Volume 95 Issue 3 May/June 2017

# **INTEGRITY?**

By Frederick Wolfmeyer, President

isters and brothers, Webster Dictionary defines integrity as, "1. Uncompromising adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty." This is a virtue or element of a person's character that establishes them as an honest or 'stand-up' person. In other words, a person who possesses the characteristic of integrity is one who can be trusted to act and speak with honesty. This is a characteristic that we try to instill in ourselves and our children because it builds character and a reputation that follows you throughout your life and marks you as a person of unwavering principle. As a union official, integrity is what lets management and your members know that you can be trusted, and it is what builds your reputation as a person who acts honestly and morally right. I do not mean to say that it makes you better than the next person or places you above other people. If that were my intention, then there would be a lack of integrity and your reputation would be one of a conceited person who only cared for their own self-interest. No, my intent is that a person with integrity is one who has the moral character to care about and help people in need, and not be concerned about themselves.

I used the word 'lack' above and Webster defines this word as, "1. Deficiency or absence of something needed or desirable: 2. Something missing or wanted: 3. To be without: 4. To fall short in respect of: 5. To be absent or missing:" The definition goes on but I think you understand what I am saying. Therefore, if a person is lacking integrity, then there is a deficiency or absence of this characteristic in their makeup. This is what my article will be about in this is

sue of the *Press On,* the lack of integrity or lack of honesty.

As you all know, I have dealings with management every week. Whether it is policing the contract or advocating on your behalf, my discussions



with management most always revolve around the collective bargaining agreement and/or assisting all of you in one way or another. What you may not know is that many times I inform management of contract violations in an attempt to resolve the issue without having to file a grievance. For example, a manager denies a person an overtime opportunity improperly. I can file a grievance or go to the supervisor, show them where they went wrong, and secure either a make-up opportunity or cash for the bypassed person. I do this under all sorts of circumstances and do so successfully on many occasions. When I cannot prevail through discussions, then a grievance will be filed and put into the system.

On several occasions now, I have pointed out to the postmaster that many of her supervisors and station managers are performing bargaining unit work (BUW). Whether it is the supervisor in Carrier Square or the manager at U-City, Creve Coeur, Weathers, Oldham, or South County, I inform the postmaster that her management people are doing clerk work or are having CCAs and carriers perform clerk work in the hopes that it will be stopped and grievances will be avoided. I have been assured that these management people should not be doing this work and that they will be admonished for it by the postmaster. Well it has come to my attention that this is not the case. Even though

I have acted ethically and with integrity in an attempt to resolve these issues, I have not received the same in return. Actually I thought I did, but later learned that the little word I mentioned above, "lack," needed to be placed in front of the word integrity in regards to the postmaster. Not only did she not talk with her managers and supervisors about them performing BUW, but she has been seen at these same stations and branches performing bargaining unit work herself. She was witnessed throwing parcels and mail on Friday, April 28, 2017, at Oldham Branch along with her MCSO for the Central Area, James Hall. I cannot say that this comes as a surprise to me, because it corroborates what I have suspected for some time and that is, the postmaster has lied to me and has a serious lack of integrity. This ends the attempts on my part to resolve any issue through discussions and opens the door for many grievances.

Recently, postal management has initiated a new process called Compliment Management or Job Dashboard process. What they are now doing is reverting any job that goes vacant. They refuse to look at actual hours worked, but instead they look at "earned" hours to determine whether or not a job will be reposted for bid. This, they say, is to improve the efficiency in the stations and branches. What it says to the union is that the service is merely trying to replace full-time duty assignments with non-career workers or worse, do the work themselves. It just so happens that the branch where the postmaster and her lackey were performing bargaining unit work was a branch where they have determined that they have too many clerks and have decided to revert a clerk duty assignment. I think that the term "lackey" is very appropriate for this MCSO. How does Webster define this word? Lackey, "1. A servile follower; toady. 2. A liveried manservant; footman;" In other words, one who does not think for themselves, but rather must be

Station clerks, start standing up for your rights. You have every right to file grievances. When you see managers doing your work, ask for a steward and file. We will never get any positions filled if we allow them to do our work. They may even be able to get rid of more clerks if they are willing and you allow them to do your work. The same contract covers everyone, even clerks at the station. Don't be fearful. It's time to stand up for your contractual rights!

told what to do and does so with no regard to integrity or ethics. To put it bluntly, a stooge.

In summary, now the service wants to revert most every vacant duty assignment with no regard to how many actual hours it takes to perform the task at hand, and will now base everything on earned hours. In doing so, management wants to have non-career workers perform this work, but in their absence they will use non-bargaining unit workers or managerial personnel to perform the duties of bargaining unit workers. They do not care if they are supervisors, managers, MCSOs, or even the postmaster as long as it is not the bargaining unit. To accomplish this, they must lie during discussions with the union, act unethically and without the slightest shred of integrity. We describe these types of workers as scabs, but also as workers devoid of character and lacking integrity. A discussion I would very much like to have would be one where management would try to explain to me how efficiency can be achieved with them performing clerk work. High salaried management personnel performing level 6 work means the hourly cost just went up and efficiency went down. I must point out to you that this is now your responsibility to assist the union. You must inform your steward or me when you witness a supervisor, manager, or even the postmaster performing clerk work. This will not only save your job, but when we break down the postmaster's yearly pay to an hourly amount, I will attempt to get you paid \$65.33 per hour, but at the very least overtime pay. Does that sound attractive? I will do my best to make sure you receive this amount for each hour she does clerk work. If it is her lackey doing the clerk work, then it will be \$42.37 per hour. I need your help and you need to help yourselves, so let's work together. Until the next issue, I will be filing numerous grievances and keeping you informed. The struggle continues!



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# **Executive Vice President**

By Gene Hollenbeck

irst of all I would like to congratulate our newest career employees. On April 1, 2017, we were able to get 30 PSEs converted to career status. Most of them have been placed into residual positions. We are still working with management to get even more conversions in the future.

There are bids posted right now and if there are any residual vacancies we will try to get more conversions.

Are you working short? Are you working one to a machine? Is management working alongside you? Have you called for a steward and given them a statement? If not, why not? This will continue until you take action. Every time you allow a supervisor to perform craft work, it shows that we don't need the extra employees.

Station and branch employees are you working shorthanded? Has management been helping you get the mail out? Has management instructed the CCAs to pick up their mail from you? Have you asked for a steward and given them a statement? If not, why not?

Right now management is not allowed to post all of the vacant



bids. They know that everyone is short staffed. They know that it takes more employees to do the job than what we currently have. Upper management has stated that our management must ask to post a position and if they feel we have earned that position then they will allow them to post. For the most part they are being instructed to revert any and all vacancies. We have received proposed reversions notifications on several positions. If you noticed on the last posting there are no station/branch positions posted. So, when you are considering whether or not to bid, just remember that if you are successful your current bid will be reverted.

# **Personal Responsibilities**

By Shelia Patton-Harris

he other day I talked to a young lady who had been removed from the postal service. She brought her notice of removal down to the Union Hall. The notice was dated March 8. The day I talked to her was May 7, almost two months after it was issued. When I asked her why it took her so long to file, she said that she had just gotten the notice on Friday. Well, delivery confirmation proved the letter had been signed for on March 28. She will not be getting her job back because of time limits.

We all have to play a part in protecting our postal jobs. If you get mail from the Postal Service or the union, open it immediately and read it. If it is discipline, call the Union Hall or see a steward as soon as possible. The union has to file a grievance within 14 days to be able to fight the discipline.

You are responsible for your work record. Be regular in attendance. Down the line you may want to transfer to another facility in another state. One of the elements used in making that decision is your attendance.

Too many times I see employees walking down the hall talking or texting on their cell phones. Management is using the cell phone policy to issue discipline. Remember, you can only have your cell phone out in the cafeteria or the break area.

Look, some of you have been regulars for a year, year and a half, but you have already gone through all the steps in the discipline procedure. Being fired from the post office makes it difficult to get another job. Why would someone hire you for a job paying minimum wage when you wouldn't come to work at a higher paying job?

Don't assume anything. If you have questions, see a shop steward. Your co-workers are not a good source for information. Come to union meetings. Don't you want to know what's going on with matters that affect your job? Get involved in the local. We need you. There is strength in numbers.









# **Discipline Procedures**

his article will try to explain how the discipline procedure works at the main office for clerks. Many of the new employees have been given incorrect information and hopefully this will clear up any confusion.

- Art 16 This is a discussion to make the employee aware of a problem. — No steward needed
- PDI This is a predisciplinary interview. This is the clerk's chance to tell their side of the story, your day in court. — Steward should be present (always request a steward)
- Letter of Warning (LOW) This is an official letter of warning that has to be taken seriously. Request a steward. You have 14 days to file a grievance.
- Second Letter of Warning (LOW) Ask for a steward. You have 14 days to file a grievance. — If you are a PSE, management will try to fire you instead of giving you a second letter of warning. The Union will fight to return you to work.
- 7-day Suspension Ask for a steward. You have 14 days to file a grievance. — Normally you won't be put off the clock on a suspension, but it still counts against you.
- 14-day Suspension Ask for a steward. You have 14 days to file a grievance. Normally you won't be put off the clock on a suspension, but it still counts against you.
- **Second 14-day Suspension** You are now one step

- away from losing your job. Ask for a steward. You have 14 days to file a grievance. Normally you won't be put off the clock on a suspension, but it still counts against you.
- Notice of Removal (NOR) This is the last step. You have been fired from the Postal Service. It is critical that you file a grievance as soon as possible. This is a 30 day notice. Management may decide to allow you to work for those 30 days or put you off the clock. The Union may be able to get you back to work but there is no guarantee.

There are exceptions to this progression, but this is how it usually goes. The safest course of action is not to get discipline. If you do get discipline, file a grievance even if you think you deserve the discipline. If you get discipline in the mail and can't ask for a steward because you are off work, call the Union Hall and file a grievance. If you are in doubt about something, ask one of the shop stewards. Supervisors and your co-workers are not good sources of information when it comes to the discipline procedure. Always get a shop steward. Don't believe it when a supervisor tells you they will take care of the discipline, get a steward. Someone may tell you it's only a letter of warning, but it is a step in the progression that might lead to you losing your job. If you are a PSE, that second letter of warning will be a removal. Any discipline that you receive, take it seriously.

# MVS Town Talk By Jeff Cooper, MVS Director

he union attended some training at the end of April 2017. The main speaker at the seminar was Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy. Her message was "Building our Union Strengths and Members as Activists." The labor movement was strong because everyone fought for good jobs and a better life for their families. With the challenges today, some forms of the government are desperately trying to strip away the things working-class families have worked hard to achieve. Ex-



amples include suppression of our voting rights, right to work for less laws, attacks on Medicare and health benefits, etc. It is imperative that all members do something extra to ensure that their benefits and life standards are not compromised.

A grievance was filed to get the relief MVS clerk position returned to the craft. The grievance was unsuccessful, but there was an agreement that whenever possible craft employees will perform the duties of the vehicle dispatch clerk position during said clerk's absence for reasons such as annual leave, sick leave or extended absentees.

When a problem arises, submit your written statement to a steward and it will be handled. The grievance procedure must be timely, whether it is a dispute or discipline it requires prompt attention, so your grievance can be filed in the 14 day time limits. Exercise your Weingarten rights when talking to management or an official of the post office where the conversation may lead to discipline.

# One to a Machine

By Earl Staats, Clerk Craft Director

hope everyone had a happy Easter. Management seems to have a problem with putting two clerks to a DBCS, DIOSS and BCS machine. They have been utilizing one to a machine on a constant and continuing basis. If you're an employee who is working one to a machine, you should ask for a union steward as well as filling out a 1767 which is titled "Unsafe and Hazardous Condition." After you have completed the form, give it to the supervisor. The supervisor is supposed to return the form to you before the end of your tour. It should state management's position on the form as well as if and how they are

going to correct the safety hazard. If they don't return your form to you before the end of your tour, ask for a shop steward. If you prefer to remain anonymous, you can fill out the form and place it in one of the boxes marked "1767 forms" or is labeled "Unsafe and Hazardous Condition forms."

When you request a steward, you should also ask the steward to give you a form titled "One to a machine" form. On that form you must put the number of the machine that you were on and the date you were on it, as well as the time and the different jobs you had to do while you were on the machine. These records must be accurate. These statements

must match very closely to the times on the run reports.



If you don't see a steward we have "one to a machine" forms in a pamphlet holder on the outside of the union booth. You can also put the districts you worked on the forms as well. If you have any questions on how and when you need to return those forms to the stewards, don't hesitate to ask any steward or call the Union Hall for the information. In order to know who to pay and for how long we **must** have these forms filled out and filled out correctly.



# Come One! Come All! Family Day is here again!!

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RSVP by AUGUST 1, 2017



Name	Tour	
Number of guests	Pay Location/Section	
There is a limit of six (6) guests per member.		

Cut out and return to: Robin Robertson, 1705 S. Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63104





# **Maintenance News**

#### By Tina Rubino

ello members! We have several new faces and new union members in our Maintenance Department. These new employees come with a few years of service to almost 30 years of employment. From the clerk craft we welcome: James McDaniels, Mary Wheeler, Edith Lucas, Lisa Harlan, Sonya Brooks, Terrance Williams and Brent Rodenborn; also Zachary Peters from the Saint Louis VMF, Ken Whitehead from the carrier craft, Justin Pasley VMF out of the Lakeland District and Teresa Familia, Carla Granger and Katurah Brown from the mail handler craft. We welcome you into our Maintenance Department. We wish you all the best and hope you have a long enjoyable employment. Please stop by our union booth and introduce yourself if you haven't yet. Also if you have any questions, please stop by and we will do our best to help answer your questions.

In March the Gateway Area Labor Relations manager from the Chicago office requested a meeting with the maintenance union officers to discuss the backlog of grievances and how they can get the numbers to none. Tom Nanna, our maintenance craft director, explained the series of events that led to the union sending up to step 3 over 700 grievances. The majority of these grievances are Article 32s which management had contracted out bargaining unit work without first discussing it with Maintenance Craft Director Tom Nanna. We have several signed settlements that stipulate that management has to discuss with the craft director the work to see if BEM (building equipment maintenance) or PEM (postal equipment maintenance) is capable of doing any of the work before management wants to contract it out. They have failed to do so for several years. This has led to this backlog of grievances. Jeff Edwards has done an outstanding job of researching and filing these grievances. He along with the other union stewards are trying to save employees' jobs. BEM and PEM Shop are now starting to see some of these grievances being settled. They are noticing an increase on their paychecks for settlements. We need to be diligent in protecting our work. If you see a contractor in your office performing maintenance work, ask to see a union steward. Note the name of the contractor and the work they were performing with the date and time. Take notes please. All of our jobs are under attack. Thank you!



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Membership eligibility required on all offers. Restrictions apply on all offers. See Neighbors Credit Union for complete details on all offers.



# Tri-State Convention — Des Moines, Iowa





# **Associate Office Report**

By Rebecca Livingston

have been receiving a lot of calls requesting representation for clerks who are having issues related to attendance. I have the opportunity to address PSEs during their new hire orientation process and the union has always placed an emphasis on attendance. The union addresses everything from the probationary 90 calendar-120 workday rules to the standard rule of being regular in attendance, as your job depends on it. I would like to say that everyone gets it, but that would not be correct. The union makes sure that everyone starting their journey with the Postal Service has the information they need to be successful and have a longstanding career, but we can't emphasize enough the policy of being regular in attendance! Now trust me, the full-time regular clerks also have issues with maintaining a regular work schedule. Fortunately for them they have the hours required to be eligible for FMLA, although they don't always take the time to get the coverage. To be eligible for FMLA an employee would need to have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours. Please request FMLA coverage when you or a family member has a serious health issue. The documentation has to be received by FMLA within 15 days of the date you first called in. The doctor's office can fax the information directly to FMLA (1-651-456-6055). You would also need to make sure that you designate the absence as FMLA related when you call in. If you have an established serious health issue that may cause you to be unable to maintain a regular work schedule,

please have your doctor fill out the proper documentation and send it to FMLA to get an established case number. This way you are already covered if the condition causes you to be unable to report to work. Remember, even if you have an FMLA approved condition, you still are required to call in prior to your scheduled reporting time. Please take attendance seriously folks. The post office is! This is just one of the ways they can reduce the work force.

We have all been a part of a day that starts off with a co-worker(s) not reporting to work. Every time someone calls in, management acts like it has never happened before. Panic sets in and the stress levels are off the charts. Every action receives a reaction. I have been called out to situations that have been created because one or more people have called in and now you feel as though all of the responsibility of the office falls on your shoulders. Article 34.A states that all parties recognize the principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. That simply means that you are expected to report to work as scheduled and work in a safe manner to perform all of your duties. Safety first. An injury due to carelessness is subject to discipline even if you are only trying to compensate for someone else's absence. Remember you are only one person. Please follow those last instructions from your supervisor and the work will get done. It is their responsibility to make sure the work gets done. PSEs were hired to be support employees. They were never meant to work the hours of full-time jobs that were never filled. The Postal Service is in the process of refusing to even replace any position that is vacat-



ed. In offices where there is only one PTF, until a request goes to District Headquarters and they are given permission to post and fill that job, it is left vacant. This can take months. What we are asking is that in Level 20 and above offices you make sure that postmasters and supervisors are not performing bargaining unit work. In Level 18 and below offices, please make sure that they are not exceeding their permitted weekly bargaining unit work limits. Now that clerks are realizing that the post office is trying to reduce their hours and function four teams are visiting all of the offices in an attempt to reduce the work force — they understand this is serious business. Please pay close attention to the amount of work your postmaster or supervisor performs. In the large offices it is easy to get caught up in the moment when a co-worker calls in and all of a sudden management wants to help you get the job done. In most cases this office has reverted a bid when it became vacant and they have other jobs that they are waiting to get permission to fill. This does not give them the right to perform bargaining unit work without consequences. If management needs to perform the bargaining unit work to get the carriers out of the building, then they have to own it. There are a few offices that actually keep track if they perform the work, but that is not the normal postal way. Most postmasters and supervisors will deny they ever touched the mail when there are plenty of people who saw them. They are relying on



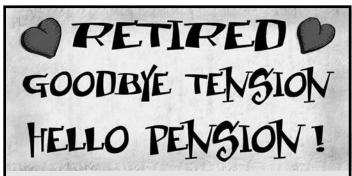
you to not hold them accountable. Seriously, folks! I know we continually say that the job you save may be your own, but I'm here to tell you that is the way you need to look at it. Please hold them as accountable for their actions as they hold you to yours.

Over the past few months there has been a bit of confusion on how you request a steward. It can be as simple as going to your supervisor and requesting to see a steward or as difficult as the supervisor stating they don't care what you do and you can call the steward yourself. Okay, so let me explain to you how it works. As always, as an APWU member, you can call me anytime you want as long as

you are on an official break or are off the clock. I will be available to answer any questions or concerns and if I don't know the answers I have a pool of resources I rely on to find the answers. If after talking with me we decide that a grievance needs to be filed or there is a concern that needs to be discussed with your immediate supervisor, I will ask you to request a steward, once again, with your immediate supervisor. A grievance is defined as a dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment. If they ask you what the problem is and you are not comfortable with discussing the issues

with them without a steward present, you can simply state the working conditions of the office. It would now be the responsibility of the supervisor to contact me and secure an appointment so I can enter the building. Once you have made the request for a steward, a call by your supervisor requesting a steward should be made before the end of your tour. Once the appointment is secured, the supervisor should notify you of when I will be there. If you are having issues with this process, please let me know.

So after all of that, please have a wonderful rest of what's left of spring and we'll talk soon.



### **Janet Werner**

Retired on February 28, 2017 from Chouteau Station with 31 years of service

# **Lynelle Rounds**

Retired on March 31, 2017 from Weathers Post Office with 31 years of service

#### **Christine Smith**

Retired from Chouteau Station with 32 years of service

Congratulations to all of our retirees.





Ali, Camera Blanchard, Dajohn Calvin, Tashayla Cooper, Alexus Davis, Heather Ann Dunse, Darold Ewing, Deja Ford, Richard Harper, Terrance Holman, Johnathan Isaacs, Brittany Jenkins, Charlette Johnson, Keandre Lester, Marco Luckett, Ashley Sanders, Nailah Stutsman, Mark

# Our Condolences to the Friends and Families of:

**Heather White** 

Step-daughter of Mark Moore (Support Services)

**Betty Lynn Orf** 

Mother of Russ Orf (Support Services)

**Laney Randels** 

Mother of Sandra Randels Clerk U-City Post Office

**Shirley Roberts** 

Mother of Brian Roberts (Shop Steward Tour 3)





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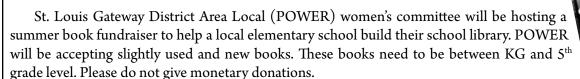
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APWU POWER OF THE ST. LOUIS GATEWAY DISTRICT AREA LOCAL #8 INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BOOK FUNDRAISER. WE NEED SLIGHTLY USED AND NEW BOOKS. BOOKS CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT ANY STEWARD BOOTH. COLLECTIONS MAY 2017 – JUNE 2017



# Reading Restores Our CHILDREN intellectually!!!!!!



Each donation should be left at the steward's booth with your name on it. The donations will be collected in the months of May and June at general membership meetings, so the teachers can set up the library for fall 2017. We usually donate to the Lift for Life Academy but this city school asked for our assistance. The kindergarten teacher was amazed how we donated supplies and asked if we would participate in the book drive.

POWER is always up for the challenge to succeed for the kids. Point of contact will be Community Event Coordinator Kym Calmese.

# **Maintenance Overtime**

#### By Tina Rubino

Stations and branches overtime desired list is for each station and branch. A long time ago management had a need and the union had a want. An accommodation was made to accomplish both. But management decided to ignore all the rules. Now we all will have to abide by the contract and the LMOU. This is effective immediately. The following language comes directly from our LMOU. Page 20-21.

#### "2 Maintenance

(a) Employees on the overtime desired list will be allowed to volunteer for available overtime assignments within their occupational group and section on other tours. Employees on the overtime desired list who do not volunteer for the available overtime assignments on other tours will not be required to work such overtime prior

to drafting non-volunteers. Overtime assignments will give first priority to volunteers. Overtime assignments will give first priority to volunteers on their own tour then volunteers from other tours, prior to drafting.

- (b) For special projects at the Stations and Branches, station/branch volunteers will be given first priority on any overtime assignment, on a rotating basis, after the section volunteers.
- (c) Employees shall be scheduled for overtime work by tour and occupational group by the following sections:
  - (1) Main Office
    - A) BEM
    - B) PEM
    - C) PEM Equipment Shop
    - D) Building Services
    - E) MOS
    - F) Area Maintenance
  - (2) Customer Service

- A) Each individual station /
- B) Station relief custodians.

Your union isn't your stewards alone. Your union is all of its members. We need all our members help to do our job. If you see management or someone who isn't in maintenance doing bargaining unit work, document it and request a steward. We have gotten several settlements for whoever is reporting the violations. Someone recently got \$200 because management was poking the tray line.

Thank you for being a member. Please help support your union. **Get involved!** Attend your union meetings.

Don't forget on Memorial Day to remember and honor our deceased military members and their families.

In union solidarity, your maintenance craft officers and stewards.

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# **Press On**

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#### Shelia Patton-Harris ... Editor

PROUD MEMBER
POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

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# **GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR**

May 3 May 7	(Wednesday) (Sunday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.) General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
May 14	(Sunday)	Mother's Day
May 15	(Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
May 29	(Monday)	Memorial Day Holiday
June 7	(Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
June 10	(Saturday)	General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)
June 12	(Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
June 18	(Sunday)	Father's Day
July 4	(Tuesday)	Independence Day Holiday
		No General Membership Meeting
July 17	(Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
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There will be no General Membership Meetings in the months of July and August.

The Union Hall will be closed on holidays.



### Moving?

Send us your new address so we can stay in touch.

Help Nancy, our office secretary, by sending us your address changes. Your union spends many work hours and pays significant postage fees to obtain your correct address. We cannot get your union paper to you on time without your correct address. Thank you.