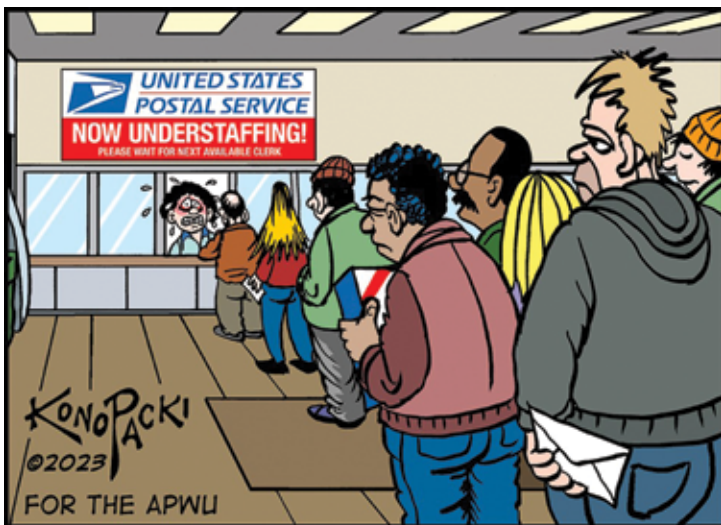


THE AMERICAN
Postal Worker APWU

March/April 2023

Short Staffing Hurts Us All!



Join the campaign for proper staffing.



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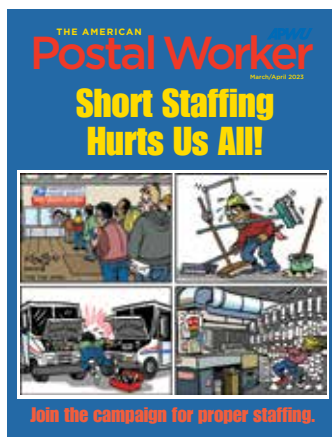


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ABOUT THE COVER:

Short staffing means long lines. Understaffing is a chronic and serious problem that fuels hostile work environments and is detrimental to our safety. Turn to page 7 for information on how to join our campaign for safe and effective staffing.

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The American Postal Worker

(ISSN 0044-7811) is published bimonthly by the American Postal Workers Union,
AFL-CIO 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC, 20005

www.apwu.org

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKER, 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC, 20005

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PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

Tax Season is Upon Us. But Who Pays Taxes? And How Are They Spent?

Working people, including postal workers, routinely pay taxes. We don't have massive write-offs, off-shore tax havens, untaxed stock incomes, tax avoidance trust funds, or high-priced lawyers.

But the billionaire U.S. oligarchs and corporate America do – all used to evade paying their fair share of taxes.

According to Americans for Tax Fairness, 26 top billionaires didn't come close to the 20-30 percent tax rates postal workers pay. Between 2013 and 2018, Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Warren Buffett (Berkshire Hathaway), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Michael Bloomberg (Bloomberg LP), and Elon Musk (Tesla) paid less than a 2 percent tax rate on their obscene wealth. The people who can afford the most pay the least!

The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy reported that 55 corporations paid no federal taxes on 2020 profits. Many profitable companies actually received federal tax rebates. Food conglomerate Archer Daniels Midland received \$164 million, FedEx \$230 million, and Nike \$109 million. Outrageous!

Moreover, we often don't pay attention to how our taxes are spent by Congress.

The recently passed bipartisan \$1.65 trillion Omnibus Budget Bill represents annual discretionary government spending. Over half, or \$858 billion, is for "defense" spending: more than the next 11 highest defense spending countries combined. This military budget was an \$80 billion increase from 2022, and \$45 billion more than the Pentagon requested. Over half of the military budget goes to private military contractors, like Lockheed Martin and Boeing. Meanwhile, the Department of Defense estimates that 24 percent of active duty personnel and their families face chronic food insecurity!

Five Star General and Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower observed that: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not

fed, those who are cold and are not clothed... It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children." The \$80 billion increase from 2022 alone could pay for the hiring of 873,000 elementary school teachers, 9.5 million public housing units, or VA healthcare for over five million veterans.

In his 1960 farewell speech, Eisenhower presciently warned, "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist." Tragically, his wisdom has gone unheeded.

The insights of highly decorated Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler in his book "War is a Racket," help explain why. Referring to his responsibility as a top military leader, he wrote: "I spent thirty-three years and four months in active military service, and during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers."

Even the conservative Cato Institute (an enemy of unions and our public Postal Service), provided important information in an article "750 Bases in 80 Countries is Too Many for Any Nation: Time for the U.S. to Bring Its Troops Home." The institute estimates the bases cost taxpayers \$80 billion a year and that the U.S. has more overseas bases than every other country combined. China has five.

It is in the interests of postal workers and all working people at home and abroad to stop the madness of the bloated military budget and domination by the military-industrial complex. As called for by APWU and AFL-CIO convention resolutions, let's bring the war dollars home, insist that our tax dollars are used to improve our day-to-day lives and collective societal needs, such as health care, education, public transportation, affordable housing, childcare, food, clean water, addressing the climate crisis, and safe, good paying union jobs, including for veterans. Let tax season remind us that the billionaire class must be forced to pay their share! ■

WAGE INCREASE

THIRD COLA INCREASE ANNOUNCED

In accordance with the 2021-2024 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), career employees represented by the APWU will receive a \$0.10 per hour cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), effective March 11, 2023.

The increase is the result of a rise in the January Consumer Price Index (CPI-W). It will appear in paychecks dated March 31, 2023 (Pay Period 07-2023). The value of the COLA for full-time employees in each step and grade will increase by \$208.00 annually for full time, career employees.

The COLAs are in addition to general wage increases. This is the third cost-of-living increase under the 2021 CBA. The first increase, effective in February 2022, amounted to \$0.63 per hour or \$1,310.00 annually. The second, effective in August 2022, was \$1.18 per hour or \$2,455.00 annually. The COLAs received so far during the 2021-2024 CBA total \$3,973.00.

In light of the fact that Postal Support Employees (PSEs) do not receive cost-of-living increases, they have received several additional

increases beyond the general wage increases for all employees in the APWU bargaining unit under the 2021 contract.

Rising inflation underscores just how important the continuation of our negotiated COLA is in our outstanding new CBA. The COLA is our best protection against inflation. Postal workers are some of the few U.S. workers who receive these increases. Even in the postal world, we are the only postal union that has maintained full COLA in our CBA. ■

Update on Management's Network Modernization Plans

As previously shared, management's planned network changes consist of two main aspects: 1) creation of larger carrier delivery units with package machine sortation capacity, called Sortation and Delivery Centers (S&DCs), and 2) creation of approximately 60 regional sort centers (including realigning many of the current BMCs to regional sort centers and expanding and/or reconfiguring a number of existing processing plants).

Management is continuing to move forward with their plans, although needed concrete information requested by the union, including any impact on staffing and potential excessing, has not yet been forthcoming -- in violation of the National Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The APWU has continued to engage in meetings with HQ management, including craft specific meetings. The union leadership's goal is to protect our jobs, keep dislocation of and inconvenience to our members to a minimum, and protect and improve service to the public. The union has received some positive "verbal" commitments and is working to secure a written framework agreement.

As of the writing of this article in early February only two S&DCs are up and running – Athens, GA and a

specialized package delivery unit in Brooklyn, NY. More S&DCs are scheduled to open in the coming months. Atlanta, Richmond, Indianapolis, and Charlotte are the management targets for the first regional processing facilities. The union has not received any official notification when these regional centers will open.

Our union contract affords employees vital protections – no lay off protections, limits of 50-mile excessing (only if sufficient duty assignments can't be identified within 40-miles), and timely notification to the APWU Regional Coordinators of any excessing events (which must include proper supporting documentation to support the excessing event).

Update meetings will continue to be held with all the national officers and locals directly affected by these management changes.

As the network modernization plans come more into focus, information will continue to be shared in future editions of this magazine, the APWU website, and other means of communicating directly with our members. ■

APWU AUXILIARY HELPS KIDS GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

THIS YEAR, THE AUXILIARY TO THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION IS SPONSORING A LITTLE-KNOWN ORGANIZATION, NAMED SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE, WHICH MAKES BEDS FOR CHILDREN AGE 3 TO 17 WHO WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE A BED TO SLEEP ON.



Sleep in Heavenly Peace, based in Kimberly, ID was formed in 2012 when founder and Executive Director Luke Mickelson built a single bed for a Christmas project. With leftover lumber from the build, Mickelson wondered if more children might be in need of a bed to sleep on. He researched and found out that there was indeed an overwhelming need. The organization has since grown and become a 501(c)3 non-profit.

Data collected by Sleep in Heavenly Peace over the past decade indicates that about 3 percent of children in the United States do not have a bed. Many kids sleep on floors, couches, sleeping bags, or even just piles of clothing.

Lack of sleep can cause harm to brain development and cause learning problems, growth issues, and increased frequency of illnesses. The volunteers at Sleep in Heavenly Peace believe that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional, and mental support that a child needs.



With the motto “No kid sleeps on the floor in my town,” Sleep in Heavenly Peace builds beds for children in more than 300 chapters in 46 states, as well as Canada, the Bahamas, and Bermuda.

Between 2012 to 2018, the group delivered more than 100,000 beds by volunteers from their community chapters. That was all achieved through the work of volunteers. Their goal is to provide one million beds in the next ten years. When a newly-built bed is delivered to a child, it is set up, complete with a new mattress and new bedding. APWU Auxiliaries nationwide are collecting these items to donate.

To see if there is a local chapter in your area, visit www.shpbeds.org.

Chapters are in need of new twin-sized sheets, blankets, comforters, pillows, and quilts – they delightfully accept new quilts! You can volunteer your time and services for children in need.

Join your Auxiliary members, family, friends, union brothers, and sisters, and help construct beds and collect new bedding. Or you can make a monetary donation through the Auxiliary website at www.apwuauxiliary.org. ■





Workers' Memorial Day **TAKE ACTION!**



On Friday April 28, 2023, postal workers will observe Workers' Memorial Day with a day of action.

It is a day when we remember workers killed or injured on the job and to renew the fight for strong safety and health protections. Fifty-three years after the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970

(OSHA) was passed, many of us are still exposed to unsafe working conditions. Understaffing often leads to hostile work environments, which are a major cause of workplace safety hazards.

Find out more about how you and your local can take action on Friday, April 28 at www.apwu.org/safe. It is up to us to make sure management is taking its responsibility for our safety at work seriously. ■

Creation of Staffing Task Force

Understaffing is a chronic and serious problem for both postal workers and postal customers.

The APWU made significant progress over the last few years in increasing Function 1 (Mail Processing) staffing. There is more work to do, but we have increased the size of the career workforce by over 10,000 jobs.

However, management commitments to address understaffing in Function 4 – (Retail and Distribution) have gone unfulfilled.

Understaffing increases stress on postal employees. It fuels the hostile work environment. It leads to a lot of forced overtime and the inability to obtain annual leave. In relation to VMF mechanics, it leads to increased subcontracting of our work. Short staffing of custodians translates to less safe facilities for every worker.

On the customer side, understaffing results in reduced service with long lines and slower service. Lack of staffing in carrier units delays mail getting to customers. In many cases, understaffing leads to the closing of retail units when not enough window clerks are available.

APWU President Mark Dimondstein recently created an APWU “Staffing Task Force,” a team at national APWU headquarters combined with local union activists from each of our five regions.

The goal of the task force is to assist APWU local and state organizations in winning needed staffing by building alliances with community organizations and the public. We'll take the fight “to the streets” through actions such as press events, petitions, workroom floor safety campaigns, and informational pickets.

Local and state leaders seeking assistance can contact the Staffing Task Force at: staffing@apwu.org. ■

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Vote By Mail is Better Than Ever: The Postal Service Successfully Delivered for Democracy During the 2022 Mid-Term Elections

The U.S. Postal Service issued its Post-Elections Analysis Report regarding the delivery of 2022 mid-term Election Mail on Jan. 9, 2023.

The analysis reported that the Postal Service delivered more than 15.4 million ballots through the mail between the Sept. 6 and Dec. 6 mid-term election period, which included the U.S. Senate run-off election in Georgia. It took less than two days on average to deliver ballots from voters to election officials.

The report also shows that 98.96 percent of ballots sent by voters to election officials were delivered within three days, and that 99.82 percent of ballots sent from voters to election officials were delivered within five days. The full report is available at: apwu.org/2022-usps-election-analysis.

The role of the Postal Service in the vote-by-mail process is to transport, process, and deliver ballots to and from election officials and voters. In July 2022, the Postal Service announced the creation of the Election and Government Mail Services Team, a permanent task force that will focus on the timely and secure delivery of Election Mail year-round as the use of vote-by-mail services continues to grow nationally.

“Vote-by-mail is fast, reliable, trusted, and safe,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “The results of the 2022 Elections Report on vote-by-mail just go to show that postal workers are exceptional custodians of the people’s right to vote.” ■

House Committee on January 6 Capitol Attack Unanimously Adopts Report about “the peril our democracy faced”

On Monday Dec. 19, 2022 the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection on the U.S. Capitol released an extensive report of its findings.

The report describes a violent attempt to block the peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next. It documented former President Trump’s attempts to overturn the election and incite the crowd. The committee referred him to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution after interviewing more than 1,000 witnesses and holding ten hearings during the 18-month investigation of the violent insurrection two years ago.

The criminal referrals for Trump include: obstruction of an official proceeding; conspiracy to defraud the United States; conspiracy to knowingly make a false statement; and assisting, aiding or comforting an insurrection.

At the final hearing of the Jan. 6 committee, Vice Chairwoman Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) said, “Every president in our history has defended this orderly transfer of authority, except one. January 6, 2021 was the first time one American president refused his constitutional duty to transfer power peacefully to the next. In our work over the last 18 months, the select committee has recognized our obligation to do everything we can to ensure this never happens again.”

“When I think back to January 6th, after nearly a year and a half of investigation, I am frightened about the peril our democracy faced,” said committee Chairman, Bennie Thompson (D-MS). “Specifically, I think about what that mob was there to do: to block the peaceful transfer of power from one president to another based on a lie that the election was rigged and tainted with widespread fraud.” ■



USPS Continues Free At-Home COVID-19 Test Kit Program

The Postal Service continued a Biden Administration program in December that mailed free at-home COVID-19 rapid tests to every household that requests them. The program is available for every residential address and residential PO Box in the United States.

The latest wave of test kits has been available for order since Dec. 15, 2022 through the Postal Service. Visit www.covidtests.gov to place your order. Limit of 1 order per residential address. Each order contains four individual tests shipped in one package.

- Only one order per household may be placed, regardless of the size of the household.



- Each order will be shipped in one package containing four tests.
- An order number will be provided after order entry.
- A tracking number will be sent upon shipment of the order if you provided an email address.

Packages cannot be shipped outside of the United States, but the Postal Service will ship to APO/FPO/DPO addresses and U.S. territories and possessions.

The COVID test kit program has shown the importance of the Postal Service's national delivery network in a time of crisis. It illustrates how expanding services through the network can help secure its future and provide important services across the country.

Please check the test kit packaging for the expiration date. **Before You Throw Out "Expired" Tests:** Check to see if your COVID-19 tests' expiration dates have been extended. For more information on the shelf-life expiration date of each test, see the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) List of Authorized **At-Home OTC COVID-19 Diagnostic Tests**. ■

Source: <https://faq.usps.com/s/article/At-Home-COVID-19-Test-Kits>

USPS Announces Massive Transition to Electric Vehicles for Next Generation Postal Delivery Fleet

The Postal Service announced plans in December 2022 for a massive transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs) for a next generation postal delivery fleet. It made a commitment that 75 percent of the approximately 66,000 new next generation vehicles in the initial purchase will be EVs. All fleet purchases will be "zero emission" by 2026.

"The APWU welcomes this excellent news," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "It is good for the environment, good for future postal revenues, good for postal workers, and it is a huge step forward from management's original plans for an only 10 percent EV fleet. This is progress, for the people, the planet, and the Postal Service."

A broad coalition of unions, community, and environmental groups has pressed hard on this issue over the last two years. Their involvement and public outcry made a big difference in moving the needle and also obtaining helpful Congressional action that provided \$3 billion for the postal fleet conversion to EVs.

Meanwhile, the APWU will continue to support members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) by insisting that all of the new vehicles be union made.



The Motor Vehicle Services leadership will work to ensure that the mechanics who repair the vehicles are fully and properly trained on the new technology and that repair work remains "in house."

Another ongoing goal of the coalition is to make sure that the public can use the charging network at post offices. The new, publicly funded charging network could be the foundation of a nationwide system of EV charging stations in every community. ■

Greedflation:

Corporate Executives Prosper While the Rest Suffer

When the prices of groceries, gas, prescription medications, and other essentials go through the roof, it hits working families hard. But what's behind the rising prices?

Some people, such as Federal Reserve Chairman and former private equity executive, Jerome Powell, point the finger at workers' raises, but the real problem is "greedflation."

Greedflation is what happens when corporate executives raise the prices that we pay in order to pad profits, shareholder payouts, and huge executive salaries.

Average Price of a
Gallon of Gasoline in
2022

\$4.06

according to U.S. Energy
Information Administration

Exxon Mobil Profits
in 2022

**\$56
Billion**

record-breaking profits

Shell Profits in 2022

**\$40
Billion**

doubled its profits

Chevron Profits in
2022

**\$36
Billion**

Corporate Payouts Are Up, Workers' Wages Down

In 2021, the CEOs of S&P 500 companies received an average of **\$18.3 million** in total compensation. CEO pay rose 18.2 percent. That's more than double the U.S. inflation rate of 7.1 percent.

Yet, workers' wages in the United States actually fell behind inflation in 2021. The average wage increase of 4.7 percent actually turned into a **2.4 percent wage cut** when you factor in inflation. In 2022, average workers' wages were down 1.4 percent with inflation.

Meanwhile the average CEO made **\$324 for every \$1 they paid their workers** in 2021. In 1965, an average CEO made \$15 for every \$1 they paid their workers.

So why do you pay more at the pump and the grocery store? Corporate greed.

But remember – the answer to organized greed is organized labor! Our fight for greater power for working people and an end to monopoly power has never been more important. Find out more about greedflation at: aflcio.org/paywatch

greedflation



Fred Wright Cartoons

Amazon has the highest CEO to worker
pay ratio in the S&P 500.

Amazon's CEO
Andy Jassy

total payouts in 2021

**\$212.7
Million**

The median pay at
Amazon

**\$32,855
Per Year**

For every \$1 he paid Amazon workers;
he pocketed \$6,474.

APWU Endorses Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence for the Postal Board of Governors



At our national convention in August 2022, Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence reflected on her time in the House of Representatives as a postal champion and how her long career in various roles at the USPS laid the foundation for a life of public service. With her recent retirement from Congress, Representative Lawrence wants to utilize her passion for strengthening the public Post Office by seeking a position on the Postal Board of Governors.

The APWU has been a strong advocate for the nomination of Congresswoman Lawrence to the Postal Board of Governors, and in October 2022, President Dimondstein sent a letter to President Biden urging him to nominate former Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence to serve on the Board.

The Postal Board of Governors is comprised of nine governors, along with the postmaster general and deputy postmaster general. These governors serve seven-year terms and select the postmaster general. Governors also set postal policy, control expenditures, and review postal practices. The Board deals with service standards as well, which is an issue of critical importance to all APWU members. In order to fill vacancies, the president of the United States sends a nomination to the Senate, where a candidate's confirmation is then put to a vote.

Two of the current nine governors' terms have now expired. They remain in their positions until another governor is appointed or for a period of one year, whichever comes first. Governors can serve a maximum of two terms.

It is critical that President Biden nominates someone who has extensive knowledge of both postal operations and the workforce. Congresswoman Lawrence understands the Post Office in a way only few can due to her unique experience working at the Postal Service. Before joining Congress, she served as a postal employee for over 30 years, including time as a clerk. After leaving the Postal Service, she was elected mayor of Southfield, Michigan, where she worked with the community to bolster the quality of the mail service. Prior to her retirement from Congress, she served on committees with jurisdiction over the USPS, where she skillfully defended the public Postal Service from privatization.

Congresswoman Lawrence was the only member of Congress to have been a member of the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers. She understands the commitment and dedication each postal worker provides to the nation.

By nominating Congresswoman Lawrence, the Biden Administration has a historic opportunity to provide more equitable representation for the USPS workforce and the country at-large. Despite African Americans making up nearly a quarter of the USPS workforce, the current board has only one African American member, and just one woman.

As the USPS implements a massive network reorganization, nominating Congresswoman Lawrence will help ensure the makeup of the USPS Board includes diverse voices who better represent the postal workforce and customer base. Nominating Congresswoman Lawrence would also guarantee that any reforms from the postmaster would be vetted by an independent voice and critically reviewed to ensure that any proposals would not adversely affect the people from all walks of life who rely on and trust the public Postal Service.

Never before has a candidate for the Board possessed such a deep understanding of the workers as well as the unique operational challenges that face the Postal Service. The APWU is pleased to endorse Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence and wishes to see her nomination and confirmation to the Postal Board of Governors. ■



Who is Keeping Track of Bullying, Sexual Harassment, and Hostile Work Environments?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

The USPS has never put forth its best effort to protect postal workers from hostile work environments. Employees often experience management failures to resolve cases. They watch management harassers move from one postal facility to another and these cases are often closed as inconclusive. Now an Office of Inspector General (OIG) Report entitled “U.S. Postal Service’s Response to Sexual Harassment Complaints,” shows that training, tracking, and documenting cases have been found to be inconsistent, incomplete, and inadequate.

The report makes it clear to me that the USPS Workforce Environment Tracking System (WETS) can’t work without training, and is unreliable with its failed tracking, incomplete resolutions, or an inability to identify a case from any of the three systems that we know about.

The report sets out three formal ways to report harassment: through Human Resources (a complaint to management); through Labor Relations (reporting to the union and filing a grievance); or via the Equal Employment Opportunity procedures, which are filed through the USPS, but include a right to appeal to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The OIG Audit Report #21-173-R23 dated Jan. 9, 2023 specifically reviewed sexual harassment complaints to assess policies, procedures, quality of the data, and identified trends in the data for closed cases, during Fiscal Years 2019 and 2021. They reported 691 closed and 24 open complaints. From May 2021 through December 2021, there was no access to the tracking system.

Studies have found that approximately 70 percent of individuals do not report sexual harassment due to pressures and reprisal. The OIG report shows management failed to perform due diligence in investigating, documenting, monitoring, and taking immediate corrective action.

The OIG recommended that the USPS conduct periodic Climate Assessment Surveys as a best practice for understanding the prevalence of sexual harassment. The information gathered from these surveys could help the USPS identify specific facilities that need training, prevention programs, and intervention.

Prevention training programs are not provided regularly to all employees/management. Even new employee orientation training has been slashed over the years to a one-day event.

Management told the OIG that they are not interested in doing an environment climate survey. Is management fearful that the surveys would show an even bigger problem escalating due to harassers continuously getting away with sexual harassment and with a failed anti-harassment program?

The OIG found that 97 percent of managers that conduct the Initial Management Inquiry Process (IMIP) never completed the required training to complete and record harassment data into WETS.

The APWU’s Work Environment Improvement Task Force has requested to review the WETS files since last year, trying to review the hot spot locations, violations, specific repetitive manager violations, and how cases are resolved and continue to be monitored. We still have not been provided the information.

In a letter to the OIG dated April 29, 2022, The USPS states that “The Postal Service has no doubt that WETS maintains the most accurate data for the four workplace environment processes.” Management does not even include the EEO cases filed when they procedurally dismiss them. If USPS says they have four workplace environment processes, OIG claims there are three. Is the fourth process for “Management Only?” APWU will dig deeper. **Remember union members can stand and support each other when witnessing hostile work environments.** Finally, don't forget to celebrate Women's History Month throughout March. ■

**APWU MEMBERS WORK TOGETHER
IN SOLIDARITY**

**Report sexual harassment, bullying,
and hostile work environment.**

**Don't let management get away with
hiding the truth and ruining lives!**



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 April 3, 2023. Winners will be randomly selected among those who correctly answer the following:

The lucky winners from the January-February 2023 edition of the *American Postal Worker* were:

**Theresa Taylor, Olympia (WA) Local
Danielle Harden, North Jersey Area Local
William Prieto, California Area Local**

APWU March-April QUIZ

1. Hearing damage can take place at work, at home, and during leisure activities like attending concerts, listening to loud music, or attending sporting events. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends how many decibels (dBA) as the limit for an eight-hour exposure?
2. The Postal Service announced plans in December 2022 for a massive transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs) for a next generation postal delivery fleet. 75 percent of the approximately 66,000 new next generation vehicles in the initial purchase will be EVs. By what year does the Postal Service strive to have an all "zero-emission" fleet?
3. March 17 marks the 53rd anniversary of the Great "Wild-cat" Postal Strike that led to improved wages and working conditions for postal workers, and the creation of the postal unions. What date was the APWU established?

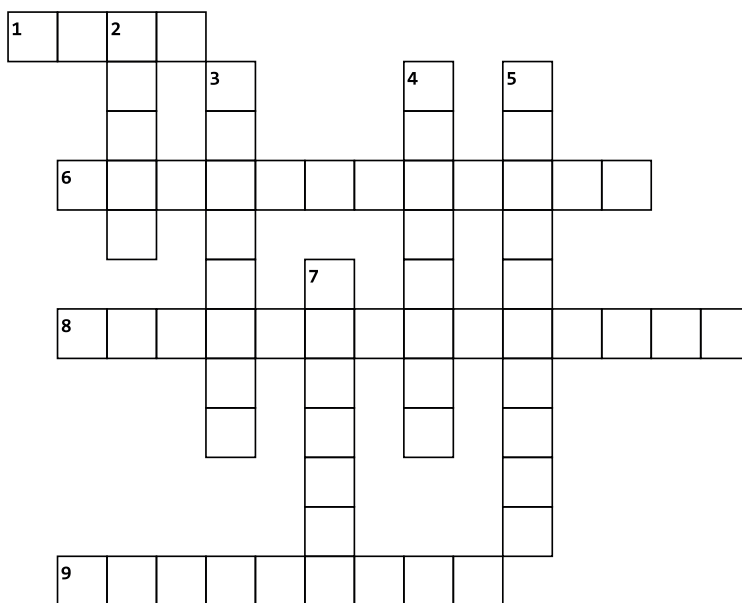
APWU CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. The "Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics" Act, is also known as the "_____ Act"
6. What is it called when corporate executives raise prices in order to pad profits, shareholder payouts, and huge executive salaries?
8. On August 12, 1970 the Postal _____ Act was signed into law, which abolished the Post Office Department and created the USPS we know today.
9. Our union contract affords employees vital protections, such as no lay off protections, and limits of 50-mile _____.

Down

2. Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence was once a member of this APWU-represented craft
3. The Postal Service announced plans in December 2022 for a massive transition to _____ Vehicles (EVs) for the next generation postal delivery fleet.
4. Under _____ is a chronic and serious problem for both postal workers and customers, increasing stress on employees and reducing service for customers.
5. These give you the right to a union representative if a meeting or conversation with management could lead to discipline. They are "_____ rights"
7. The USPS delivered more than 15.4 million _____ through the mail for the 2022 mid term elections between Sept. 6 and Dec. 6.



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-survey to take the survey.



 **SCAN ME**

ANSWERS: Across: 1. pact; 6. greedflation; 8. reorganization; 9. excessing
Down: 2. clerk; 3. electric; 4. staffing; 5. weinergarten; 7. ballots



Meeting Annual Report Deadlines

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

To ensure local and state union officials meet Department of Labor (DOL) and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax deadlines, the Secretary-Treasurer's department provides training on how to complete and electronically file the required Labor-Management (LM) report and provides the information and IRS links to assist in electronically filing the IRS 990 report. It is important that all affiliates electronically file their local or state LM report by **March 30** if the fiscal year ends on December 31. LM reports are due 90 days after the end of the fiscal year. If additional information or assistance is needed, please contact Annette August-Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer at (202) 842-8538 or aaugust@apwu.org.

The IRS requires unions and retiree chapters (who have their own EIN and separate bank accounts for their funds) to electronically file a 990 report to maintain their tax-exempt status. The annual financial report (990) to the IRS is due on the 15th day of the fifth month after the fiscal year ends. Severe fines can result, or revocation of the union's tax-exempt status will automatically take place, if the report was not filed for three consecutive years. **May 15** is the deadline for affiliates who have a fiscal year that ends December 31. There are three types of reports. The size of a local, state or retiree chapter's annual receipts collected will determine which it should electronically file.

ANNUAL RECEIPTS	990 FORM
0-\$49,999	990 - N
\$50,000 - \$199,999	990 - EZ
Over \$200,000	990

Effective Jan. 1, 2023 New GSA Mileage Rate

Effective January 2023, the IRS mileage rate increased to \$0.655 per mile. It is important to ensure officers and members are compensated at the correct rate. Reimbursement for mileage is required to have supporting documents that provides the name, dates of travel, locations traveled

to and from, number of miles driven, and business purpose for each trip where reimbursement is requested. Local and State Treasurers should ensure reimbursement is submitted using the mileage log form and a copy of Google Maps or MapQuest as additional verification for the mileage submitted. The mileage log form can be obtained on the Secretary-Treasurer's section of the apwu.org webpage.

Save the Date! Secretary-Treasurer's Conference April 11-13, 2023

The three-day conference will provide vital training to new local officers, especially Presidents and Secretary-Treasurers. To register for Fiduciary Responsibility training, Advance QuickBooks and Beginners QuickBooks training use the link below. The conference will take place from April 11-13 in New Orleans, LA. Participants should plan to arrive April 10 and depart April 14.

Fiduciary Responsibility training will cover Department of Labor requirements, National Constitution requirements, legal responsibilities, planning for the future, setting goals, establishing local policies and procedures, bank accounts and union credit cards, budgeting, record keeping, DOL and IRS audits, travel and business expenses and insurance.

Advanced QuickBooks training will cover QuickBooks overview, charts of accounts, writing checks, bank deposits, bank reconciliations, payroll review & information, budgets, treasurer's & financial reports. **PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE TAKEN BEGINNERS QUICKBOOKS TRAINING BEFORE REGISTERING FOR ADVANCE QUICKBOOKS TRAINING.**

Beginners QuickBooks training will cover QuickBooks overview, charts of accounts, writing checks, bank deposits, bank reconciliations, treasurer's & financial reports.

It is recommended that local officers attend at least one conference a year.

<https://apwu.org/events/national-secretary-treasurers-training> ■

Congress Deserts Railway Workers Fighting for Paid Sick Leave

Last December, U.S. President Joe Biden signed off on congressional legislation that blocked a legally protected strike and imposed a contract on railroad workers without the paid sick leave they have long campaigned for.

Freight rail companies have slashed labor costs to increase corporate profits. In 2022, those profits were in excess of \$21 billion. At the same time, the companies have adamantly opposed the rail workers' just demands for fair scheduling and paid sick leave.

The workers democratically rejected the September Tentative Agreement that did not include paid sick leave, and were set to strike on Dec. 9 after months of stalled negotiations.

However, Biden asked Congress to intervene in the dispute in favor of the freight companies — at the expense of the workers and their right to collectively bargain. On Dec. 1, Congress voted to block the strike and impose a contract lacking paid sick leave, which Biden signed into law on Dec. 2.

Union leaders and members nationwide rallied on Dec. 13 in support of rail workers' fight for paid sick leave. APWU President Mark Dimondstein voiced postal workers' support at the Washington, DC rally.



NALC President, Brian Renfroe; APWU's President, Mark Dimondstein; Executive Vice President Debby Szereby; NCSMAL members including Local President Dena Briscoe; and APWU MD State and MCMAL President Nanette Corley, rallied with railway workers.

"It is unconscionable for any worker to have so little control over work schedules and receive no paid sick leave," said President Dimondstein. "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." ■

APWU National Officers Press Management to Pay Postal Workers Who Lost Wages Due to LiteBlue Fraud

Several hundred postal workers had their pay stolen by cyber-criminals who used fraudulent websites to obtain sensitive personal data that was then used to divert and steal their direct deposit payments.

The thefts mainly occurred during Pay Period 26 of 2022 but continued into Pay Period 1 of 2023. The Postal Service has now implemented Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), which requires a second method to log in to LiteBlue, such as a one-time text message code.

While many affected workers have been able to recoup money from their banks, the Postal Service has taken the position that any unrecovered loss of pay as a result of the fraud is the fault of postal workers.

APWU has filed a national dispute on behalf of those members who have been unable to recover the funds.

Management was aware of the risk of cyber fraud but did not warn employees. They had been working on the

creation and implementation of MFA since mid-2022, but did not inform the APWU of this until the last week of November 2022.

"The criminals behind this attack are to blame, but postal management must also take its share of the responsibility," said Charlie Cash, APWU Industrial Relations Director. "It is clear that Postal management knew for a long time that LiteBlue had this security risk but they made no serious attempt to warn workers or upgrade security until it was too late for hundreds of workers."

If you are concerned that you might have entered your LiteBlue information on a fraudulent website or have provided that information from a phone call, please attempt to log in and check your LiteBlue/PostalEase account immediately. If you can't log in, see unauthorized changes, or if anything seems suspicious, contact HRSSC immediately at 1-877-477-3273. ■



Know Your Rights at Work!

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHARLIE CASH

One of the basic rights you have in the Postal Service is the right to meet with a steward if your contractual rights have been violated. You have the right to representation by a steward in any meeting that could lead to discipline, and the right to meet with a steward to file a grievance.

I recently saw a letter given to a member informing them of an upcoming investigative interview that could potentially lead to discipline. The letter informed them of their right to a steward. However, the letter stated it was the employee's obligation to contact their steward to be present at the interview.

I spoke to leaders in various parts of the country and this seems to be a recurring issue. There may be many members who think this is the rule. *This is not the rule! It is management's responsibility to contact and arrange for your steward to be present in one of these meetings when you request it!*

I sometimes forget that what I take as common knowledge is not known by everyone we represent. The Postal Service workforce has seen an influx of tens of thousands of new employees. We all need a refresher and reminder of our rights occasionally.

Every APWU-represented employee needs to remember their *Weingarten Rights*, which are the rights to request a representative. Management does not have to tell you that you have Weingarten rights. You have to know and invoke them.

It is important to always have a steward present in any meeting that could lead to discipline. Your steward is your witness, and can advise you on how to answer questions, prevent badgering, help clarify questions and answers, and they can meet with you privately prior to the meeting. Your steward is not a "silent witness" but rather a full participant.

Always remember to say these words when management calls you in for a meeting:

"If this meeting can result in me being disciplined in any way, I request that my union representative be provided and be present. I will not answer any questions until my union representative is provided."

Repeat this until your steward is provided. If they say you need to find your own steward, the meeting cannot continue and the contract has been violated.

The Postal Service requires that a steward ask for permission to be released from work duties in order to perform union duties. How can any employee go find their own steward when the employee would need permission to leave the work area to find a steward or make a call to a steward? It is ridiculous to think that a member has to get a steward on their own since they have no authority to release a steward from work to perform union duties. Only management can do that.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS HAVE A STEWARD PRESENT IN ANY MEETING THAT COULD LEAD TO DISCIPLINE. YOUR STEWARD IS YOUR WITNESS, AND CAN ADVISE YOU ON HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, PREVENT BADGERING, HELP CLARIFY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, AND THEY CAN MEET WITH YOU PRIVATELY PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

It is vital that you ask management for a steward when you need representation for either an investigative interview, to meet with you to see if you have a grievance, or to file a grievance. If you go looking on your own, you could face additional discipline for being out of a work area or not working. The steward could also be at risk if they were not on official steward time as well.

Asking management to arrange for a meeting is a requirement under the contract. Asking management protects you, protects the union, and puts the burden squarely on management. These meetings are to be "on-the clock"—not before work, after work, or on breaks. You must insist on this and stand up for your rights!

Thanks to Chuck Camp, President, Philadelphia BMC Local, for the article's inspiration. ■



Preventing Hearing Loss

Hearing loss caused by noise can largely be prevented, and protecting your hearing should be taken seriously. Hearing damage can take place at work, at home, and during leisure activities like attending concerts, listening to loud music, or attending sporting events.

Recent studies show that hearing loss is connected to many health problems, including dementia.¹ According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, over 37.5 million adults have some form of hearing loss.²

How do you know if you are in too loud of an environment? If you need to raise your voice to speak to someone 3 feet away, noise levels might be over 85 decibels. Noise may be a problem in your workplace or if you:

- Hear ringing or humming in your ears when you leave work.
- Have to shout to be heard by a coworker an arm's length away.
- Experience temporary hearing loss when leaving work.

These same symptoms would indicate that noise is a problem after any activity you participate in.

OSHA allows an exposure up to 90 Decibels (dBA) for 8 hours a day, but not more than 15 minutes a day for 100dBA. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends 85 dBA as the limit for an eight-hour exposure. The NIOSH Sound Level Meter App (cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise/app.html) is one tool available to the public to download on mobile iOS.

devices that measures sound levels in the workplace and provides noise exposure parameters to help reduce occupational noise-induced hearing loss.

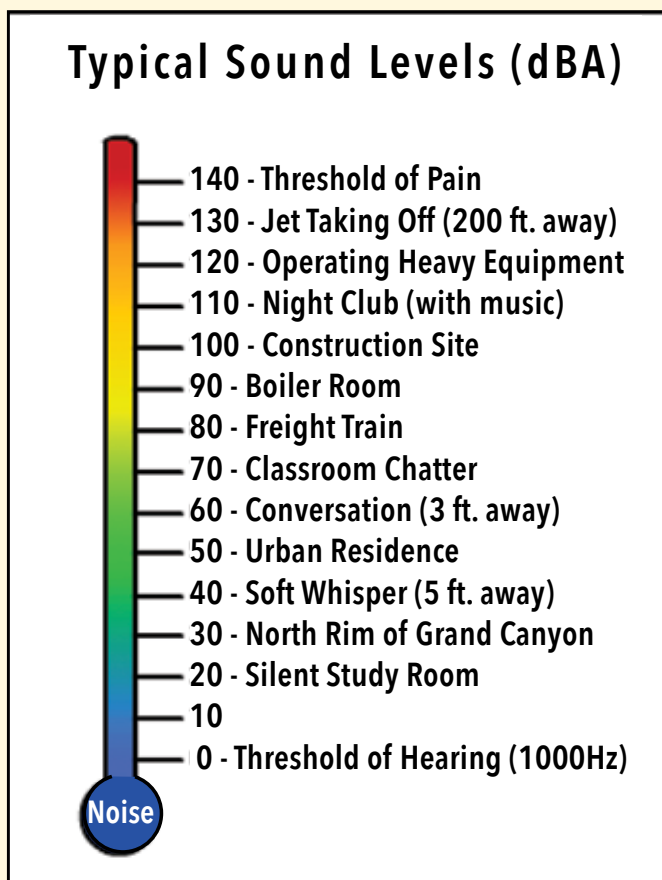
1. Hearing Loss and the Dementia Connection | Johns Hopkins | Bloomberg School of Public Health (jhu.edu)

2. Quick Statistics About Hearing | NIDCD (nih.gov)

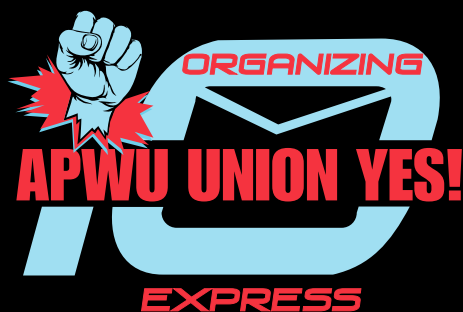
You can protect your hearing by wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) like ear plugs or over the ear hearing protectors. Employees who use power tools should always wear hearing protection when operating this equipment. If you wear ear buds to listen to music, maintain the volume at a level less than 85 dBA to help preserve your hearing.

Get your hearing tested regularly. Often times hearing loss is gradual and goes unnoticed over time. Regular testing and preserving those records could help if you eventually need to file a hearing loss claim through the Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP). ■

Stand Up for Safe Jobs!



Source: www.osha.gov/noise



10 Roads Express ROUNDUP

Columbus, OH 10 Roads Express Drivers Win Huge “Union YES!” Vote

10 Roads Express mail drivers in Columbus, OH have voted to join the APWU by a blowout 57-21 margin. The ballots were tallied by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on Jan. 26.

The 75 percent “union yes” vote came on the heels of union victories at 10 Roads Express locations in Harrisburg, PA and Peoria, IL. The company is now the Postal Service’s largest trucking contractor.

The drivers came together to build their union after management cut their hours and rescinded a raise they had earned before 10 Roads Express took over their previous employer.

“We were tired of the company making all the important decisions that affected our lives. We knew the only way we were going to have a true voice and be heard was with a union contract, so we called the American Postal Workers Union,” said Paul Hacker, a 10 Roads Express driver.

“We welcome these new members into our union and thank our organizers, Chuck McFarland, assigned as lead on the campaign, and Lori Cash. They have worked tirelessly to make this win for workers a reality,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “As a wave of union organizing sweeps the country, these brave 10 Roads Express workers have won their right to the protection of a union by building from the ground up. Private sector organizing in the postal industry is a tide that lifts all boats. As these 10 Roads Express workers use their



“We were tired of the company making all the important decisions that affected our lives. We knew the only way we were going to have a true voice and be heard was with a union contract.”

collective voice to win raises and a good union contract, their gains will improve standards everywhere to benefit us all.”

Company Charged for Labor Law Violations

The victory came just three weeks after the General Council of the NLRB filed charges against the company for threats of pay cuts, cuts to hours and routes, and withholding bonuses. The company also unlawfully promised workers better health care benefits and improved terms and conditions if they rejected union representation.

The offenses cited in the charges took place throughout 2022. Following Board charges, cases are prepared by the Board for a hearing before an NLRB Administrative Law Judge.

“Our message to the company is that it’s all about being fair,” said Scott Wise, a 10 Roads Express driver with almost two decades of experience driving mail from their Harrisburg location. “It’s not rocket science. It’s not hard. We’re not asking for a lot. We all want to be treated fairly. We want to be able to come in, do our jobs and go home and not be harassed by the company.”

Peoria, IL 10 Roads Express Update

Meanwhile, at the company’s Peoria, IL location, workers pushed back on a management attempt to unilaterally impose a drastic cut to drivers’ hours. Drivers in Peoria successfully voted to join APWU in December 2022. Company management reached out with an agreement to bargain just hours before a planned workplace action was due to take place. ■

INTERVIEW:

The Union Veterans Council is the AFL-CIO's Newest Constituency Group

The *American Postal Worker* magazine recently spoke with the Union Veterans Council (UVC) Executive Director Will Attig.

The UVC was established by the AFL-CIO to enlist millions of military veteran union members to get more involved in the union movement, tackle urgent veterans' issues, and hold candidates for office accountable on those issues.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council formally established the UVC as an official constituency organization in 2022 alongside the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and Pride at Work.



What is the Union Veterans Council?

The UVC is the only labor-wide veterans' advocacy organization. Our mission is to engage, educate, and mobilize veteran union members... to harness our collective voices to bring about change – legislatively, politically, and at the bargaining table.

UVC was recently chartered as a constituency group of the AFL-CIO. What does that mean?

More than one million veterans in the labor movement play a critical role in our fight for justice. Veterans are in every corner of the labor movement, from job sites to bargaining tables – from first year apprentices to international union presidents... by being chartered... it really means that working veterans all across the country now have a voice at the highest level of the labor movement.

You previously mentioned your organization's focus on outreach, legislation, and policy.

Could you tell us more about how veterans' issues and labor issues are connected?

Veterans are a group ... that need a lot of legislation, unfortunately ... with healthcare, issues with suicide – the largest percentage in numbers of suicide are veterans that are earning less than \$31,000 a year – veterans that are retiring in areas that have high retirement insecurity ... it takes a lot of work to support them.

One of the biggest bills that we've worked on over the last few years is The PACT Act (Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics)... a bill to ensure that toxic exposure is part of the VA's comprehensive health-care system and veterans would be able to get the

help and healthcare they needed....now thousands of veterans ... are going to be able to get benefits and be taken care of for the ailments they may have had for decades."

What is the connection between postal workers and veterans?

The Postal Service has always been a great place for veterans to find long term stable employment... My grandpa was a Sergeant Major in the Air Force. Everybody knew him in my hometown as the postal worker. In his office, right next to his picture in his [military] dress uniform, there was a picture of him in his postal uniform and it meant a lot to him.

When I returned home [from deployment], a union program taught me how to weld and put me into a building trade, that changed my life. That story is not just my grandpa's, ... when you think about Postal Service workers, the hundreds of thousands of veterans who have been able to live a better life ... to be able to retire and live with a little dignity. That is a story that that can be told hundreds and hundreds of times.

How can postal workers get involved with the UVC?

The first step is to sign up at our website, unionvets.org.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Take the initiative as a union veteran, reach out to your union about any type of veterans' program... find a way to support your community and hometown. It's always a good thing to do.

For more information on APWU Veterans Issues, visit: apwu.org/veterans. ■



FROM the FIELD

Below are quotes from various APWU local and state publications throughout the country. All the publications listed are part of the Postal Press Association (PPA). For more information on the PPA, visit apwupostalpress.org or email ppa@apwupostalpress.org.

“We ASSUME the union will survive and thrive to defend our rights, provide opportunities to make decent livings, and offer benefits into the foreseeable future. We ASSUME the union will have stable leadership during our working years and won’t become embroiled in some sort of conflict to where it can’t function properly – or we ASSUME that officers will always be there and won’t get sick and have to quit; that stewards will be in the workplace to represent us when needed. But let’s be honest – we don’t know what we’ve got ‘til it’s gone. ... The point I’m trying to make is – Let’s not take our local’s leadership for granted. Serving the local is a labor of love. If that ingredient is missing, what purpose does it serve? Most work for the local is volunteer. We do it from our hearts; not our pocketbooks. What binds the local together is not just the work or the workplace or struggling with management over issues both great and small; it’s caring for one another. We are a community foremost. Without this solidarity we are nothing.”

– Loren Adam
Northwest Arkansas Area Local Editor
Razorback Scheme

“The USPS is a constitutionally mandated ‘service’ to the American public. It requires universal service regardless of where you live. That means we have the privilege of serving our customers whether they live in a large city, or small rural town. Profitability of one, or the other, should have no standing in the decision to grant quality postal services to citizens in either of these locales. That is a great part of the value of the APWU. As we advocate for you, the craft employees of the United States Postal Service, we are also advocating for the continued, universal, high-quality services we provide to the American public.”

– Russ Franklin
Salt Lake City Area Local President
The Six-Bits

“The union has won you benefits that most workers in this country wish they could have. As a Full-Time Regular employee, you are guaranteed 40 hours of work per week. Over that you get overtime pay, and over ten hours in a day you get paid double time. You get paid vacation and sick time. The APWU has a fabulous health insurance plan. You also have retirement benefits that, if you contribute to and moderate, can give you a lifetime benefit. The APWU has had to fight for all these benefits for you. So, when I hear people say, ‘why should I participate in the union,’ I say ‘you are the union.’ If you read up on the history of working conditions of postal workers, you will understand what the union has done for you. A little participation by you could make a major impact on the future for the employees that come after you. So, go to a meeting once in a while, vote when you have local and national officers’ elections. Also, especially take notice during contract negotiations and vote for or against ratification. Make your voices count.”

– Ike Floyd, Illinois Postal Workers Union Human Relations Director, *The Illinois Postal Worker*

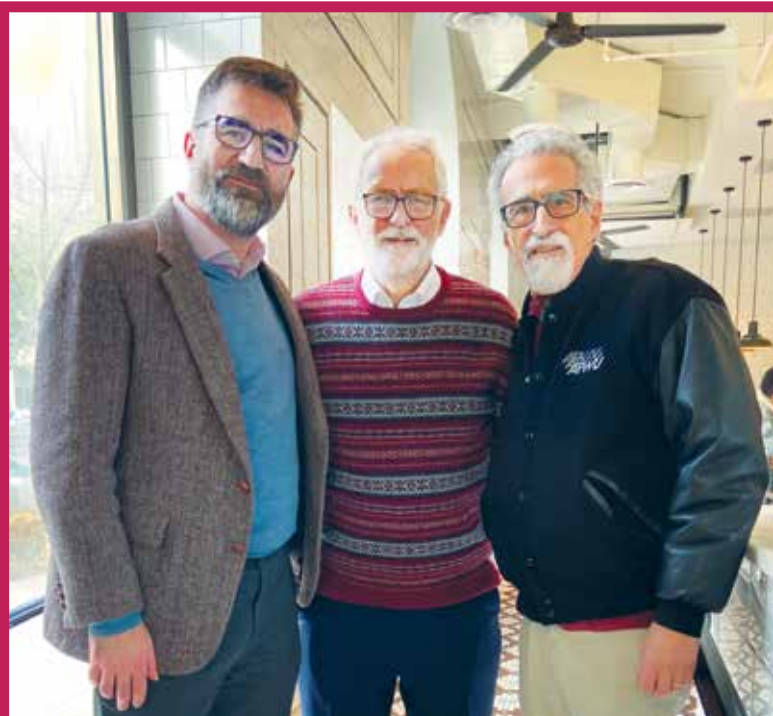
Efforts to Protect and Expand Social Security in This Congress

As negotiations continue over raising the federal debt limit, the holdup seems to center around members of Congress looking for concessions in order to raise this limit. In the House of Representatives and the Senate, there has been talk, largely led by Republicans, of spending cuts to social programs including, but not limited to, Social Security and Medicare. Possible cuts to these programs include raising the age of retirement and lowering cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). Fortunately, President Biden has vowed to protect both Social Security and Medicare, and any bill that weakens these programs would most likely not pass in the Senate.

While some in Congress are trying to cut Social Security and Medicare, others are trying to protect and expand the programs to ensure their financial stability. One way to help fund Social Security is by adjusting the current Social Security tax structure. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) has proposed raising the cap on the payroll tax. Currently, Americans are taxed on their earned income up to \$147,000 for this tax season. Any wages earned over that value are not taxed for Social Security. This means that the wealthiest person in the nation pays the same amount of Social Security tax as an individual making \$147,000. Like Manchin, Senator Bernie Sanders

(I-VT) also believes this unjust tax structure should change.

Sanders supports applying the payroll tax to all income above \$250,000 so that average Americans are not paying the same tax rate as the wealthiest few. Sanders also supports expanding Social Security, including benefit and COLA increases, as well as taxes on business income. Over fifty organizations, including APWU, have endorsed Sanders' proposed legislation, entitled *The Social Security Expansion Act*. APWU is fighting to protect and expand both Social Security and Medicare, programs we have all paid our fair share into and deserve to receive! ■



A Visit With Jeremy Corbyn

President Mark Dimondstein and APWU Communications Director Graham Copp are pictured here with British Parliament member and former British Labor Party leader Jeremy Corbyn MP. They had the opportunity to meet and share their views on the encouraging worker actions throughout Great Britain, including the striking actions of the postal workers of the Communications Workers Union, led by their General Secretary Dave Ward. Corbyn was briefly in Washington, DC to testify at a hearing in defense of press freedom and calling for the end of the attempt of the U.S. government to extradite Julian Assange of Wikileaks.

LABOR NEWS



New York Nurses End Three-Day Strike for Patient Safety

In January, more than 7,000 nurses at two New York City hospitals ended a three-day strike after negotiators reached a tentative agreement. The deals with the Mount Sinai Hospital and the Montefiore Medical Center include better working conditions, safer staffing, improved patient care, and a 19 percent pay increase over the course of three years.

Luigi Morris



Vote Sparks Union Power at Ohio Auto Battery Plant

In December, autoworkers at the new General Motors (GM) battery plant in northeast Ohio voted 710-to-16 to unionize with the United Auto Workers (UAW).

The vote comes as the auto-industry transitions away from gasoline-powered to electric vehicles. Workers at the plant make significantly less than GM's long-standing unionized manufacturing plants. ■

Unionization Trail Continues for REI Workers

Workers at outdoor retailer REI have filed for a union election at the company's Orange Village store in Northeast Ohio, the third scheduled at the nationwide chain. It follows successful votes in their SoHo, NY and Berkeley, CA locations.

Workers walked out in an unfair labor practice strike on Feb. 3 after the company refused to agree to a timely election and unlawfully surveilled workers. The company backed down, just minutes before a NLRB hearing was due to begin. The election for union representation by Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) was scheduled for March 3.



No Justice, No Jousting: Medieval Times Workers Throw Down the Gauntlet

Medieval Times workers in Buena Park, CA walked out on strike as they fight for a first contract for the unit of knights, squires, stable hands and other performers, citing dangerous conditions, low pay and lack of respect.

"We'll be out picketing basically every day for the foreseeable future until we can make some kind of meaningful progress with the company," said lead organizer Erin Zapcic, who plays the Queen at the medieval-themed dinner-theater.

The workers, who are organizing with Medieval Times Performers United and the American Guild of Variety Artists, filed multiple unfair labor practice charges after facing retaliation by management. One charge follows an attempt to remove the union's account from social media platform TikTok, due to a trademark action from the company for using the company's name in their union moniker. ■

RWDSU

Half a Million UK Workers Strike

On Feb. 1, approximately 500,000 workers across the UK joined a mass one-day strike. The coordinated strike saw teachers, train and bus drivers, university lecturers, civil servants and airport workers walk out to protest rising prices and stagnant wages.

Other groups of workers are also conducting rolling one-day strikes, including Communications Workers Union (CWU) members at Royal Mail. On Feb. 17, the CWU announced that 95.9 percent of members at Royal Mail voted in favor of continuing strike action on a 77.3 percent turnout. An unprecedented level of support for a strike.

The UK has some of the most restrictive labor laws governing strikes in the developed world. They are required by law to ballot all affected members by mail and achieve a majority "yes" vote with a 50 percent turnout threshold. They must give 14 days' notice before the strike takes place.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Government is attempting to restrict the right to strike even more by introducing a "minimum service level," forcing workers to cross picket lines against their will to guarantee coverage in certain industries. ■

UC Workers Make History After Six Weeks on Strike

After six weeks on strike, 48,000 teaching assistants, researchers, tutors and other graduate student instructors across the University of California (UC) system won large increases in wages and benefits.

It was the largest strike of academic workers in history and brought together separate bargaining units within the UC. Many workers struggled to get by on salaries as low as \$24,000 in some of the country's most expensive cities, such as Berkeley, Los Angeles and San Diego.

All workers will see raises under the agreement, with the lowest-paid receiving as much as an 80 percent pay increase over the life of the contract. Benefits will also cover child care and health care costs.

French Workers Defend Retirement Age



French workers have held a series of mass protests and one-day general strikes against government plans to raise the official retirement age from 62 to 64.

More than two and a half million people took part in a mass protest on Feb. 11, with 500,000 marching in Paris.

The mass mobilization against the centrist Macron administration's plans is reminiscent of the 2010 protests against then-President Sarkozy's retirement age increases. Polling shows that the measure was a key factor in his 2012 presidential election loss. While the union-friendly left coalition has led much of the political opposition to the unpopular reforms, the French extreme-right *Rassemblement National* has also opposed the change. Analysts fear that the much-hated reforms could drive voters toward the extreme nationalist party, which is already the largest opposition party in the French National Assembly.

Amazon Labor Union Certified by National Labor Relations Board

On Jan. 11, 2023, the Amazon Labor Union (ALU) was officially certified by the National Labor Relations Board. Amazon is now legally obligated to bargain a contract in good faith with the ALU after workers won their union election at the company's JFK8 warehouse in New York. ■

APWU Files National Dispute Over New Employee Orientation



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

The COVID-19 pandemic caused numerous problems for the Postal Service and the postal unions, but more importantly, the employees. The APWU and the other unions did our best to ensure that the safety of the members we represent was the foremost issue to account for by management during those difficult times. One problem that had to be addressed in 2020 was the new employee orientation process.

During the height of the pandemic, the APWU agreed to a one-time virtual presentation of the new employee orientation program. APWU received assurances from the Postal Service that once these employees reported to work at their assigned facilities, the union would have the opportunity to meet with each of them to explain the importance of membership with the APWU. Unfortunately, management's promises were broken in several areas throughout the country and the APWU missed out on the chance to organize thousands of new members.

After observing these broken promises, the national APWU leaders made sure that during the next year and ensuing years, our union leaders at the local and state levels would not be ignored again, or prevented from making our presentation to new employees to join the APWU. We have steadfastly insisted that any local or state APWU representatives who address new employees during the orientation process, and desired to do so in person, would be afforded that opportunity. Though there have been a few bumps in the road, the Postal Service has predominantly adhered to this face-to-face interaction.

This insistence is not by accident. It is a part of our contractual rights under Article 17 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM). The parties have agreed that the union will be "provided ample opportunity to address the new employees while they are on the clock."

Recently, the Postal Service unilaterally created a one-day new employee orientation process that limits the union from exercising our contractual rights to address these new employees. In September 2022, the Postal Service implemented a *Welcome to the USPS Participant Guide* to be utilized for new employee orientation. To make mat-

ters worse, false and misleading declarations are being made to the new employees and to local union officials that the APWU, at the national level, has agreed to this procedure. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The APWU previously filed a national dispute on what is titled the *Welcome to the USPS* (W2USPS) program that contained some references to the orientation process. However, once the latest participant guide was applied that sharply reduced the time new employees were being trained, and limited union involvement in the new employee orientation program, a second national dispute was initiated that concentrated solely on the new employee orientation system and its contractual violations.

AFTER OBSERVING THESE BROKEN PROMISES, THE NATIONAL APWU LEADERS MADE SURE THAT DURING THE NEXT YEAR AND ENSUING YEARS, OUR UNION LEADERS AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVELS WOULD NOT BE IGNORED AGAIN.

Local representatives who present the APWU portion of new employee orientation, and who have had a past practice of being allowed "ample" time, no matter how much time that has taken, are urged to provide the APWU at the national level with any past clock rings or other evidence that the Postal Service is now limiting the union's time for this presentation.

There are other issues involved in this dispute, including the harm to these new employees as they have been prevented from receiving as much information as possible, regarding their employment with the Postal Service, that comprises contractual rights, health benefits, career opportunities, and other support for new employees as they navigate their postal employment. As this dispute goes forward, we will keep the membership apprised of its progress.

To view a copy of the national dispute please visit: apwu.org/hqtc20220354 ■

In-Service Examination, Register, Eligibility Q&As



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

On Jan. 18, 2023, the parties signed National Questions & Answers (Q&As) on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: In-Service Examinations, Register and Eligibility Ratings.

Annually, during the month of March, ALL career employees may request to be tested for Maintenance Craft eligibility ratings and placement on In-Service Registers (ISRs). Also, during March, those career employees already on ISRs have the right to submit a written request to remain on those registers and avoid the annual purge that occurs on April 1.

Below is a list of all sixteen questions & answers:

- 1.) Is the March annual service-wide opportunity to test for Maintenance Craft eligibility ratings limited to once per year during the month of March?
A. Yes.
- 2.) Who is eligible to participate in the annual opportunity to test for Maintenance Craft eligibility ratings?
A. All career employees are eligible.
- 3.) Can Maintenance Craft employees participate in the annual opportunity to test for Maintenance Craft eligibility ratings?
A. Yes.
- 4.) If In-Service Registers do not exist, where are the exam results placed?
A. The HR MSS Coordinator is responsible for placing the results in the employee's eOPF.
- 5.) What form must career employees complete when submitting a written request to participate in the March annual In-Service opportunity?
A. Management shall provide an Employee Maintenance Position Selection (EMPS) form as found in the EL-304 to employees.
- 6.) What occupational group can career employees request to receive eligibility ratings for?
A. All Maintenance Craft occupational groups (MSS and non-MSS) that require an examination, except National Service Technician ET-11.
- 7.) Can non-Maintenance Craft, career employees that have already received eligibility ratings request to be tested again in subsequent years in an attempt to improve their scores?
A. Yes.
- 8.) What options are available for non-Maintenance Craft employees who have failed the structured interview, but received an eligibility rating on examination 955?
A. In subsequent years, the employee may (1) request to retake the examination for the structured interview only or (2) can request the opportunity to retake both the examination 955 and the structured interview. If the employee retakes examination 955, the highest achieved score is used as the eligibility rating.
- 9.) Can current Maintenance Craft employees that have received In-service eligibility ratings for occupational groups that are not in their facility, request to be tested again in subsequent years in an attempt to improve their scores?
A. Yes.
- 10.) What happens if an employee is a "no show" for the proctored exam or structured interview during the In-Service process?
A. The employee is deemed ineligible and may request to take the exam/structured interview during the following year's annual opportunity.
- 11.) Are there any changes to the way employees are ranked on In-Service Registers?
A. No, there are no changes.
- 12.) If non-custodial In-Service Registers exist, how will employees be added in subsequent years?
A. Merged in score order.
- 13.) If an employee on an In-Service Register declines to accept a position in the Maintenance Craft, is that employee's name removed from the In-Service Register?
A. No, the employee will be bypassed for that position.
- 14.) When will In-Service Registers be purged?
A. Every year on April 1, beginning in calendar year 2023.
- 15.) What must employees on In-Service Registers do to avoid the April purge and remain on In-Service Registers?
A. Employees must submit a written request by March 31st to the District HR MSS Coordinator. The exception is employees on custodial In-Service Registers, which are not purged.
- 16.) Is there a specific form that employees must use to submit their notification to management of their intent to avoid the April purge and remain on In-Service Registers?
A. No, any written/mailed request to remain on the In-Service Registers will be accepted. ■

Department of Transportation Testing Violations by USPS Contractor



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz

The APWU strives to ensure USPS compliance with the Department of Transportation (DOT) rules and regulations as related to our Motor Vehicle Service Division members whose positions require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). APWU and the USPS have resolved several disputes when the Postal Service was not following DOT CDL testing requirements, which resulted in Step 4 agreements.

A recent dispute was initiated when the APWU became aware that the Postal Service agent Concentra was requiring CDL Employees to sign a medical record release form for random mandatory DOT Drug and Alcohol (D&A) testing. Employees received a prompt that stated: "Your employer requests you register online for faster check-in at your upcoming visit," followed by "I give Concentra authorization to release to my employer, insurance company, and their representatives... including any medical information, including any psychotherapy notes, psychiatric information, sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol and drug abuse and /or HIV/AIDS status, which is obtained as part of the evaluation and /or treatment for this work-related injury/illness or employment-related examination."

Employees who refuse to sign a Release of Medical Information form are denied the opportunity to take the D&A test. Failure to take a scheduled D&A test is considered a positive test, which results in a positive test on the D&A Clearinghouse database, and suspended driving privileges.

Since 1995, the USPS has committed to follow DOT and Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration (FMCSA) policies and regulations for their CDL employees including participating in the DOT Physical and D&A Testing program.

The issue is addressed in several Step 4 disputes regarding the CDL physical and DOT rules. This is the first dispute regarding the issue of the medical release of information for a D&A test. Prior disputes were with the Postal Service's administration of DOT physical examinations. One issue addressed was whether postal employees would be compelled to sign forms authoriz-

ing the release of personal health records to the Postal Service. **Both parties agreed that they would not.** The agreement states:

"...The FMCSA does not require the medical examiner to provide a copy of the medical examination report to the employer, **therefore employees will not be required to sign a medical release for medical records**"...

There is no need for the contract clinic to require a medical release form when taking a Physical or D&A Test.

When the USPS makes the decision to contract out their services, they often lose control of their brand, and the contractor initiates new policies which often violate the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

A copy of the dispute and prior settlements are available at: apwu.org/HQTV20230046

PS Form 4533's MVS Schedules

On Jan. 19, 2023 the APWU requested confirmation from postal HQ that there is no dispute between the parties that the PS Form 4533 (driver's schedule) is still the appropriate MVS schedule to be used in PVS operations.

PS 4533, Section 213.1 of the PO 701 Fleet Management Handbook establishes the route of travel, and operating instructions for runs. Form 4533 lists whom to call in the event of a breakdown or accident (Exhibit 222.22).

The lack of PS 4533s causes operators to not have specific information necessary to safely and efficiently perform the schedule as intended.

If there is no dispute that the PS 4533 is still in use, we are requesting management instructions for the procedures to be sent to the field and the union. In various locations, local management is utilizing information in the scanners to substitute for the 4533s. We believe that the 4533s are a resourceful tool and any other aids should augment not replace this form.

This Struggle Continues. ■

Contract Negotiations in the Year Ahead



Director Arrion Brown

Our collective bargaining agreements are the foundation of the relationship between APWU members and management. Our collective bargaining agreements are the contracts that establish the wages, benefits, and working conditions that we work under. When these contracts expire, the union must enter into negotiations with management to obtain a new contract.

This year the Support Services Division will negotiate contracts for several of our 10 Roads Express units, B & B Trucking, the National Professional Postal Nurses (NPPN), and our Hollingsworth workers. Each of these negotiation sessions are opportunities to make improvements for the working class.

The lead-up to negotiations involves preparatory work that will allow the negotiators to submit proposals that accurately reflect member demands. The most important part of negotiation preparations will be our contact with local leaders and members to gain input about what members want to see changed, added or removed from their contracts. Our union is a democratic organization. We believe each of our members should have a voice that contributes to what they believe should be included in their contracts. While it is unlikely that we will achieve all of our bargaining proposals, it is important that we reach our proposals through consensus of the membership.

Our members' day-to-day experiences under their current contracts offer the best vantage point to understand what should be proposed to management at the bargaining table. For example, in discussions with our private sector drivers, it has been brought to our attention that there are staffing issues. There are locations where our work is leased and subcontracted out because the company does not have the available drivers to meet the complement. This condition is not acceptable. Since we know about this condition prior to negotiations, we will be able to learn more about the cause in our preparatory work to offer proposals to resolve the issue.

**EACH OF THESE NEGOTIATION SESSIONS
ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE
IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE WORKING CLASS.**

Scenarios like these are why it is important for the negotiators to communicate with the members and for the members to communicate with the negotiators. When we all work together it gives us the best conditions to negotiate a good contract.

**WE NEED OUR MEMBERS TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES
THAT WILL BE PRESENTED TO BE
INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATION
PROCESS THIS YEAR, AND OVER THE
NEXT FEW YEARS AS WE NEGOTIATE
CONTRACTS FOR OTHER UNITS.**

In terms of working together, we also must show management that the union negotiators and members are unified in the struggle for a good contract. When we sit at the table with management as negotiators, it must be clear that the members are in full support of the proposals that are suggested.

We cannot allow management to believe that the union negotiators' proposals are independent ideas that do not reflect the interests and concerns of the membership. Acts of union solidarity such as union gear days and contract kickoff events prove to management that we are in a unified effort to obtain good contracts. We will work with local leadership and members to help coordinate acts of solidarity in relation to our contract negotiations.

The Support Services Division leadership looks forward to contract negotiations this year. We will negotiate with tenacity to achieve the best outcomes possible. We need our members to take advantage of the opportunities that will be presented to be involved in the negotiation process this year, and over the next few years as we negotiate contracts for other units. Our input and involvement is key to success. ■

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COORDINATOR

ALABAMA | ARKANSAS | FLORIDA | GEORGIA | LOUISIANA | MISSISSIPPI | NORTH CAROLINA |
SOUTH CAROLINA | OKLAHOMA | TEXAS | TENNESSEE

Together, We Can Overcome Any Obstacle



Yared Wonde, Southern Regional Coordinator

As a new officer writing my first article, I would like to start by saying that I am honored and humbled to have been elected as Southern Regional Coordinator of our great union. I cannot express enough my gratitude for the trust and confidence you have placed in me. I assure you that I will do my utmost to represent and serve the best interests of our union and its members.

I understand the weight of this responsibility and I promise to work tirelessly to ensure that our union continues to thrive. I will actively listen to your concerns and ideas, and will do my best to address them in a timely and effective manner. Together, with my experience as a former President of one of the largest locals in the nation (Dallas Texas Area Local), we can continue to make the APWU a success.

Thank you again for your support and for giving me the opportunity to serve in the 11 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas and Tennessee that are represented in the Southern Region. I look forward to working with you all in the upcoming months.

As we look to the future, it is clear that our members will face a number of challenges that will have a significant impact on their jobs. These challenges include technological advancements, shifting economic conditions, and changes in the political environment.

One of the biggest challenges facing our members will be the rapid pace of facility conversions into Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DC) and mega plants.

The conversion of facilities is already affecting our members, and this trend is likely to accelerate in the coming years. This will have a major impact on jobs across the nation.

As Regional Coordinator, I will challenge the USPS on the remaining impacts, as well as future impacts. When Impact Statements (excessing notices) are received, we will make sure there are no Article 12 violations of the

Collective Bargaining Agreement. It is imperative that we work together with the local union leaders addressing these impacts, in order to minimize and/or eliminate the impacts to our members.

Most of the impacts have been canceled in the 11 states of the Southern Region.

The next few years will be challenging. However, by staying informed and being prepared, our members can navigate these challenges and continue to thrive in their careers as we have done it in the past and to advocate on their behalf. Together, we will be able to overcome any obstacles that come our way.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Article 14 of the union contract states in part “It is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe working force.”

Work-related injuries range from minor cuts and bruises to serious life-threatening injuries. These injuries can result in significant physical pain, emotional trauma, and financial hardship for affected employees and their families.

The U.S. Department of Labor recently found the USPS exposed workers to struck-by, electrical, crushing, fire and other health hazards at facilities in Columbia, Knoxville, and Nashville, TN.

www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/region4/01252023

When employees identify safety issues in our work place and need to report it by completing **PS Form 1767** (Report of a Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice), the form should be readily available on the work room floor.

I am available and ready to assist locals. Along with the other Coordinators: Sharyn Stone, Central Region; Omar Gonzalez, Western Region; Tiffany Foster, Northeast Region; and A.J. Jones, Eastern Region; we are always available to work with you and for you.

Congratulations to Kenneth Beasley on his retirement! Thank you for your service. ■



Judy Beard, Director

What's the 411 on Capitol Hill?

With the 118th Congress underway, there is already much talk throughout the country on the debt ceiling, a legislative limit on the amount of debt that can be incurred by the United States Treasury Department. The Treasury Department has already undertaken extraordinary measures to keep the government from defaulting on its existing debt. Raising the debt ceiling, an action that must be approved by both Congress and the president, merely allows the U.S. Government to pay the bills that have already come due.

While it is likely the debt ceiling will be raised, the question becomes how will it be accomplished? Some Republicans propose deep spending cuts in exchange for raising the limit, while many Democrats want a clean bill without amendments. The clock is ticking on this since Treasury Secretary Yellen believes the extraordinary measures will only last until June.

No postal worker or federal retiree will see a gap or reduction in pension payments or healthcare coverage while the Treasury Department utilizes these extraordinary measures to avoid a default. For more information on the impact of the debt limit, please visit: apwu.org/news/debt-ceiling.

New Year, New Bills

With the start of every new Congress, members must reintroduce any bill that did not pass in the last Congress if they want it to be considered, in addition to any new bills they create. The *Social Security Fairness Act* was one of the first bills to be introduced. The bill has over 100 cosponsors to date and would remove the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Repealing GPO and WEP would restore Social Security benefits to millions of seniors. Postal employees covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) are just some of many employees unfairly penalized for their prior employment due to 1980s Social Security amendments. These retirees have paid into the system and therefore should receive their full Social Security benefits.

H.R. 82, *The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023* was introduced on Jan. 9 to repeal GPO and WEP. This bill is bipartisan, with close to 35 percent of the cosponsors being Republicans. We ask every APWU member to call the Legislative Hotline at 1-844-402-1001 and urge their House representative to cosponsor H.R. 82, *The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023*!

Congress is preparing to reintroduce many other bills that are vital to our members. One such piece of legislation is *The Shipping Equity Act*, that, if enacted, would allow USPS to ship beer, alcohol, and wine. Due to regulations dating back to the Prohibition era over a century ago, the Postal Service cannot ship these products. Not only does this take away a valuable stream of revenue, it does not let USPS fairly compete with its rivals, who are not bound by these outdated regulations.

Another bill we are working to have reintroduced is *The Federal Retirement Fairness Act*. Temporary employees, namely Postal Support Employees (PSEs), currently cannot start contributing to their retirement savings until they become career employees. This results in delayed retirement and unequal access to retirement benefits among postal workers. If signed into law, this legislation would allow temporary employees to “buy back” time toward their retirement by making a contribution equal to what would have been added during their time as a PSE.

APWU will continue to fight for the legislation that matters most to you and your families. A more comprehensive list of our legislative priorities can be found on our webpage at: apwu.org/legislative-priorities ■





Anna Smith, Director

“What Have You Done for Me Lately?”

What’s the first thing you hear from a non-member when you ask them to join the union?

Maybe surprise! Many non-members have never been asked to join the union. But a lot more non-members really just don’t understand what we are and what we do. They might ask “Why? What’s the union going to do for me?”

There are a lot of ways to answer that question. We are a family. By working together in a union, we have a voice on the job and rights that must be observed. Together we are powerful; alone we are powerless.

A great way to help them understand why we are all stronger in a union is to explain the union difference.

The union difference is the gap between what we achieve in a union job through collective bargaining and what workers in non-union jobs get.

The most obvious thing is money. A worker covered by a union contract earns 11.2 percent more, on average, in wages than a worker with similar education, occupation, and experience in a non-unionized workplace in the same sector.

Another important union difference is health care. Non-union workers are far less likely to have employer-sponsored health care. More than nine in 10 workers who are covered by a union contract have access to employer-sponsored health benefits. Just 69 percent of non-union workers can say the same thing.

Everyone should have health care as a right, but until we can win that fight, a union card is one of the best guarantees of affordable health care out there.

Over nine in 10 workers covered by a union contract have access to paid sick days, compared with just 75 percent of non-union workers.

Unions give each of our members an equal opportunity to advance in the workplace. We believe every worker deserves a fair chance to succeed. There is more equal pay in unionized jobs, whether you look at race or gender.

THE UNION DIFFERENCE IS THE GAP BETWEEN WHAT WE ACHIEVE IN A UNION JOB THROUGH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND WHAT WORKERS IN NON-UNION JOBS GET.

Union jobs are good for the whole community. States with higher union membership invest more in education and health care. Life expectancy is actually longer (80.2 years) in states with high union membership compared to states with low union membership (78.1 years).

So, when you talk to those non-members in your work place, be sure to let them know that building a strong union is good for them, for their family, and for the whole community around us. ■

The Union Difference

Pay	11 percent better pay with a union
Health Care	96 percent better health care vs. 69 percent without
Paid sick days	93 percent have paid sick leave vs. 75 percent that don't
Equal pay	Union contract gives better protection against discrimination

Source: <https://proact.aflcio.org/the-union-difference>



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

Women's Rights are Under Attack

Today, in the USA, women's rights are under attack. Women are being told what they can and can't do with their bodies. Although one might not personally believe in abortion, it's not up to anyone, especially a man, to tell a woman what's religiously right and wrong. It's up to the woman to make that personal decision and only God has a right to pass judgement. These same men, who say they are protecting the rights of the fetus, refuse to pass gun control laws to stop the sale of automatic weapons that are killing our most valuable resources--our beloved children.

International Women's Day Celebrated

March 8 commemorated the anniversary of International Women's Day. On this day, countries from around the world celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women. In the USA, the 19th Amendment was ratified on Aug. 18, 1920, granting women the right to vote. While American women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation, women continue to face discrimination on the basis of sex. Today women are still denied equal pay and Congress still refuses to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

Women Around the World Are Still at Risk

Human Rights Watch has reported that "Despite great strides made by the international women's rights movement over many years, women and girls around the world are still married as children or trafficked into forced labor and sex slavery. They are refused access to education and political participation, and some are trapped in conflicts where rape is perpetrated as a weapon of war. Around the world, deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth are needlessly high, and women are prevented from making deeply personal choices in their private lives."

Gender Bias Still a Problem in the USA

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, in the USA, "Gender bias continues to create huge barriers for many women. Ongoing struggles include ensuring equal economic opportunities, educational equity, and an end to gender-based violence. Women still make just 78 cents for every dollar earned by men. Black women earn only

64 cents and Latina women earn only 54 cents for each dollar earned by white men.

MARCH 8 COMMEMORATED THE ANNIVERSARY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY. ON THIS DAY, COUNTRIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD CELEBRATE THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN. IN THE USA, THE 19TH AMENDMENT WAS RATIFIED ON AUG. 18, 1920, GRANTING WOMEN THE RIGHT TO VOTE. WHILE AMERICAN WOMEN OF EVERY RACE, CLASS, AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND HAVE MADE HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GROWTH AND STRENGTH OF OUR NATION, WOMEN CONTINUE TO FACE DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX.

The Lobby for Equal Rights

In the 1960s and 70s, feminist activists lobbied for the ratification of the ERA, which would legally guarantee women the same rights as men. Since then, the ERA has been reintroduced in every session of Congress, but still has not been ratified. Critics of the ERA say that we don't need it anymore. Those critics say, men and women are already seen as equal in our country. We know that this is not true.

Renewing the Fight for Equality

While women have made great strides toward equality, they must never rest until all women are guaranteed equal opportunities and equal pay. Let the courageous vision championed by the women of the 1960s and 1970s inspire the women of today, of all ethnic groups and backgrounds, to join together to "Fight Like Hell" to lobby Congress to pass the ERA and legislation that is fair and equitable to women and working families.

Women must vow to never go back to the "good old days" when women were told what to say, what to do, and how to act. ■

Camp Lejeune Lawsuits



People living or working at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene, and other chemicals from the 1950s through the 1980s.

One doesn't have to look far these days to find a legal advertisement attempting to reach Marines, Sailors, civil servants, and contractors who served at the base, promising to give them their day in court.

The *Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act* is an omnibus bipartisan legislative act that included the Camp Lejeune Justice Act, a bill introduced in 2021 separate from the *Honoring Our PACT Act*, but now included within it.

Section 804 of the PACT Act allows certain individuals to sue and recover damages for harm caused from exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune between 1953 and 1987. This only applies to individuals who were exposed to contaminated water for at least 30 days, and the bill prohibits the U.S. government from asserting specified immunity from litigation in response to such a lawsuit.

Section 804 states: “An individual, including a veteran (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code), or the legal representative of such an individual, who resided, worked, or was otherwise exposed for not less than 30 days during the period beginning on August 1, 1953, and ending on December 31, 1987, to water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, that was supplied by, or on behalf of, the United States - may bring an action in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina to obtain appropriate relief for harm that was caused by exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.”

With the *Honoring Our PACT Act* now law, many organizations are encouraging their veterans to re-evaluate whether or not they want to participate in the recent Camp Lejeune lawsuits.

Camp Lejeune veterans and families are urged to weigh their options and to contact a VA-accredited VFW service officer before making any decisions regarding Camp Lejeune lawsuits.

The *Camp Lejeune Justice Act* has an offset provision for any compensation awarded from a court case. That compensation will be deducted from any VA disability pay, VA health care, Medicare, or Medicaid. The suspension would be in effect until the amount of money that was used to file a suit is fully paid.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) states that if you have qualifying service at Camp Lejeune and a current diagnosis of one of the conditions listed on the VA website, you may be able to get disability benefits.

Qualifying health conditions include:

- Bladder cancer
- Breast cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Female infertility
- Hepatic steatosis
- Kidney cancer
- Leukemia
- Lung cancer
- Miscarriage
- Multiple myeloma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes
- Neurobehavioral effects
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Rena toxicity
- Scleroderma

For more information and to sign up for updates about Camp Lejeune historical water contamination, visit: publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune

To find a VFW VA-accredited service officer, go to: vfw.org/service-officers

Additionally, the US Marine Corps is encouraging all those who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune before 1987 to register to receive notifications regarding Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water at: clnr.hqi.usmc.mil

Veterans who are a part of a lawsuit related to Camp Lejeune water contamination have the ability to remove themselves from the lawsuit before judgement is made. ■

Source(s): *Congress.gov*
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Training, Regional Assistants and COVID Leave



Daleo Freeman, Director

Human Relations Conference

The Human Relations Conference will be held from June 12 to June 16, 2023 at the Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel, located at 401 W. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Guests should plan to arrive on June 12 and depart on June 16.

For additional information on registration, hotel booking, and schedules, visit: apwu.org/events/human-relations-conference.

Regional Resource Assistants

The APWU has established a Regional Resource Assistant (RRA) training program for issues related to the Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) and on-the-job injuries.

Twenty APWU members were recommended by their local presidents and have officially been appointed as RRAs by APWU National President Mark Dimondstein.

The Injury Compensation Basic Training Program provided by the Department of Labor (DOL) equips the nationally appointed RRAs with the knowledge and tools needed to assist locals nationwide in order to provide proper advice and effective assistance to workers within the APWU family. All APWU RRAs will have gone through the formal training and certification processes provided by the DOL to deliver effective and knowledgeable training on those specific issues.

The RRAs will provide training sessions and presentations to local, state, and regional union offices (including members at local union meetings) for issues related to on-the-job injuries and OWCP upon request.

Local, state, and regional offices may request RRA training sessions by contacting Human Relations Director Daleo Freeman at: dfreeman@apwu.org. Members should contact their local/state union representatives for all issues related to OWCP.

APWU Regional Resource Assistants:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Adam Souza | • Keith Combs |
| • Ashley Sorensen | • Kevin Meyer |
| • Coleen Maxwell | • Lana Harris |
| • Don Stein | • Passion Walker |
| • George Harris | • Richard Manifold |
| • Gabriel Medinna | • Rosemary Gladden |
| • J. Renee Bost | • Roxanne Heckman |
| • Jennifer Fulbright | • Teresa Hamilton |
| • Joe McCrary | • Tinamarie Vivens-Stafford |
| • Kathleen Kaplan | |



APWU Regional Resource Assistants

New FECA Procedures for COVID-19 Cases

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), which protected federal workers who contracted COVID-19 (COVID), expired on Jan. 27, 2023. We are providing the following information to members on the new procedures for COVID-related workers' compensation (OWCP) claims through the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA).

Under the ARPA, postal workers who tested positive for COVID were presumed to have contracted the illness while at work. OWCP claims were processed through the DOL by submitting form CA-1, Notice of Traumatic Injury, which allows for Continuation of Pay (COP) benefits.

For workers who test positive for COVID after Jan. 27, the DOL has announced procedures for processing OWCP claims in FECA Bulletin 23-02, available online.

In most instances, OWCP claims for COVID should be filed on form CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease (unless the worker is capable of positively identifying their exposure to a single event or work shift). There is no entitlement to COP in an occupational disease claim. Claims for wage-loss benefits should be filed by a CA-7 with the DOL. Claims for COVID benefits based on testing after Jan. 27 and filed on a CA-1 will be administratively converted to a form CA-2, and COP will be denied. Workers will receive written notice regarding such conversions. Employees will initially need to use their own leave until the claim is approved.

For claims based on positive testing after Jan. 27, workers will have to establish all five essential elements of OWCP entitlement to include a causal relationship, which is established by providing a physician's reasoned medical opinion that a positively-tested COVID diagnosis was attributable to work place exposure. ■

(Reference: FECA Bulletin No. 23-02. – Dec. 15, 2022)



Nancy Olumekor, Director

Join the Fight for Social Security and a Better Tomorrow

Legislative Priorities

The Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) was re-introduced during the first week of the 118th Congress. Co-sponsors are signing-on to the bill; however, they must also vote for the bill while it passes through the various House committees and when it finally reaches the floor of the House. We must keep the pressure on our congressional representatives in the House to co-sponsor and vote for H.R. 82 by calling our legislative hotline at 844-402-1001, and by writing them letters, postcards, emails as well as encouraging our family, friends and acquaintances to do so as well.

Join The Retirees Department

Your APWU dues payments stop when you retire from the USPS. To continue your APWU membership you can join the Retirees Department. Retirees Department applications are mailed out and emailed to APWU bargaining unit members upon retirement from the USPS. You can join online at apwu.org/retiree-online-join.

Retirees Department dues are just a \$3.00 per month deduction from your annuity.

OPM - Changing Your Annuity Payment Direct Deposit

Numerous retirees have complained that OPM delays in processing changes to their direct deposits resulted in delays in receiving their annuity payments.

Below is important information from OPM and the answer to the question “How do I change my annuity payments to a different bank or bank account?”

When you change the account you use for direct deposit, keep the old account open until a payment is posted to the new account. This will prevent OPM from having to reissue your payment if it is rejected by the old bank account or if there is a problem with the new account.

You can submit the change to OPM by visiting www.serviceline.opm.gov by calling (888) 767-6738; or writing to OPM to sign up for direct deposits or to change your account or bank information.

If you write to OPM, your letter should include your claim number. You can submit a Standard Form 1199A, Direct Deposit Sign-up Form, also available from your bank. Mail your letter of request or Standard Form 1199A to:

OPM-ROC
PO Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017.

Third Act: National Day of Action - March 21, 2023

Third Act, founded by prominent environmentalist Bill McKibben, aims to harness the power, passion, and experience of the nation's seniors to tackle the two greatest crises we face, climate change and authoritarian assaults on democracy.

As union members, we worked for economic justice and a better world! As union retirees, our third act must be to help save that world!

Operating through a host of groups throughout the country, Third Act, with legions of volunteers, is taking the fight to save our planet and our democracy for present and future generations, directly to the obscenely wealthy elites and mega-corporations who invest heavily in fossil fuels.

Union retirees in numerous cities around the country, are organizing for the March 21 National Day of Action, when seniors will join together to demand that four of the nation's biggest banks – Bank of America, Chase, Citibank and Wells Fargo – move their money out of fossil fuels.

Thousands of Third Act volunteers and followers have already pledged to divest from these banks unless they agree to divest from fossil fuel, and more will do so in the weeks and months ahead.

As union retirees, you can become a part of this exciting movement by helping us build participation in the activities throughout the nation.

For more information on activities happening near you – from attending the rally, picketing, being part of a rocking chair vigil, serving food or being a marshal during marches, to civil disobedience – visit thirdact.org. ■



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

My Consumer Driven Option

On behalf of the entire APWU Health Plan, I would like to welcome all of our new members and their families. The Health Plan team looks forward to serving you for many years to come.

The APWU Health Plan offers two rich and comprehensive plans: the **High Option** and the **Consumer Driven Option**. This Open Season so many of you enrolled in the Consumer Driven Option! I thought this would be a great time to highlight the benefits of this plan.

Get more for less! For example, if you are a Self Only member of the Consumer Driven Option, then your biweekly premium could be only \$14.77! The reason behind this is that under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the APWU negotiated a benefit that the USPS pays 95 percent of your premium for this plan. To qualify for this discount, you must be a career APWU bargaining unit employee who has been enrolled in a FEHB plan as the subscriber for at least one year. This a great union benefit that members are taking advantage of. I enrolled my family in the Consumer Driven Option to take advantage of these savings, and we absolutely love it!

With the Consumer Driven Option, the APWU Health Plan funds your Personal Care Account (PCA) with \$1,200 for Self Only and \$2,400 for Self Plus One and Self and Family every January. These funds will automatically pay all covered medical and pharmacy bills until exhausted. If funds are available in your PCA you can also submit for reimbursement dental and vision costs that you paid for out-of-pocket, up to \$400 for Self Only, and \$800 for Self Plus One and Self and Family. And did you know that the APWU Health Plan will pay you to get your annual physical? In PCA funds that is! We will put a \$25 wellness credit into your PCA for each family member on your plan that completes their annual physical. So, for a family of four that's an extra \$100 you'll get on top of the \$2,400 that you get on Jan. 1! And the visit is free when you use a network provider. Annual physicals are a great way to start a healthy new year.

In addition to the apwuhp.com website, another great resource for our Consumer Driven Option members is the myUHC.com portal. Sign into your portal for online tools and resources that will help you to take full advantage of this plan and all of its benefits. You can sign in to:

- Find network doctors and healthcare providers
- Print a temporary ID card
- View claims and PCA balances
- Get estimates for treatments and procedures
- Price your medications
- Find what services are covered

GET MORE FOR LESS! FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU ARE A SELF ONLY MEMBER OF THE CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION, THEN YOUR BIWEEKLY PREMIUM COULD BE ONLY \$14.77! THE REASON BEHIND THIS IS THAT UNDER THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, THE APWU NEGOTIATED A BENEFIT THAT THE USPS PAYS 95 PERCENT OF YOUR PREMIUM FOR THIS PLAN. TO QUALIFY FOR THIS DISCOUNT, YOU MUST BE A CAREER APWU BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEE WHO HAS BEEN ENROLLED IN A FEHB PLAN AS THE SUBSCRIBER FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR. THIS A GREAT UNION BENEFIT THAT MEMBERS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF.

The Consumer Driven Option is an excellent plan and we're excited for you to take advantage of its generous benefits and perks. If you are a member and have any questions about your plan, don't hesitate to reach out to us at 800-718-1299 or go to: whyuhc.com/apwu. ■



Whither the Postal Regulatory Commission?

In September 2021, we announced that the Postal Service and the APWU had partnered on a limited proof-of-concept test of expanded financial services in a few post offices. The early stage of the test would allow consumers to convert payroll or other business checks, up to \$500 in value, onto a prepaid debit card.

While the initial announcement fell short of the Campaign's demand for a more robust array of postal financial services, it marked an important milestone in our campaign to leverage the postal network and the public's trust in postal workers to address the needs of the unbanked and underbanked in this country.

It was, as President Dimondstein wrote, "a small step in a positive direction."

The initial months of the test program showed small progress. Because of the limited number of sites and the Postal Service's delay in marketing the product, only a few checks were cashed at the four participating post offices. But those transactions showed that the technology at the register and the training provided to clerks worked; there were no other problems identified in the test program.

To their credit, and at the urging of the APWU representatives on the joint task force, the Postal Service continued to develop marketing materials for the pay-check cashing test, continued working on additional financial services, study additional areas to assess demand for such products, and invest in additional back-end security for the program, all with an eye to expand the test program.

When Congressional opponents of postal banking tried to slow them down, postal management responded confidently that the program was within their authority and they intended to move forward.

By the Spring of 2022, the joint union-management task force had agreed on a plan to expand to at least 50 post office locations, increase the dollar amount transferable to the prepaid cards, and to continue working on the early-stage development of additional services.

While the tangible progress of the program was limited at the time, there was real hope that a broader

program, better suited to meet the needs of the underbanked, was taking form. But that progress was halted suddenly when the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) stepped into the fray.

In June 2022, the PRC opened a docket to study the program. Its review process questioned how the check-cashing program differs from the longstanding gift card product on offer at post offices around the country, and how the Postal Service envisions the program evolving.

While it may seem the PRC is "just asking questions," it has the ability to kill the financial services program in its infancy. This is a serious threat to the future of our campaign and the ability to expand the Postal Service's role to continue meeting the needs of the people of the country.

Postal management has continued to maintain that the check-cashing program lies squarely within its authority under the law and the regulations governing the USPS. But the PRC's saber-rattling through the docket has proven already to be a setback: postal management has refused to advance with the additional sites until the PRC provides clarity on their position.

While this may seem reasonable, the PRC still hasn't acted despite opening the docket last June. Therefore, supporters of expanding postal financial services find ourselves waiting for the impasse to break.

But let's not just wait. Our movement can continue to make a difference. Ensuring the PRC has a majority of members who view postal financial services favorably and continuing to pressure postal management to do the right thing, must be priorities for the year ahead. ■

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.

Vehicle Win Shows the Power of Our Coalition

The United States Postal Service owns and operates one of the largest civilian fleets of vehicles in the world, with more than 230,000 vehicles on the road every day. So, while the USPS's carbon footprint is considerable, its recent decision on a new delivery vehicle was a key opportunity to reduce the Postal Service's environmental impact and lead the way in the country's clean energy transformation.

For years, environmental advocates and members of A Grand Alliance have been campaigning to ensure that the Postal Service's next model of delivery trucks included as many electric vehicles (EVs) as possible. The campaign was victorious in December when the USPS and the White House announced that 75 percent of the first 60,000 Next Generation Delivery Vehicles (NGDV) will be electric, with a plan to purchase only electric trucks after 2026.

Experts have agreed that the postal delivery vehicles are well-suited for electrification, with regular starts-and-stops along the routes, and plenty of time for charging overnight. Despite this, in 2021, when announcing plans to purchase the NGDV, the USPS only committed to electrifying about 10 percent of the fleet. By 2022, responding to pressure from coalition groups and congressional leaders, Postmaster General DeJoy increased USPS's EV commitment to 40 percent. December's announcement however, marked a substantial victory for EV campaigners.

Since 2021, the campaign has actively been pressuring the USPS, Congress, and the Biden Administration to work together to increase the Postal Service's purchase of EVs. They have written numerous letters to congressional leaders, briefed administration staff on the science behind their arguments, and delivered over 500,000 thousand petition signatures urging the USPS to buy EVs.

The campaign has been a stellar example of labor, environmental and other advocacy organizations working hand-in-hand on a shared goal.

One of the key organizations in the campaign to electrify the postal fleet has been the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). In a statement following the December announcement, NRDC said, "The U.S. Postal Service is finally getting the message. An electric postal fleet is good

for the environment, good for our communities, good for postal workers, and good for the USPS bottom line."

"This is a dramatic turn around. Going from an initial plan to purchase just 10 percent electric delivery vehicles to more than 75 percent now shows the Postal Service is starting to listen to the hundreds of thousands of Americans who urged it to buy cleaner vehicles," the NRDC concluded.

The NRDC, the Blue-Green Alliance, the United Auto-workers (UAW), the Sierra Club and others were among the groups that challenged errors they identified in the Postal Service's earlier environmental impact statement, which used faulty analysis to justify their plans to procure a 90 percent gas-powered fleet. In addition to the organizing and public pressure campaign, the NRDC and the UAW have taken the USPS to court on issues related to the environmental impact statement. While those court proceedings are still ongoing, the groups have claimed victory for the progress marked by the increased commitment to EVs.

While December's news is a clear vindication of the efforts put forth by the Grand Alliance and other coalition allies, it is not yet a total victory. The struggle to ensure that the production of the NGDV is done with union labor is ongoing. Oshkosh, the defense contractor awarded the contract to make the trucks, is moving ahead with preparing a non-union production facility in South Carolina, far from its existing unionized workforce in Wisconsin. The Alliance and others continue to call on the USPS to offer EV-charging stations available to the public at post offices around the country.

Keep tuned to this column in future issues for more information on how to engage in those ongoing campaigns. ■

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



Gary Klopfer

November 2, 1953 - February 5, 2023

Former Legislative and Political Director and Maintenance Division Assistant Director Gary Klopfer has passed away aged 69.

Brother Klopfer joined the Postal Service after his honorable discharge from the US Army in 1973. He started as an LSM operator before transferring to the Maintenance Division as a MPE mechanic. Rising through the ranks of the union, he became president of the of the Tri-

County Area Local in 1980. In 1991, he was elected a Maintenance Division NBA and was then appointed Representative-at-Large and BMC coordinator in 2001, before assuming the role of Assistant Maintenance Director in 2003, and finally Legislative and Political Director in 2013.

Much of his work for the Maintenance Division focused on Article 32 (outsourcing) and safety. He was a strong advocate for training, with his member trainings described as groundbreaking and legendary. Brother Klopfer also played a key role in multiple national level grievances, including the multi-million dollar MS-47 Das settlement for custodians.

Latterly, he remained active as an arbitrator on the APWU/USPS arbi-

tration panel, as well as arbitrating on a variety of other issues. This involvement in his postal and local communities was very important to him. He continued to volunteer at his local food bank even as his health declined.

In the November-December 2013 edition of the American Postal Worker, Brother Klopfer gave his farewell as a national officer, writing: "I want to thank you for allowing me to represent your interests on issues involving the contract, safety and health, legislation and much more. I could not have accomplished what I did without your help. No one individual makes a union; together we make a union that is strong."

He is survived by his wife, Judy, his five children and 11 grandchildren. ■

HELP THE NALC STAMP OUT HUNGER

On Saturday, May 13, the 31st annual National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive takes place.

Over the course of its 30-year history, the drive has collected well over 1.82 billion pounds of food, thanks to a postal service universal delivery network that spans the entire nation, including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Currently, more than 42 million people in the U.S. are unsure where their next meal is coming from. More than twelve million are children who feel hunger's impact on their overall health and ability to perform in school. And nearly 5.2 million seniors over age 60 are food insecure, with many who live on fixed incomes often too embarrassed to ask for help.

"Despite living in one of the richest countries in the world, too many of our neighbors face shortages of basic needs, including food to put on the table," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "I encourage all of our members to participate at the local level in this positive and ongoing initiative by the NALC."

It is easy to get involved: Prior to their regular mail delivery on Saturday May 13, postal customers are asked to place non-perishable

food donations in a sturdy bag and place the bag next to their mailbox. Letter Carriers will collect the donations as they deliver mail, and donations will help serve your local community.

For information about the drive in your area, please visit nalc.org/food. ■



Looking Back on Labor History



Remembering The Great Postal Strike

March 17 marks the 53rd anniversary of the strike that led to improved wages and working conditions for postal workers after enduring decades of low pay, long hours, lack of benefits, and no collective bargaining rights.

More than 200,000 postal workers in over 30 states participated in the illegal strike, triggered by a below-inflation 5.4 percent raise.

President Nixon's attempt to use the National Guard to keep the mail moving failed as the post ground to a halt.

The Postmaster General came to the bargaining table and, by March 25, workers began returning to work.

The agreement gave postal workers a retroactive six percent raise. The 1970 *Postal Reorganization Act (PRA)*, signed into law five months later, gave an additional 8 percent increase and the right to bargain collectively. By January 1971, the newly created USPS participated in its first collective bargaining session with seven postal unions, including five that would found the APWU on July 1, 1971.

Paul Robeson: Renaissance Man, Leader for Social and Racial Justice

April 9, 1898 – Paul Robeson was born 125 years ago in Princeton, NJ.

Robeson was an acclaimed singer and actor; a star athlete with 15 varsity letters in four sports; an intellectual who received a scholarship to Rutgers aged just 17– be-

coming the third African-American to attend the school, and graduated as valedictorian.

A world-famous actor, he starred in London and Broadway productions of *Othello*. Two of his most notable films were 1933's *The Emperor Jones* and the 1936 movie adaptation of *Show Boat* in which Robeson sang his iconic rendition of *Ol' Man River*.

Robeson was an outspoken advocate of social and racial justice. One of the first major artists to refuse to perform to segregated audiences, he opposed colonialism and supported the Spanish Republic against fascism during the Spanish Civil War.

He also supported many fights for workers' rights at home and abroad. In 1941, he joined the United Auto Workers' Detroit Ford strike. He sang and spoke to workers, including southern African American non-union workers who bosses brought in to try and break the strike. "The best way my race can win justice, is by sticking together in progressive labor unions," Robeson said.

However, Robeson's high-profile activism came at a personal cost. The State Department withdrew his passport in 1950, prohibiting him from international travel. Because of government pressure, he was banned from television networks and rarely heard on U.S. radio.

After a multi-year campaign, Robeson's passport was restored in 1958 and he resumed his world tour until his retirement in 1963.

"At the heart of his labor activism was a burning desire to see black and white workers unified without which, Paul felt, union movements could easily be destroyed," his granddaughter, Susan Robeson, wrote.

The USPS commemorated Robeson with a stamp in 2004. Learn more about the 125th anniversary of his birth at the Paul Robeson Foundation: www.paulrobesonfdn.org. ■





Got Gear?

Wear your union pride!

T-shirts, ball caps, jackets, jewelry, bags, and more!

Just like Douglas Griswold, Tour 1 Expediter, South Suburban, IL, show your union pride in the workplace with an insignia item from the APWU online store. All goods are union made.

Find out more at:
www.apwustore.org