

## It's Contract Time

*By President Fred Wolfmeyer*



Hello to my APWU sisters and brothers. Spring is just around the corner and all this cold weather will soon be behind us. We may not have had as much snow and ice as in the past, but the bone chilling cold has been here far too long, so it is time for Old Man Winter to leave the area.

Vice President Gene Hollenbeck and I were in Washington, D.C. recently for the APWU National Presidents Conference. While there we also went to Capitol Hill and visited with some members of Congress and/or their staff members. I will write more on those visits at the end of my article.

At the Presidents Conference, there were several agenda items that were presented to the body for input and discussion. I found it unsettling that so many presidents from around the country had the same problems as us and in some cases worse. PSE abuse is first and foremost among issues that plague locals across the country. PSEs working 10 to 12-hour days and 6 to 7-day weeks seem to be the norm rather than the exception. Overtime is excessive among the career employees and all this seems to be directly related to the change in the window of operations. Some locals have documentation to show without a doubt that mail in their areas is being delayed. The service wants us and our congressmen to believe that all is well and that mail is actually moving faster than it had before the "big change." We know that is not true. We know that the bidding process has been a huge mess and will take months to correct. The people in management responsible for making all the mistakes want to blame it all on your union. As I wrote in the Workroom Floor edition of the Press On, only management creates bids; only management

posts the bids; only management can award the bids. Unless I'm missing something here, I do not see the union involved in the bidding process.

And so you know, the union did offer help to In-Plant Support in the preparation of the bids, but was turned down. So to say the union is at fault, is simply not true.

The truth of the matter is that the union had discovered the errors and pointed them out to management. On the second large vacancy notice that was some 47 pages long, **the union told management about the errors and actually allowed management to hand-write the corrections on the posting so that our members would not have to miss the opportunity to bid.** On that particular vacancy notice there were 76 posting errors; 56 in the P&DC and 20 at the Annex. If we hadn't agreed to allow management to hand write the corrections, there is no telling how long it would have taken to correct and repost those bids.

On March 5, 2015, I brought this to light at the District Labor Management Meeting and told District Manager David Martin, HR Manager Loretta Tolliver and others, that the morale in the plant is at an all-time low. I told them six and seven day weeks need to stop, that 10- to 12-hour days need to stop, and that I want 22 PSEs converted to career in the plant and another 15 converted in the associate post offices. I said that if things continue along the same path, morale will not improve and the workers will only become more dissatisfied with local management.

I gave much this same message to the congressmen we visited with on March 3. Lacy Clay is fighting mad and

wants to help in any way he can. Emmanuel Cleaver from the Kansas City area wants to help and others like Peter King from the second district in New York have helped. Congressman King signed as a co-sponsor on HR 54, the bill designed to return the service delivery standards back to what they were in 2012. Congressmen Clay and Cleaver promised to co-sponsor. We asked Congressmen/woman Luetkemeyer, Smith, and Wagner to so-sponsor. Senators McCaskill and Blunt were also asked to sponsor similar legislation. Senator Blunt in particular has taken a stand and is helping us with postal issues. I asked if he could possibly sway some of our other congresspersons to do the same.

Brothers and sisters, if we sit around and do nothing, that is what will happen – nothing! We must write, call, e-mail our elected officials and ask them to co-sponsor HR 54. We need to ask our senators to sponsor similar legislation or co-sponsor if another senator sponsors this type of legislation. Look around you at the mail sitting on the workroom floor. I received calls from two small

newspapers in the area asking what to do because their papers are being delivered late. We must take a stand to preserve the service delivery standards and to do that we must engage our elected officials.

“How do I do this?” you might ask. The answer is the APWU national website. Go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) and click on Departments at the heading. Go to the Legislative Political Department and click on it. On the next window in the middle right you will see a title **“Resources”** and under that you will see **“Contact your Legislators,”** click on that. Next you will be taken to a window containing a pre-written message and a box where you can enter your zip code. Enter your zip code plus four and you will be able to send this e-mail to your representative. **You do not have to compose anything, just a series of clicks and the message is sent. How easy can it get to save your job?**

**Please take the time to send your congressman a message or a thank you and help save the Postal Service and save your job.**



*Exec. Vice President Gene Hollenbeck and President Fred Wolfmeyer with Congressman Clay.*



*Gene and Fred with (L) Missouri State Legislative Director Lee McNew and (R) Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer.*



*Fred and other presidents from around the country, National VP Debbie Szeredy, and National Legislative Director John Marcotte with Congressman Gerald Connolly of Virginia.*



*Gene and Fred with New York 2<sup>nd</sup> District Congressman Peter T King.*

# Congressional Issues

By Executive Vice President Gene Hollenbeck



I attended the National President's Conference with President Wolfmeyer. We were in Washington, D.C. While we were there we went to the Hill and spoke with our representatives or their staff members concerning postal issues. Right now there is a bill in the House of Representatives, (HR 54), that if passed would return the delivery standards back to where they were in 2012.

We spoke with Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer, 3rd District. He seemed receptive to our issues, but when postal banking was brought up he was not in agreement with that issue. He will be one of the representatives that you, the membership, need to contact.

We spoke with Congressman William Lacy Clay, 1st District. He is definitely our hero. He is very much on the side of postal and federal employees. He stated that he would sign onto HR 54. Please write to Congressman Clay and thank him for his support.

We spoke with staffers for Congresswoman Ann Wagner, 2nd District. The staffer stated that he would give our information to the congresswoman. She will be another one that we need to keep in constant contact to get her on our side.

It was staffers for Congressman Jason Smith, 8th District. We will need the membership to contact him as well.

For Senator Roy Blunt, we met with staffers. Senator Blunt has been a friend to us and if a bill similar to HR 54 reaches the Senate, I believe he will co-sponsor, as he did in the last Congress.

We met with staffers for Senator Claire McCaskill. They stated that they would bring the information to the senator. Hopefully, she will sign onto a bill if one reaches the Senate. In the last Congress she did not co-sponsor the bill that would have helped us. She will be another one that we need to focus on to get her support.

For those of you who wrote your senators/congressmen and asked for their help to resolve our issues, I would like to say thank you.

If you have not written to them, it is never too late. Take the time to write and ask them for their help. It was a lame duck Congress that put us in this situation. It will take a working Congress to get us out.

Here are the addresses and phone numbers to send your message.

**Postal Board of Governors**

475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20260  
Phone: 202-268-4800

**Postmaster General**

475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20260  
Phone: 202-268-4264

**Congressional Members**

Capitol Hill Switchboard  
Phone: 202-224-3121

**President of the United States**

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Phone: 202-456-1414

**Tips on writing to a member of Congress\***

The letter is the most popular choice of communication with a congressional office. If you decide to write a letter, this list of helpful suggestions will improve the effectiveness of the letter:

Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House Bill: H.R. \_\_\_\_\_, Senate Bill: S \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Be courteous, to the point, and include key information using examples to support your position.
2. Address only one issue in each letter; and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.

**Addressing Correspondence:**

**To a senator:**

The Honorable (full name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_:

**To a representative:**

The Honorable (full name)  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

*Provided by the National APWU,  
Directory of the 114th Congress.*

## Do Postal Employees Really Have the Right to Remain Silent ?

By Director of Industrial Relations Melvin Sanders



Anyone who has watched any of the many law enforcement or cop shows on TV has heard a police officer after placing someone under arrest read the suspect his/her Miranda Rights. The officer will say something like ... "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you can't afford an attorney one will be appointed to you..."

This is just the tip of the iceberg. If you are called into the postal inspector's or the OIG office of the inspector general (yeh, what's the dif?) office please remember this.

In order to conduct investigations that do not violate Garrity and Kalkines warnings the inspec-

tors should provide information to those employees they plan to interview.

**A Garrity Warning typically contains the following (sample) information:**

You have the right to remain silent if your answers may tend to incriminate you. Anything you say or do may be used as evidence in both an administrative proceeding and any future criminal proceedings involving you. If you refuse to answer the questions posed to you on the grounds that the answers may incriminate you, you cannot be discharged solely for remaining silent. However, your silence can be considered in an administrative proceeding for its evidentiary value that is warranted by the facts surrounding your case. This interview is strictly

voluntary and you may leave at any time.

**A Kalkines Warning typically contains the following (sample) information:**

You are going to be asked a number of specific questions concerning the performance of your official duties as an employee of the United States Postal Service. You have a duty to reply to these questions and agency disciplinary proceedings resulting in your discharge may be initiated as a result of your answers. However, neither your answers nor any information or evidence which is gained by reason of such statements can be used against you in criminal proceedings. You are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including your dismissal if you refuse to answer or fail to respond truthfully and fully to any questions.

It is always best to exercise your Weingarten Rights and ask for a union representative to advise you of your options. Please remember that APWU officers and stewards are not attorneys and they should not attempt to act as such. They are taught about these different rights so they can advise in your time of need.

If a member is directed to participate in an OIG-inspector interview and there is reason to believe that the member may be subject to criminal prosecution, the union should advise the individual to consult an attorney as soon as possible.



# Accountability

By Secretary Treasurer Robin Robertson



Hello my brothers and sisters! How accountable are you? Many times we want to blame others for our decisions or actions. As adults we should be accountable for **all** our actions. **Accountability** means “the quality or state of being **accountable**; especially: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to **account** for one’s actions <management lacking accountability>” on decision making ([www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)). Some of our members lack accountability on personal and professional issues.

Within this member organized community a majority of the employees do **not** get disciplined, it’s the minority. We have members who feel since they have **never** been in trouble, why should they pay dues for employees who won’t be accountable for his/her actions. Since we aren’t in a closed shop, why should we stay in the union? My response, “It’s not all about discipline and grievances. It’s about a small community working together to rebuild a social working middle class.” St. Louis Gateway District Area Local is affiliated with several unions throughout the city of St. Louis and the state of Missouri. Such as: Missouri APWU, St. Louis Labor Council, St. Louis Labor and Trade Union, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and Missouri Jobs with Justice.

Our president attends monthly AFL-CIO meetings while he diligently visits all three tours

monthly. We have two of our stewards, one from the plant and one from Support Services, who attend monthly EAP meetings. EAP is a resource for those in need of temporary assistance or counseling. This benefit alone supersedes what USPS offers management. Don’t miss 15 days within 90 days and don’t seek assistance and/or request FMLA.

Leaders, if you misinformed someone of his/her situation, let the member know and apologize. None of us are perfect and yes we make mistakes, it’s called “being human.” Acknowledge, apologize, and keep it moving. Stop telling the members what they want to hear and tell them the truth.

Everyone has his or her own opinion about different situations within this membership organization. The leaders are charged with the responsibility to educate and promote unity and awareness throughout the St. Louis Gateway Region. As members, we must stop complaining and become part of the solution within the membership organization. Being accountable is one of the first steps.

In most cases when an employee reaches a removal it’s due to an escalation of discipline, which starts with a job discussion, letter of warning, 7-day, and 14-day. At what point does the employee accept accountability of his or her actions, before or after the 14-day suspension? Conversations like these go on between craft employees. As we know, every situation or circumstance is differ-

ent. There is a point when the employee must accept accountability for his or her actions and/or corrections.

You and only you are accountable for the choices that you make. If you decide that you don’t want to come to work, there are consequences for that decision. If you decide that you want to take something from the Postal Service that does not belong to you, again there are consequences. You cannot blame the supervisor, the service or the union for decisions that are your’s alone to make. Management does not make the job easy, but we are all adults and should act accordingly.

Members, we can **not** blame the union because some **management** people don’t want to **think**. Better yet, ask questions when they don’t know. **Common sense and integrity are curse words to management.** It’s called, “**past practice.**”





## Editor's

# Corner

By Shelia Patton-Harris



As the editor, I read newsletters from all over the country. The recent changes in the tour structure have happened not just here but all across the nation. The results have been the same, disastrous. Here in St. Louis, letter processing machines sit idle on tour 1 because there is no one to run them. Overtime on the manual flat unit is constant. One of the managers asked me, "Why did you let this mail pile up like this?" I answered, "I'm not the supervisor, and this mess is management's fault." Clerks are being asked to work 10, 12, even 14 hours. Before the changes, V-time was a no-no. Management no longer cares about overtime, V-time or anytime. Mail sits for two and three days without being worked.

We are being forced into privatization. The handwriting is on the wall. If it is proven that we can no longer process the mail in a timely fashion, this opens the door for private companies to take over the mail and the elimination of the Postal Service as we know it.

There is no longer time for a wait and see attitude. Hoping that someone will come along and save our jobs is no longer an option. We are the ones who will have to stand up and take charge of our own destiny. We asked that you write to Congress and the Senate for a moratorium on these changes and most of you did not do it. Most of you are willing to sit on your hands while our jobs are destroyed. If you did not believe that the powers that be are trying to eliminate the Postal Service, the recent changes should be evidence enough. We have to come together and fight for our jobs.

The Tea Party, the Republicans, and the conservatives are all out to get rid of us. They don't see the need for an institution that is as old as the country. They say the Postal Service is no longer relevant. Forget about the people who don't have any other form of communication with the rest of the world. The people who receive their medications, their checks, greeting cards, and photos through the mail just don't seem to matter anymore.

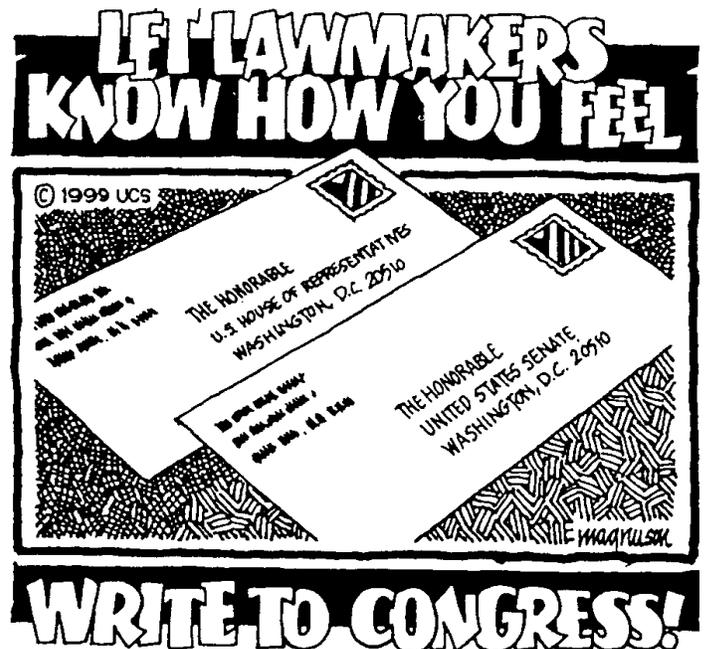
The destruction of the Postal Service would have

a devastating effect on the middle class. The ripple effect on the economy would be horrendous. The income generated by postal employees support many businesses in this country. Postal employees buy groceries, cars, clothes, send their kids to college, and go out to dinner and a lot more.

Congress and the Senate are elected by the people. They are accountable to us, not the other way around. We must begin to take back control from the fat cats who seek to destroy the middle class for their own gains. We have to show them that we will not go quietly into the night.

I probably will be retired by the time the Postal Service is gone for good. This is a fight that belongs to the newer employees. It is time that you get involved. The same old faces always show up for events pertaining to the union. Most of those faces are at or close to retirement. New blood is needed to continue the fight to save the Postal Service. The job you save may be your own.

In the article by President Wolfmeyer, there are the simple steps to sending your legislator a message concerning bills pertaining to the Postal Service. Please take the time to follow those steps and help to save our jobs.



# Associate Office Steward's Report

*By Becky Livingston*

I hope everyone is enjoying the new year. It is really difficult to stay positive with everything that is going on. There are indications that things are starting to move in the right direction. We have seen our first PSEs become career, in the 631 offices. In the associate offices the POSStPlan has created several career opportunities. This has been a very positive outcome from all of the grievances and hard work that has been done on behalf of the St. Louis Gateway District Area members. St. Louis is one of the last districts in the country to convert PSEs and trust me, we still have a long way to go. The APWU is in daily discussions with management concerning residual full-time bids. Of course, management wants to low-ball the number of residuals. Is anyone surprised? I certainly am not! Record keeping in St. Louis, especially anything concerning the associate offices is atrocious. We have not yet had a PSE converted to career by filling residual bids in the associate offices. The bad part is we all know these bids are there. Unfortunately the union does not have the authority to convert and fill these positions. I get calls from postmasters asking when their residual bids are going to get filled so they can hire additional PSEs and finally have a full compliment. They are definitely calling the wrong person. Trust me, I wish it was that easy. The problem is that they don't know whom to call. Even management depends on us to correct some of the issues they have.

These discussions with manage-

ment have led to other issues and resulted in grievances being filed on your behalf. Management continues to attempt to duck the real issues. I had a meeting with a postmaster who indicated that a grievance was filed for someone who did not want to get involved with the issues. First off that was not true. The clerk was very much aware of the postmaster performing bargaining unit work and was sending me documentation to support the grievance. Secondly, I already knew that the second clerk for that office was out on extended sick leave and the office was going to be severely short-handed. Management knew two months prior to the surgery the exact dates the clerk would be unable to work. Yet, they did nothing to address this staffing issue. As a steward we have 14 days to file on violations as soon as we become reasonably aware. The union already knows that the Area 1 and Area 2 post offices are not properly staffed. If just one clerk goes on vacation or if someone calls in sick or has extended sick leave, management wants to declare a state-of-emergency. Really? The union doesn't see it that way. Area 2 post offices that used to have a PTF to cover absences due to illnesses and vacations no longer have that option. Post offices that just three years ago had three clerks are now being run by one clerk. That means the postmaster is performing more than their 15 hours of bargaining unit work. Yes, there have been grievances filed and money has been paid, yet they continue to violate the contract and hope that the clerks and the union will not file grievances.

Folks, please do not stand by and

allow postmasters and supervisors to perform more bargaining unit work than they are allowed without requesting to see your steward. Postmasters and supervisors in Level 20 and above post offices are not allowed to perform bargaining unit work and the Level 18 post offices are only allowed 15 hours of bargaining unit work per week. I have postmasters and supervisors who actually write down the amount of bargaining unit work they perform, which is contractually required, while others deny they are even doing it. Really? I am even receiving anonymous phone calls letting me know that carriers and supervisors are performing bargaining unit work. When I call the supervisors they admit that they have to do the work because someone called in sick or management gave too many clerks annual leave. Sorry, this does not qualify as an emergency. This is the thing. It is not about, what the postmasters call the "free money"; it is about saving our jobs. There is nothing wrong with that. While some clerks have recently been awarded thousands of dollars, we have other clerks who do not want to get involved. Postmasters rely on that apathy. On the other hand I have postmasters who want the grievances filed because they are being instructed to do the work and they are tired of it, as they should be, but the union isn't there to protect postmaster jobs or make their jobs easier. We are here to protect your jobs and ensure that enough people are provided to get the job done. Please help us save jobs. Call me any time and keep me informed. That is the only way I can help with these serious issues.

# General Membership Minutes

## For January/February 2015

**G**reetings my brothers and sisters. I pray all is well in everyone's household. Below are the January and February highlights from the general membership meetings for St. Louis Gateway District Area Local. Make two thousand fifteen (2015) YOUR year for participation.

### President Wolfmeyer

The most time consuming thing that has been going on currently has been the bid process for the clerks. Bids were and have been posted incorrectly causing trouble for the clerks. Over 50 clerks were unassigned because of errors. However, on the bright side, all are entitled to out-of-schedule premium for 40 hours and some for 80 hours, for the PP immediately following the effective date of the new bids.

### Executive Vice President Report

The union is still having issues with conversion of PSEs. Especially how management wants to calculate the number of residual bids are available for conversion. Of course, the union's number of residual bids is more than management's.

### Secretary-Treasurer Report

January and February secretary-treasurer's report presented to the Executive Board members in their E-board meeting. Maintenance had an issue on a PSE that was converted to full-time employee requesting new membership rebate incentive. Several PSEs recently converted were still paying PSE dues. The issue has been corrected and rectified. FYI ...

### Research and Education Report

Research and Education director is excited about conducting new steward training on Feb. 10 – Mar 12. Becky mentioned how steward training is always the Monday following general membership meeting at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Union Hall.

### Industrial Relations Report

Industrial Relation director mentioned, "In the 2013 election, the officers are automatic delegates to the State and National Convention by their virtue of office." During the 2013 nominations the nominee stated, "The officer will be a state and national delegate." No need to elect an officer for the State or National Convention.

### Maintenance Craft Director Report

Maintenance Craft still fighting many different issues pertaining to Form 50s not being processed in a timely manner (years behind). Article 32 and hours worked. Nanna ensures that the stewards are working diligently and making sure their due diligence is being documented for different grievances.

### MVS Craft Director Report

MVS Craft director mentioned, "Management refuses to pref the unassigned regulars into the residual bids that are currently available on the MVS bid list." Management still continues to violate the contract because of favoritism. We would not have this issue if management would have taken all their 204Bs out of position in a timely manner. The union prepared grievances to file on behalf of the unassigned regulars to receive out-of-schedule premium from every hour worked. Additional grievances filed on behalf of the PSEs to be converted to full-time since management hasn't **PREF** the drivers into bids.

### Door Prizes

The \$50 door prize was won by Shelia Patton-Harris (clerk craft) and Melvin Sanders (retiree clerk craft). The COPA 50/50 drawing was won by Cheree Gladney (maintenance craft) and David Childers (MVS VMF craft).

*Attend Your Union Meetings  
and Make Your Voice Heard!*



# Postal Service in ‘total chaos’ nationwide: Upheaval delays *Labor Tribune* delivery

The impact of massive cost-cutting changes in the Postal Service are already being felt by the *Labor Tribune* in the form of late, and in some cases very late, delivery of our paper.

After receiving complaints in recent weeks that the paper was arriving three, four, or even five days late, the *Labor Tribune* investigated with the post office and determined the major cause was the cancellation by the Postal Service of the afternoon shift at the USPS distribution center in Hazelwood where mail is sorted and then sent to local post offices. At the same time, there has been a major revamping of job responsibilities and work hours for all staff, not only in St. Louis but nationwide.

## Total Chaos

Unfortunately, the revamping is not going well. Posted job classifications for workers to bid on were wrong and as a result, there is ‘total chaos in the Postal Service,’ said Fred Wolfmeyer, president of St. Louis Gateway Local 8 of the American Postal Workers Union.

“People’s lives have been upended. Kid’s school schedules, family work schedules, everything is in chaos.”

It’s not just the *Labor Tribune* that’s been impacted. Other publications are as well. First Class mail, once delivered overnight, is now stretched to three and four days.

“Everything has been turned upside down,” Wolfmeyer said.

“Supervisors and managers don’t know what to do. Because of fewer staff and different hours, mail is sitting all over the place. Morale is shot and productivity is down even though the postal workers themselves are trying desperately to keep up. It’s impossible with shorter hours and fewer staff.”

## Deliberate

“This appears to be the result of a deliberate attempt by the Republican leadership in Washington to starve the post office as part of their ‘less government’ theme, which forces top USPS managers to make cuts and drastic changes that really don’t help the situation, but rather create public anger at the Postal Service. Over time, that growing anger will help justify the Republican drive to privatize the entire service under the phony mantra of ‘improving service,’” said *Labor Tribune* publisher Ed Finkelstein.

“If that happens, Americans will suffer greatly,” he predicted. “The problem is not with the workers, it’s with political leadership in the national Republican Party determined to wreck the current successful system in order to put it into private hands. Then watch what happens!”

Finkelstein added, “If there is ever an electronic nightmare that brings down the Internet and the Cloud, and it could happen, it’s only the Postal Service that touches every American home. Wreck that and we put our entire national and our way of life at risk. Are we as Americans going to allow that?”

## Phony Problem

In their drive to privatize, the Republican Congress has intentionally created the crisis by demanding that the Postal Service pre-fund the health benefits for retirees 75 years into the future — people who have not even been hired — and pay for it all within the next 10 years.

“There is not a company in the entire U.S. that has that kind of mandate,” Wolfmeyer said. “It’s crazy!”

“The Postal Service made an operational profit of \$1.4 billion last year. They are not losing money,” Wolfmeyer added.

However, the prefunding mandate has given the appearance that the Postal Service is losing money and forcing the Postal Service to take drastic cost-cutting measures that are severely impacting the entire system.

Two bills have been introduced into Congress to postpone this program for two years. If you’re upset with what’s happening, send your congressman a letter and demand it stop.

*Reprinted from The Labor Tribune*



## APWU POWER

### Central Region Educational Conference

*The Deadline to Register for Hotel Rooms is Friday, April 3, 2015*

<b>When</b>	Saturday, May 2 through Sunday, May 3, 2015
<b>Arrival Date</b>	<b>Participants should plan to arrive at the hotel on Friday, May 1, 2015.</b> The Conference convenes at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and adjourns by 3:00 p.m. on Sunday.
<b>Where</b>	HoteLumière and Casino, 999 N. 2 <sup>nd</sup> St., St. Louis, Missouri 63102
<b>Hotel Reservations</b>	The room rate is \$105.00 for single/double occupancy, plus 16% tax per night. <b>To receive the group rate, contact the hotel at 1 (877) 450-7711, identify yourself as attending the Post Office Women for Equal Rights Conference, and <u>register by the Friday, April 3, 2015 deadline.</u> Use <u>Group Code SAPWU14.</u></b> The hotel requires that one night's lodging be paid in advance by a major credit card. <i>To receive a refund, reservations must be cancelled within 72 hours prior to the scheduled arrival date and obtain a cancellation number. Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. and check-out time is 11:00 a.m.</i>
<b>Additional Hotel Fees</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. The hotel will charge an extra \$50.00 per night for incidental fees, at check-in.</i></li> <li><i>2. A major credit card or debit card must be used to pay for incidental fees. Cash or checks will not be accepted.</i></li> <li><i>3. If no incidental charges are made, incidental fees will be refunded within 5 business days.</i></li> <li><i>4. An early departure fee of one night's lodging will be charged to guest checking out prior to their confirmed check-out date.</i></li> </ol>
<b>Registration Fee</b>	The registration fee is \$70.00 per person and includes a luncheon on Saturday and a breakfast on Sunday.
<b>Registration Times</b>	Friday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
<b>Parking</b>	Parking is complimentary for hotel guest.

### WORKSHOPS

Common Sense Economics  
Clerk Craft Issues

You are Out of Order  
Women's Health Issues

***SPECIAL NOTE: Please bring a \$50.00 check or money order, "Payable to COPA," to the conference!***

**REGISTRATION FORM  
(PLEASE PRINT)**

**Name:**

**Delegate**     **Guest (Please check one)**

**Employee Identification Number (Needed to verify membership):**

**Address:**

**City:**

**State:**

**Zip Code:**

**Home Phone Number:**

**Work Phone Number:**

**Work Hours:**

**E-Mail Address:**

**Local's Name:**

**Special Needs:** Sign Language Interpreter     **Yes**     **No**

Person(s) needing a Sign Language Interpreter must register before the *Friday, April 3, 2015*

**Childcare Needs: (For toddlers and children up to age 12).** The child must be potty trained and the cost will be **\$20.00 per child per day**. The check for child care must be submitted with this application by the *Friday, April 3, 2015 deadline*.

**Number of Children:**

**Age(s) of Children:**

**To Register:**

Return this Registration Form with a check or money order for **\$70.00** payable to **APWU POWER** by the *Friday, April 3, 2015 deadline* and mail as follows:

Joyce B. Robinson, Director  
Research & Education Department  
1300 L Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone Number: (202) 842-4225

**For Additional Information Contact:**

Charlotte E. Hiatt, Central Region  
APWU POWER Coordinator  
P.O. Box 18373  
Indianapolis, IN 46218  
Cell: (317) 362-1817  
Email: [chachak@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chachak@sbcglobal.net)

## Postal Workers face two-front struggle: bargaining with USPS and Staples takeover of Office Depot

Washington (PA) Postal Workers face a two-front struggle: Upcoming bargaining with the Postal Service's new management, and battling a planned monopoly in office products and supplies following Staples' announced plans to take over Office Depot. In essence, the two fronts are linked.

**\*Killing jobs:** The former postmaster general's scheme to cut costs at USPS included transferring many postal worker's tasks to postal stations at Staples stores — stations manned by minimum-wage, no benefit, non-union part-timers, rather than well-trained, unionized APWU members.

**\*Contract talks:** Bargaining, the more immediate front begins February 19, 2015. APWU President Mark Dimondstein said his union's 200,000 members are already revving up their campaign for public support against the USPS and further cost-cutting plans.

"Negotiations are always contentious, and this year will be no exception," Dimondstein warned. "The Postal Service's manufactured financial crisis is being used to justify an all-out assault on postal workers, on service to the people and on the USPS as a great public institution." "Our goal is to win a contract that protects good, stable jobs and guarantees the American people their constitutional right to have good postal services, regardless of who they are, where they live, or how much money they have."

Dimondstein plans to have his members out in the streets as well as at the talks.

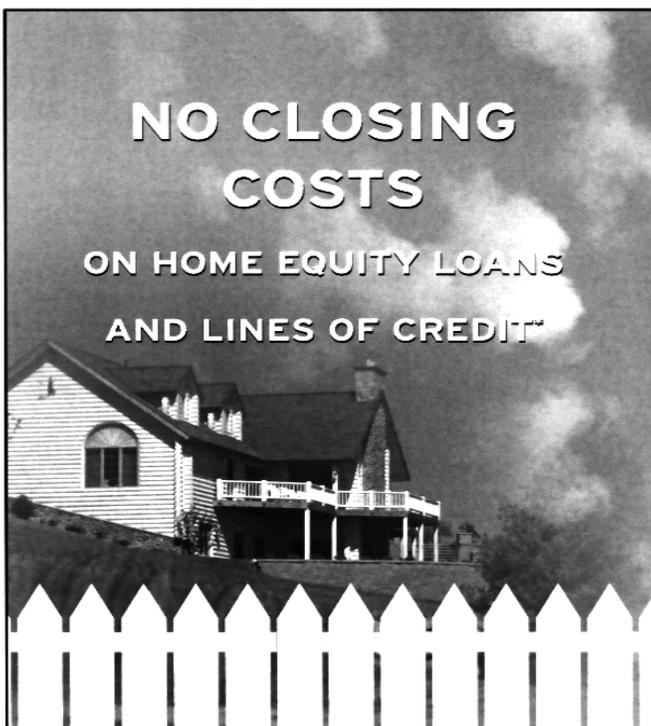
"To be victorious, we will have to conduct our fight very differently than we have in the past," he said. To succeed in bargaining, we must win support from the people of the country for our goals — good, stable postal jobs and a strong Postal Service that belongs to them."

The Staples' fight will involve APWU carrying its anti-monopoly campaign to the U.S. Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission. Both agencies must approve Staples' takeover of Office Depot and, if needed, attach conditions to reduce its monopoly impact. The agencies rejected Staples' last takeover bid, 17 years ago.

USPS already has reduced hours in some post offices and encouraged customers to use Staples stores instead.

"The transfer of living-wage jobs to low-wage, poverty-level jobs is not in the public interest," said Dimondstein. "Staples is an anti-worker corporation, and we don't want to see its reach expanded. We will vigorously oppose this merger. It's bad for workers and bad for consumers."

*Reprinted from the Labor Tribune*



**NO CLOSING COSTS**  
**ON HOME EQUITY LOANS**  
**AND LINES OF CREDIT\***

Make your dreams come true with a Home Equity Fixed Loan or Line of Credit.

Use the equity in your home for home improvements, college tuition, debt consolidation, upcoming expenses... the possibilities are endless!

In addition, you'll enjoy:

- No appraisal or balance transfer fees
- No sudden jumps in monthly payments
- Pre-approval and a fast turnaround time
- Friendly, local service
- And much more!

Don't risk your future with an unfamiliar institution. Turn to your Neighbors today!

**314-892-5400**  
**www.neighborscu.org**

**neighbors**  
CREDIT UNION  
Here you belong.™



\*Membership eligibility required. Restrictions apply. Offer is subject to change. Contact credit union for full details.

# The Story Teller

*By President Fred Wolfmeyer*

I am a messenger, a teller of tales. I have told stories of fantasy and fact. I have told stories filled with deception and loyalty, love and hate, sadness and joy. You might even call me a historian because I have told stories of war and peace and life and death for a very long time.

I have told these stories over and over again through the years and sometimes people have learned the lessons contained within, and at times they have not. The stories about love, life and loyalty are everyone's favorites, and they always seem to come along when they are needed. They arrive most often after I have told stories of deception, hate, and death; uplifting the spirit and filling the soul with resolve and a desire to do better and treat others with respect and compassion.

I have told my stories all across our country, and all around the world. But as with many things in life, as time goes by, telling my stories gets more difficult. There was a time when people craved my words, often wanting to hold on to them and experience them over and over, but I feel that time may be coming to an end. Heads of state, presidents, and kings, common people both young and old have all heard my stories at one time or another. The stories of sadness and tragedy were naturally not the most desired, but they were often necessary and needed when they were told. Some stories, particularly those that had secret messages, had a double effect, giving hope to some while regrettably hurting others.

The stories of love, life and happiness were and are uplifting. They are like a fresh summer's breeze moving through an open window, rustling the curtains and moving across the room to tease our hair and tickle our skin. And even though these stories of mine may be coming to an end, I still tell them. I tell them because people want to hear them; they cannot do without them. There are those who say my stories have outlived their usefulness, that I have outlived my usefulness. They say I am too slow in the telling and the delivery of my tales. They say there is someone

or something that can tell the same stories faster and without so many words. These people would like to do away with me and let others, even machines tell my stories. Please do not let this happen. Unlike those others or the machines they say can do my job, I can be your constant companion, your strength to make it through a day, a week, or even years. Yes I can and do bring sadness and tears, but when I bring happiness and joy you can hardly contain yourself. My stories come in many shapes, and sizes. They come from near and far. They can be small enough to fit in the palm of your hand or so large that you must hold them with both hands. They illicit many emotions and often bring people closer together and give them hope.

Many people still love me and my stories and would not have it any other way. They see my stories and my way of telling them as significant and important. To those who say I am too slow, or not relevant, I say that I may be slower than some, but my relevancy cannot be questioned. To prove this I need only point to a child or a mother who receives one of my stories. Their faces light up, and their eyes turn bright showing the happiness inside their souls. And then when I open up to them, this joy is magnified a thousand times. But what is best is that at the end of the day, at the end of a hundred days, they can come to me and I tell my story again. All they have to do is take me out of their pocket, off the shelf or out of the desk drawer and let me tell my story again. I am a messenger, a storyteller. I am a letter, a package, I am the U.S. mail.



## Union Says USPS Should Exploit Ecommerce Opportunity

By Ina Steiner

One year ago, the USPS inspector general said offering financial services could help generate \$8.9 billion in new revenue per year for the Postal Service.

Apparently postal workers agree, and their union said the Postal Service should also capture a greater share of the growing ecommerce market. And if anyone understands the growth of ecommerce, it's the men and women carrying packages to shoppers' front doors.

As the American Postal Work-

ers Union (APWU) gets ready to enter into contract talks with the U.S. Postal Service for a new contract, it issued a statement saying that along with issues such as fair wages and benefits, it proposes "bold improvements in customer service, such as postal banking, the sale of licenses, and the addition of public notary services, along with a proposal for longer and more convenient hours for customers to allow USPS to capture a greater share of the growing ecommerce market."

APWU President Mark Di-

mondstein said USPS management has shortened hours at neighborhood post offices, closed mail processing centers, lowered delivery standards and slowed mail delivery.

"The Postal Service must take advantage of the explosion in ecommerce to modernize and better serve the people," he said.

The APWU is a participant in a new initiative formed by 64 organizations called A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service.

Reprinted from *EcommerceBytes.com*

Scores!!  
Scores!!  
Scores!!!

Sam Wood is the president of Southwest Florida area local. He has compiled a spreadsheet comparing the on-time delivery scores from before the new operational window and the present. To no one's surprise the scores in the Southern region, where Sam is located, have dropped by 26.31 percent. It is clear that this new operational window is not working, but in effect is slowing down the mail.



When management first announced a new round of plant closures for 2015, they acknowledged that next-day delivery for first-class mail would be a thing of the past. The mail processing cycle would be changed — mail collected one day would be processed the following day on Tour 2. But now, in a "Frequently Asked Questions" document, management claims that 20 percent of first-class mail will be delivered overnight, and "Overall, the time it takes first-class mail to reach its destination will increase slightly from an overall average of 2.14 days to an overall average of 2.25 days ..."

## Retirements

Congratulations to Mary Ann Bailey. She recently retired from the West County Branch after 31 years of service. Good luck and best wishes, Mary.



Suzzie Bruggeman, clerk at Union, Mo. post office, with Becky Livingston, associate office steward and research and education director. Best wishes, Suzzie.





## Web News Articles

### Don't Let Them Take Your 'Postal Pulse'

#### WEB NEWS ARTICLE #: 041-2015

03/02/2015 - The APWU and USPS are facing off over management's latest scheme: The Postal Pulse, a new employee opinion survey.

"The APWU vehemently opposes Postal Pulse — and any other employee opinion survey — despite management notices that say otherwise," said President Mark Dimondstein. A Feb. 19 USPS announcement says the APWU, along with other unions and management associations, supports the goals of the program. A Feb. 26 News Break repeats the assertion.

**The union filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on Feb. 25** protesting management's false claim.

The APWU has a long history of opposing employee opinion surveys because management uses workers' responses against union members during contract negotiations. The timing of man-

agement's notice to employees, Feb. 19, was especially insidious, Dimondstein said, because it coincided with the opening day of contract talks.

Management first cited employee survey data during bargaining in 1998. The APWU National Executive Board adopted a resolution opposing "the use of surveys, focus groups, polls, audits, as a means of interviewing employees and union officials to evaluate job-related internal issues." Similar resolutions have been adopted by the delegates to APWU National Conventions since then.

"Don't let management take your pulse!" Dimondstein said. "Our voices are more powerful when we raise them together, through our union, than when we speak individually with management," he said.

Employees who feel they are being pressured to take the survey or who have questions should contact their local union representative.



## Postal Pulse

### (The New VOE Survey)

Sisters and brothers do not be fooled by the envelope the Postal Service is giving out that is entitled "Postal Pulse." This is just a new spin on the old VOE Survey so it is still postal propaganda. So rather than returning this survey to management, let the APWU **take your pulse!!** This is not the same as what your doctor does. No, we want to take your Postal Pulse and in return, the union will pay you **\$5 cash** and then enter your name into a drawing for a two-night stay with dinner at a top hotel. **Let the APWU take your pulse!**

# Ten to Win

## Will You Join Our Team?

For \$10 per pay period through payroll deduction we can support candidates who stand up for postal workers!



## Yes! I Want to Give Ten to Win.

I authorize a payroll deduction to COPA in the amount of  \$10 or  \$\_\_\_ per pay period.

These contributions will appear on a line identified as VBP on your paycheck. You can adjust or cancel your contribution at any time by contacting APWU at (202) 842-4211.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
LAST FIRST MI

Employee ID # \_\_\_\_\_

*Should we need to contact you, please include your phone and email address.*

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please write clearly.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

This COPA solicitation is paid for by the American Postal Workers Union, 1300 L Street NW, Washington, DC, (202) 842-4200; it is not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Contributions or gifts to COPA are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. COPA will use the contributions it receives for political purposes, including making contributions to candidates for federal, state and local offices, and addressing political issues of public importance. Contributions to COPA are voluntary. The amount given or the refusal to give will not benefit or disadvantage the person being solicited. Federal law requires political action committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation, and employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

**Give completed form to your steward or mail to:  
Fred Wolfmeyer, 1705 S Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63104**

# Ten to Win

Brothers and Sisters,

I am excited to announce the 2015 COPA drive "TEN TO WIN."

APWU local/state officers, as well as officers of the Auxiliary have long been COPA champions both in their personal support and by stressing the importance of COPA to our membership at meetings, seminars and conventions. I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your dedication and excellence in bringing our political efforts to the forefront of our membership's consciousness.

Funding political action committees (PACs) like COPA are done by many organizations and unions examining the successful PACs. They all had one thing in common, a large amount of their donors are reoccurring contributors, with the bulk being enrolled in payroll deduction. The USPS insists that allotments be performed online via "lite blue." This made it very difficult for union leaders to sign up our membership for COPA payroll deductions given the computer requirement, password and lengthy procedure for allotment set up. I am extremely excited to inform you that after a prolonged effort we have solved this problem. Now by filling out a simple, postage-paid, secure card with EIN, name and signature, any active member can be signed up for COPA payroll deduction. This will make signing up members for COPA very easy at events and via local/state mailings. Payroll deduction is easy to afford and the simplest way to give to COPA.

## Why "Ten to Win"?

At this time 1 percent of our active membership gives to COPA using a reoccurring contribution method, and 8 percent of APWU retirees give to COPA via reoccurring contributions. I believe that if 8 percent of our retirees on a fixed income can give to COPA in a reoccurring manner, getting 10 percent of our active members to give likewise is an attainable goal. The average reoccurring COPA donation is over \$8 per pay day, so again asking for \$10 is not unreasonable. This allowed using the number 10 as a goal for the percentage of local or state membership enrolled in reoccurring contributions to COPA and the amount of the suggested contribution. Any reoccurring contribution counts toward the 10 percent goal.

If you are interested in leading with the "TEN TO WIN" drive, copies of the COPA postage-paid cards are available from Brent Jordan in the Legislative and Political Department @ 202-842-4211 or [bjordan@apwu.org](mailto:bjordan@apwu.org). We have a PDF form if any local or state is interested in quickly printing them off for COPA drives or mailings which is in the process of being placed on APWU.org.

## Roll Out

TEN TO WIN will be on the back cover of our next issue of the national magazine, the subject of my article, with an additional page listing our COPA goals. Also I am thrilled to say there will be a copy of the post card inserted into the magazine. Unfortunately our printer was not able to print the number required with glue strips for insertion in the magazine so they will be of the tear off variety. While I don't believe there is an issue of security, they can be placed in an envelope and mailed to L street or use the cards available above. I cannot overstate the importance of our being a counterbalance to the corporate special interests that are destroying the American middle class.

In order for us to have a successful COPA drive we will need to have every officer at every APWU event encouraging our membership to engage in the TEN TO WIN COPA drive. This was highly successful in 2004 and with your help we can win!

Thank you for all you do on behalf of the membership and if you have any questions or concerns please contact me any time.

In Friendship and Solidarity,  
John L. Marcotte  
American Postal Workers Union  
Legislative and Political Director  
202-842-4211

# When a Union Member or Union Member's Loved One Passes Away

All union members at a 631 branch or station should contact your union steward, Robin McCurry, so that the loss can be printed in the Press On. The union will make a charitable contribution to your favorite charity or have a plant sent to your home or church. Those employees at the GMF should contact the Union Hall.



## We Wish to Extend Our Condolences to the Friends and Families of:

**Robert Armstrong**

Retired Tour 1 Automation Clerk  
Father of Lottieshire Armstrong

**Vera Beard Sprow**

Mother of Wendy Evans

**Joseph Raymond Bell**

Father-in-law of Tony Howard  
Accounting Support Specialist

**Ann Gleghorn**

Mother of Vivian Gleghorn  
Clerk at Vitilas Reid

**C.W. Rose**

Father of Donna Greenberry  
and Father-in-law of Todd Greenberry  
Accounting Service Center

**Richard Targee Smith**

Father of Margaret Moore  
Accounting Support Specialist

**Alvin Jamerson**

Brother of Gwen McNeilly  
Clerk at West County Branch

**Harry Pitts**

Step-father of Sonya White  
Accounting Help Desk

**Rev. Melvin Smotherson**

Father-in-law of Pamela Smotherson

**Brittany Brewer**

Niece of Margo Brewer-Caldwell  
Clerk at PEDC Learning Development

**Steven Michael Rogers**

Nephew of Tamara Quinn  
General Accounting Branch  
And brother of the late  
Christine Nicole Jones,  
Mail Carrier, Jennings Branch

**Gary Higgins**

Father of Anthony Gladney  
Building Services

**Louella and K.C. Scott**

Mother and Father of  
Clerk Leon (Scotty) Scott at  
Jennings Post Office

**Gail Portwood**

Mother of Stephanie Portwood-Pruitt  
Accounting Specialist

**Howard Dunkin**

Father of Wendy Dunklin



Alexander, Candace

Caldwell, Keon

Dabney, Deborah

Denton, Jennifer

Gourley, Kara

Howard, Tony

Jones, Lisa

Jones, Carnun

Napolitano, Kandice

Richardson, Ashley

Webb, Celeste

Williams, Ukema

Wilson, Gladnisha

St. Louis Gateway APWU  
 1705 S. Broadway  
 St. Louis, MO 63104  
 Address Service Requested

PRST STD  
 US Postage  
**PAID**  
 St. Louis, MO  
 Permit No. 860

## Press On

Official publication of the St. Louis Gateway District Area Local of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO published bimonthly. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor of the local. All articles submitted for publication are subject to editing.

**Shelia Patton-Harris ... Editor**  
 PROUD MEMBER  
 POSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

**OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL**

**President.....Fred Wolfmeyer**  
**Vice President.....Gene Hollenbeck**  
**Secretary-Treasurer .....Robin Robertson**  
 Dir. of Industrial Relations.....Melvin Sanders  
 Editor..... Shelia Patton-Harris  
 Dir. of Research & Education .....Becky Livingston  
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Al "Mickey" Miller

**DIRECTORS**

Clerk Craft.....Joe "Earl" Staats  
 Maintenance.....Thomas Nanna  
 Vehicle Service.....Jeff Cooper  
 IT/ASC.....Orlando Anderson

**Union Office**

**1705 S. Broadway**  
**St. Louis, MO 63104**  
**(314) 231-7665**  
 FAX: (314) 231-5709  
 Toll Free 1-800-992-2945  
 After Hours (314) 330-9641

**Office Hours**

Monday-Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - noon

Steward Booths, Downtown  
 Clerk ... 314-436-5331  
 Maintenance ... 314-436-4668  
 MVS ... 314-436-5027

## GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR

March 4 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
March 8 (Sunday)	General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
March 9 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
April 8 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
April 11 (Saturday)	General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)
April 13 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
May 10 (Sunday)	Mother's Day
May 13 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
May 17 (Sunday)	General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
May 18 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
May 25 (Monday)	Memorial Day Holiday

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.