

 **NEWSFLASH**

St. Louis Installation Converts 73 PSEs to Career Status

By Frederick Wolfmeyer, President



Sisters and brothers, this issue of the *Press On* brings good news to our PSEs who have been waiting patiently for conversion to career status. As most of the PSEs know, this has been a long, hard fight — a fight where we received virtually no help from the national APWU and one which, through the efforts of the officers of your St. Louis Gateway District Area Local, has finally been accomplished. We received daily phone calls to the union hall asking when this would happen and how many would be “turned over,” and although we had an approximate date and number, we felt it better to not give any of that information out because management was so resistant to converting the PSEs.

This has been a long uphill battle that began with grievances filed at the national level by our local officers back in May of 2014. On at least two occasions I was told by our national president that if we did not get anyone converted by a certain date, to just let him know. I even spoke with the national director of industrial relations, brother McKinnon, as recent as June of this year on this matter and yet we received no help.

Facts

Two and one half years ago, I assigned Vice President Gene Hollenbeck the task of tracking bids. He did such a good job that we had management asking us which jobs were residual and which ones were not. We could look at a bid and go directly to our database and gather all details on that bid and, ultimately, this helped top the scale in our favor because our records were simply better than those of management. Every time I would see a PSE on one of my visits to the P&DC or the Annex or stations, I was asked when conversion would take place. In November of 2014, we had our first group of PSEs converted. Later in April of this year, 14 more were converted. Now we can add 73 more new career clerks. We remained diligent in this endeavor and we fought continuously for conversion. The newly converted clerks now will be guaranteed 40 hours per week, earn both sick and annual leave, and receive holiday pay. You can bid, and you can get health insurance

benefits. I believe that the local union has lived up to its promises and I welcome all the new career employees on board. We have been successful in getting nearly 120 PSEs converted in St. Louis.

The Struggle Continues

We will continue our efforts to have more PSEs converted to career, especially in the associate offices. We have been working along with the AO steward Becky Livingston to create and maintain a data base that is every bit as good as the one we use for the St. Louis installation. I want to thank you all for your patience, and you can be assured that the local union will continue this fight.

Picnic

At this time I want to thank all who attended this year's annual union picnic. I have to give some credit to the workers so bear with me a minute. I want to thank the MVS mechanics who came out a day early to grill 1,000 pieces of pork steaks along with 20 pounds of brats, hot links and hot dogs. I also say thank you to Melvin Sanders, Gene Hollenbeck, Becky Livingston, Robin Robertson, Lisa Darden (and Jayla), Bob Cook, John Fritz, and others just to get the event ready for Sunday. On Sunday we had George Murphy from MVS along with several more VMF mechanics and drivers, clerks, and support services craft members, who served hot dogs, kept the hot dog booth supplied, served cold drinks all day, and tended bar. I do not want to be remiss, but there are too many names to mention so I will not even try. You all know who you are and you have my gratitude and thanks for making this year's picnic a rousing success serving over 500 dinners.

At this time I want to also give special thanks to MVS driver Don Persons and his dedicated staff who served all the food in the main dining room. Standing united we can never be torn apart. Brother John Marcotte our national legislative director attended the picnic, and to say he was impressed is an understatement. He has sent me an email thanking the local for its hospitality and believes that we have a great labor spirit. I am proud of all of you, be proud of yourselves.

Members and Family at Labor Day Parade



From the Desk of the Executive Vice President



By Gene Hollenbeck

First, I would like to welcome the newly converted FTRs. These employees had been PSEs. It's been a long hard battle, but, we were finally able to get them converted to career status. There are just over 70 new regulars. Congratulations to all of you.

As new regulars you will have 60 days to apply for your health insurance and get your TSP and other benefits started. You should be given another orientation about your new benefits and we should be there to

talk to you and help you through this period of your career.

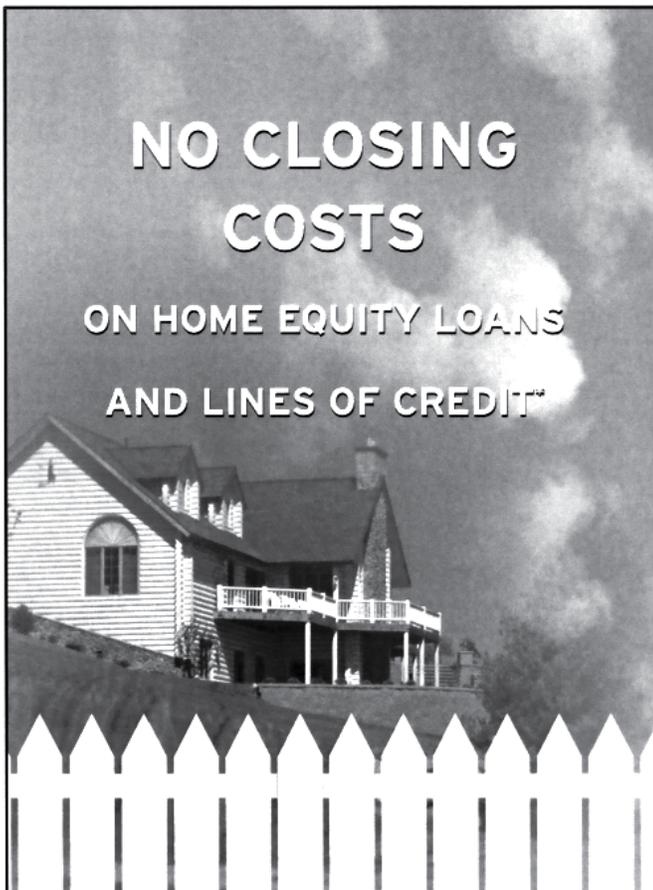
You will now earn both sick and annual leave. You will receive Sunday premium, overtime after eight hours, and penalty overtime. You will still receive night shift differential. You will now be guaranteed eight eights instead of the two hours you were guaranteed as a PSE.

During your first 90 days, you will not be able to use your annual/sick leave. Most of you will not have to serve another probationary period. Any PSE who has served two

consecutive 360-day periods will not be required to serve a new probationary period.

Our annual family day picnic has come and gone. Special thanks go out to all of the volunteers who made this a great success. There were over 500 members/ families who came out and a good time was had by all. Thank you to all who came to have a fun day.

We had a good turnout for the Labor Day parade. We walked with our brothers and sisters of the NALC again this year.



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From the Desk of *Becky Livingston* Research and Education Director

I hope everyone had a great summer. Before you know it we will be heading into the busy season.

A lot of offices will look a lot different than they did last year. The union has finally had some success in having PSEs fill residual bids. Trust me, we know we still have a long way to go.

To answer one of my most often asked questions: Yes they can have more than two PSEs working at any one post office. What the associate post offices have to watch are the caps on the 81-4 window PSEs. In the larger Level 22 and above offices, PSEs in retail/customer services who work the window will not exceed 10 percent of the career retail clerks in that installation whose duties include working the window. In the Level 21 and below offices, PSEs in retail/customer services who work the window will not exceed 20 percent of the career retail clerks in that installation whose duties include working the window. In other words the caps refer to the 81-4 PSE. It is important to keep a close eye on the use of 81-4 PSEs. Right now, all of the associate offices are only allowed one PSE to perform retail/customer service duties. There would be a violation if two PSEs are utilized and the union has been successful in having clerks compensated for the improper use of PSEs. The 81-3 mail processing PSE, can be used only in back-end duties such as the distribution of mail or mail dispatch. The 81-4 PSE can be utilized in areas of window and mail processing.

Confusing right? The thing to

keep in mind is that the union will monitor the number of total available work hours being performed by the PSEs over a 6-month period of time and we will file maximization grievances to create FTR and/or NTFT duty assignments using all available work hours. That process is going on in several associate offices right now. It does take a while to go through the process, but we have been successful in creating full-time duty assignments and we will continue to pursue creating career opportunities for the PSEs.

The next question is about overtime opportunities. The postal support employee job was created to replace casuals. The intent of the creation of the PSE was to utilize them to fill in for absences of A/L, S/L or LWOP and to eliminate overtime. The PSE became a more vital part of the operation when the USPS refused to fill residual bids and the PSEs started working 40 hours plus a week over a seven day period. As I write this article the final paperwork is being processed to convert 73 PSEs to career at the Main Post Office and several more associate office PSEs are in line to also be converted due to your APWU officers' hard work. As these PSEs fill residual bids and more PSEs are hired to replace them, overtime will slowly start to disappear. This has been a long time coming and what I want everyone to know is that there are PSEs getting a lot of hours and we will want to make sure management is following the established guidelines for overtime. Clerks on the appropriate Overtime

Desired List will be utilized before a PSE works over eight hours in a day. This would mean that even clerks on the 12-hour OTDL would be utilized up to 12 hours before a PSE can work more than eight hours in a service day. There has been some confusion as to why PSEs are getting overtime and the career clerks are not. During negotiations the APWU and the USPS could only agree to the eight hours a day but, unfortunately, not the over 40 hours in a service week. A PSE does not receive overtime until they have worked over 40 hours and we all know there are several offices that have PSEs working eight hours a day and seven days a week. This would not be an overtime violation.

Now on to something that I truly believe is a benefit that all of our APWU members are not taking full advantage of. The APWU has its own health insurance plan. As a bonus every year the APWU Health Plan generates millions of dollars that are put back into the APWU general fund to help offset daily expenses and, most importantly, keep our union dues from increasing. This is all due to members having the APWU Health Plan. Last year the St. Louis Gateway District Area Local was fourth in the country for signing up the most new members and this year we would love to see us at number one. This year for the first time the APWU Health Plan will offer a Self plus One option. OPM has not determined the cost but we expect it to be significantly less than the Self and Family Plan. This is an

option that has been requested over the last several years and we are hopeful that we will be able to increase our membership dramatically with this important change. Please take time to compare all of the plans as the pricing on several of the other health plans offered have skyrocketed over the last few years. I have had the APWU Health Plan for 10 years and I came from a big competitor and I have not

had one day that I have regretted that decision. If you look at the benefits that we receive under the APWU Plan compared to the other plans, then factor in the cost differences, money that stays in your pocket, you would not go wrong in at least trying the APWU plan for one year. The APWU Plan has a 97 percent retention rate. Once you join, you never look back.

Please give us a try and if you have

any questions please call the Union Hall. There is always someone there who can answer questions or lead you to national APWU Health Plan representatives who are experts in their field. **The annual Federal Benefits Open Season is November 9, 2015 through December 14, 2015.** Coverage would begin January 1, 2016. All we ask is that you look at the plan; the rest is up to you.

Enrollment Type

The FEHB Program introduces the Self Plus One Enrollment Type.

Introduction

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 establishes a Self Plus One enrollment type in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. Coverage under a Self Plus One enrollment will be available beginning in January 2016. The first opportunity to enroll in Self Plus One will be during the annual Federal Benefits Open Season beginning in November 2015.



Frequently Asked Questions

Will a Self Plus One enrollment cost less than two Self Only enrollments or a Self and Family enrollment?

Rates for plans are not yet available. It will be very important during this year's Open Season to look at the rates for the plan you are in and for other plans as well. It may be possible to save money by enrolling in a Self Plus One enrollment, but you should review your health benefit needs and the available FEHB plans to determine which plan is best suited to meet your needs.

What is Self Plus One?

Self Plus One is a new enrollment type in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program that allows you to cover yourself and one eligible family member you designate to be covered. Starting in 2016, all FEHB plans (your health insurance plans) will offer a Self Only, a Self Plus One, and a Self and Family enrollment type. Employees and annuitants will be able to select a Self Plus One enrollment beginning in the 2015 Open Season.

Who can be covered under a Self Plus One enrollment?

A Self Plus One enrollment covers the enrollee and one designated eligible family member. The definition of eligible family members has not changed. Your eligible family member can include either a spouse OR a child up to age 26. A child age 26 or over who is incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that existed before age 26 is also an eligible family member.

When will OPM release the rates for the Self Plus One enrollment type for each plan?

Rates are announced in early October before Open Season begins. When posted, 2016 rates will be available at www.opm.gov/openseason.

How is Self Plus One different from Self Only or Self and Family?

A Self Only enrollment covers only the enrollee. A Self and Family enrollment covers the enrollee and all eligible family members. The new Self Plus One enrollment type covers the enrollee and one eligible family member you designate to be covered.

When will a Self Plus One enrollment be effective for annuitants?

If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment during the 2015 Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the 1st of January. For annuitants, Open Season enrollments are always effective on the 1st day of the year following the end of the Open Season. If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment outside of Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first pay period following the one in which you make a change. For example, if you request an allowable change in the middle of February, your change will be effective on March 1st.

How will I know if a Self Plus One enrollment is right for me?

You should determine your eligible family members and decide which enrollment type is best for you. A Self Plus One enrollment type will cover you and one eligible family member. During Open Season 2015, you will want to pay close attention to the benefits and rates in both the plan you currently have and other FEHB plans available to you. OPM will release materials in advance of Open Season to help you make this important decision. Visit www.opm.gov/openseason to access these materials.

If I choose Self Plus One now, will I be able to make changes to my plan later?

Yes. You can always make changes to your plan during Open Season. In addition, you can make changes if you experience a Qualifying Life Event. For example, if you are currently married and chose a Self Plus One enrollment, in the event you divorce, you can make a change to Self Only. Alternatively, you can change to Self and Family if you have an eligible child. Other QLEs allow you to make changes as well. You can see a list of all your QLE opportunities on the SF 2809.

Will domestic partners/non-married partners be eligible for coverage under a Self Plus One enrollment?

No. Only legally married spouses are considered eligible family members under any FEHB enrollment, including Self Plus One. This has not changed with the addition of the new Self Plus One enrollment type.

When is the first opportunity to change my enrollment to Self Plus One?

You will be able to select a Self Plus One enrollment beginning in the 2015 Open Season. After Open Season, you will have an opportunity to change your enrollment upon experiencing a Qualifying Life Event (QLE).

I am an annuitant. What if I miss the Open Season and I want to change to a Self Plus One enrollment?

Annuitants are allowed to decrease enrollment at any time. This means that if you have a Self and Family enrollment and you decide you would like to change to a Self Plus One enrollment, you may do so throughout the year. No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season. Changes are effective January 1, 2016. If you have a Self Only enrollment, however, you must experience a Qualifying Life Event in order to change to Self Plus One. These are events such as marriage, divorce, or a family member's loss of coverage under another health insurance program. For a full list of allowed QLEs, please view the SF 2809. Reminder: No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season. Open Season changes for annuitants are effective January 1, 2016.

I am an employee. When will a Self Plus One enrollment be effective?

If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment during the 2015 Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first full pay period in January 2016. If you choose a Self Plus One enrollment outside of Open Season, your enrollment change will be effective on the first day of the first pay period following the one in which you make a change. The earliest available effective date for a Self Plus One enrollment is January 1, 2016.

I am an employee. What if I miss the Open Season and I want to change to a Self Plus One enrollment?

As an active employee, you must experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) in order to change your enrollment outside of Open Season. These are events such as marriage, divorce, the birth or adoption of a child, or a family member's loss of coverage under another health insurance program. For a full list of allowed QLEs, please view the SF2809. Reminder: No changes to Self Plus One can be made prior to the 2015 Open Season.



www.apwuhp.com
(800) 222-2798

For additional information visit
www.opm.gov/selfplusone

Things You Should Know

By Melvin Sanders, Director of Industrial Relations



We have received numerous calls from our deceased members' relatives asking for information to put on the obituary of their deceased former postal employee. The relatives actually believe that we still have the seniority dates and other information concerning retired or former members. Unfortunately, most of the information they need we cannot give them because it's not the type of data that's kept after a member retires or resigns.

Every member should write down information concerning your postal employment that is (or was) important to you and file it away with your important personal papers. Listed are some of the most requested pieces of information the family members ask for:

1. The date you started working for the Postal Service (seniority date) or if retired, the date you retired so they can mention the total number of years you worked.
2. The name of the location and or section you worked in. If you are like most of us you may have worked in a lot of different sections and locations. Since it will be your obituary, write down the ones you want to be remembered for. And don't forget to mention the name of the craft.

Refunds

Former postal employees who are now reaching retirement age have been calling to see if they are due any postal retirement for the years they worked.

The majority of former postal employees took a refund of their CSRS and/or FERS account when they were removed or resigned. When a CSRS refund has been properly paid, all annuity rights based on service covered by the refund are void (unless the former employee is later re-employed in a position subject to CSRS or FERS deductions).

Payment of a refund of FERS deductions permanently voids any retirement rights based on the period of FERS service that the refund covers. This means that an employee cannot repay the money in the future to reestablish credit for the refunded FERS service.

A refund to an employee with a total of more than five years of creditable civilian service is subject to any qualifying court order issued after May 6, 1985, involving the former employee and his or her current or former spouse(s).



ATTENTION!
ATTENTION!
ATTENTION!



To all APWU members! Our Secretary-Treasurer Robin "Robbie" Robertson is commissioned as a notary for the state of Missouri. If you need documents notarized please provide proper identification. This service is available to dues-paying members **only**.

Expectations vs. Reality

By Robin Robertson



Hello to my union brothers and sisters. Do you live by expectations or reality? As postal workers, sometimes our reality outweighs our expectations. Expectation means “a strong belief that something will happen or be the case in the future” (www.oxforddictionaries.com). Reality means “the state or quality of having existence or substance” (www.oxforddictionaries.com).

Within this organization we, as postal employees, expect the best even when reality is at its worst. As postal workers we are expected to come to work and perform our duties. The economy is still in flux in some major areas with huge layoffs, but due to the **no lay off** clause negotiated by the officers at the APWU national level, we are guaranteed a job until retirement. The reality is some postal employees lose their jobs daily due to attendance, attitudes, and theft.

Changing our mind-set is **not** for management, it’s

the expectation to grow the local to the next level, supporting and mentoring the young workers between 18-35 years old and other postal employees to help support and flourish the next generation of the union. We are expected to continue to fight for equality, financial security, and job stability within this APWU membership organization. In reality we need help spreading the word for saving the Postal Service and fighting for \$15 for the Missouri residents.

As postal workers changing our mind-set will allow us to help grow the APWU organization at the local level. Are you ready to be a vital part of seeing your expectations coming to life? If so, we the St. Louis Gateway District Area Local 8 welcome you as a vital union member, union advocate, and volunteer.



Editor's

Corner

By Shelia Patton-Harris



Recently, I attended the Postal Press Association’s conference in Madison, Wisconsin. This conference takes place every other year and involves editors and presidents from across the country and Puerto Rico and Guam. Meeting new editors and seeing some old faces was interesting. Classes were informative and gave insight on legal issues concerning the newsletter. There is always room for improvement. Members are constantly asked to get involved. Many of you don’t know what to do. I would like to invite the membership to submit letters to the editor with your concerns and questions. Stewards cannot be in every work area, every day. The union needs you to be the eyes and ears for the local. If you see something that is a concern, or an area that you need clarification, submit it to the *Press On*. I will try to print as many questions and answers as space allows. If you have something that you feel would be of interest to the membership, drop me a line. Do you do volunteer work, mentor a young person, work in your church, or belong to an interesting club, let the membership know. You can submit your questions, letters, or other information at my email address, shelia@stlouisapwu.org. All submissions are subject to the editorial policy of this publication. This is your paper and I would like to see more of you get involved.

In Madison, which is the state capital, there is a dedicated group of people who protest at the rotunda every day. They don’t picket or carry placards, they sing. Every day from noon to one, a group gathers to sing union and protest songs. This group has been doing this since 2011! They are protesting the union busting tactics of Governor Scott Walker. This is a rousing group and the members of the Postal Press Association joined the singers on two days. It was inspiring to see old and young, black and white, come together in solidarity.

Congratulations to the PSEs that were converted to full-time status. A lot of work went into the process. The local leaders, especially Gene Hollenbeck, should be commended for all the time and effort they put in to make this a reality.

Do Postal Employees Really Have The Right To Remain Silent?

By Melvin Sanders, Director of Industrial Relations

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 inspectors or the OIG office of the inspector general (yeah ... what's the difference?) office please remember this.

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 ques-

tions 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:

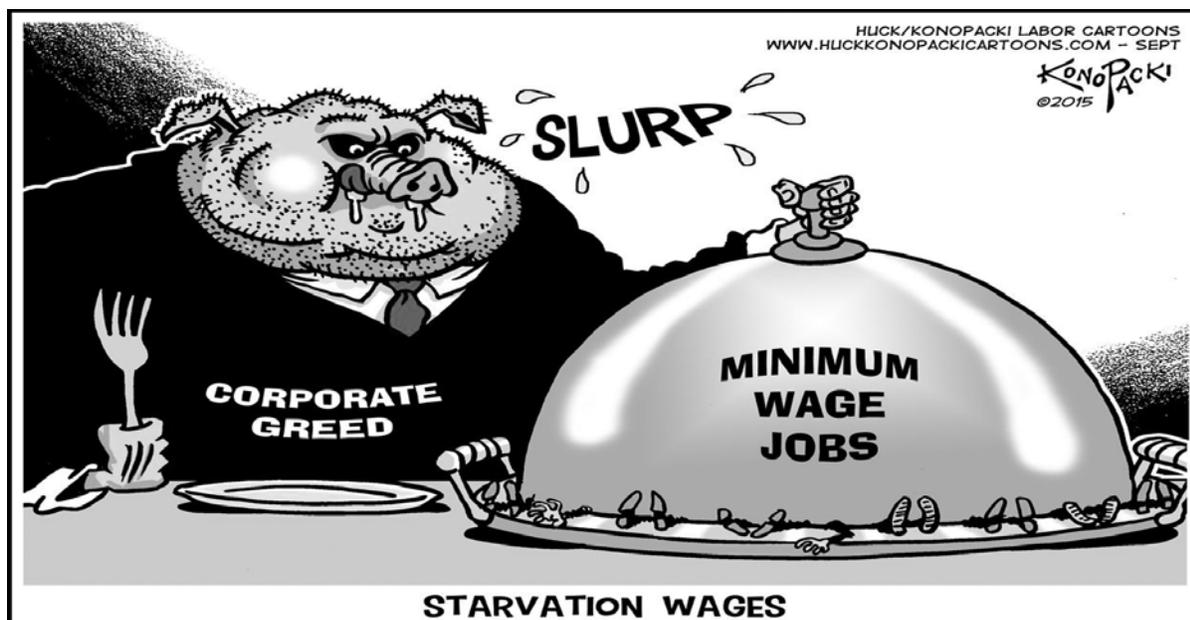
You are going to be asked a number of specific questions concerning the performance of your official duties as an employee of the United States Postal Service. You have a duty to reply to these questions, and agency disciplinary proceedings resulting in your discharge, may be initiated as a result of 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 proceed-

ings. 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.

In order to conduct investigations that do not violate Garrity and Kalkines warnings, the inspectors should provide this information to those employees they plan to interview.

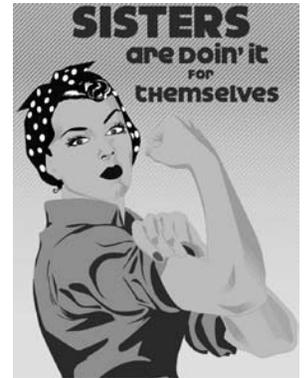
It is always best to exercise your Weingarten Rights and ask for a union representative to advise you of your options. Please remember that APWU officers and stewards are not attorneys and they should not attempt to act as such. They are taught about these different rights so they can advise in your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





St. Louis Gateway APWU POWER



What is POWER?

APWU POWER (Post Office Women for Equal Rights) is the women's committee within the APWU. It unites women with their special concerns, yet works within the framework of the national APWU organization.

When was it founded?

POWER was founded in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 28, 1979, by the late sister Barbara Prothro. The APWU National Constitution was amended to include POWER at the APWU National Convention in Detroit, Michigan, in August of 1980.

Why is St. Louis Gateway APWU POWER necessary?

The purpose of POWER is to provide assistance to the less fortunate with fund-raisers and special projects throughout the St. Louis Gateway community.

How do I join APWU POWER?

Every female APWU member is automatically an APWU POWER sister.

When are the meetings scheduled for APWU POWER?

Per the structure foundation of the APWU POWER, meetings are held directly after each general membership meeting unless the chair calls for a special meeting. It will be posted two weeks before the meeting via postings on www.stlouisapwu.org website and union boards at the plant.

Come join us at our next meeting!

You have the POWER to make a difference!

Hope to see you there!

Basic Job Rights of APWU Represented Postal Employees

By Stanley Slupik, Former NWIAL President

(Part One)

1. **You have the right to file a grievance.** To file a grievance, you should ask your immediate supervisor for a union steward to represent you. You do not have to tell the supervisor in any great detail, why you want a steward; you need only tell them the general nature of the problem, such as wages, hours, and working conditions. You should ask for the steward as soon as possible after the violation occurs. If you do not file a grievance within 14 days of the violation, you can no longer file on that issue. You have the right to dispute what management does regarding the workplace. Management is prohibited by law and the contract from retaliating against you for filing a grievance. Many employees do not realize this and do not challenge many unfair management actions. Of course, the grievance may not prove to be successful in every instance. But you should get into the habit of checking with your union steward, when any of these actions occur. Here are some examples of grievable issues:
 - a. If you call in for an absence and management disapproves your PS 3971, you can file a grievance.
 - b. If management marks your PS 3971 as “unscheduled” and you feel it should be “scheduled,” you can file a grievance. An “unscheduled” absence can be used against you in future disciplinary action, a “scheduled” absence cannot. To have your absence regarded as “scheduled” it must be requested and approved in advance. There are some exceptions. See a shop steward for further clarification.
 - c. If you receive a letter of demand for payment of alleged money owed, you can file a grievance. If you have money taken from your check by management, you can file a grievance. Management must first give you a letter of demand, that fully explains the debt, and they cannot collect the debt as long as your grievance is still in the grievance procedure.
 - d. If you are in your **bid** assignment and assigned to another job while junior employees stay in your **bid**, or non-bidders stay in your bid assignment, you can file a grievance. If you are moved from your **bid** assignment and replaced by a junior employee or an employee who does not have a bid for your assignment, you can file a grievance. Your bid assignment and your machine assignment is not the same thing.
 - e. If you are disciplined, you can file a grievance. Even if you feel you deserved the discipline, you should still see your steward. A reduction in the length of time the discipline will remain in your file is usually attainable in a settlement.
 - f. If you feel that you are improperly bypassed for overtime or holiday work, you can file a grievance. If you feel you are improperly required to work overtime or on the holiday schedule, you can file a grievance.
 - g. If an employee from another craft or level work in your bid assignment and you are on the overtime desired list, you can file a grievance.
 - h. If your supervisor makes up a new work rule, you can file a grievance.
 - i. If you are not paid properly, you can file a grievance.
 - j. If you are harassed or discriminated against, you can file a grievance.
 - k. If a supervisor does bargaining unit work in your unit, you can file a grievance.
 - l. If you do not receive your step increase, you can file a grievance.
 - m. If you feel you should have received your first vacation selection and did not, you can grieve it.
 - n. If you do not receive your proper holiday pay, you can file a grievance.
 - o. If you do not get a bid you feel you should have received, you can file a grievance.
 - p. If your bid job is abolished, you can file a grievance.
 - q. If your transfer request is denied, you can file a grievance.
 - r. If your light duty request is denied, you can file a grievance.
 - s. If you see a safety violation or an unsafe work practice, you can file a grievance.
 - t. If you asked for a steward and no steward was provided, you can file a grievance.
 - u. If you are put off the clock for any reason, you can file a grievance.

- v. If someone junior to you gets a detailed assignment, you can file a grievance.
- w. If a bid is not posted properly, or in a timely manner, you can file a grievance.
- x. If management is using outside contractors to do work that you are capable of doing, you can file a grievance.
- y. If you do not receive a proper uniform allowance, you can file a grievance.
- z. If your new bid requires training, and it is not proper, you can file a grievance.
- aa. If management forces you to use your own vehicle to do postal work, you can file a grievance.
- ab. If your request for advance annual leave is disapproved, you can file a grievance.
- ac. If a supervisor retaliates against you for filing a grievance, you can file a grievance.

There are many more issues that can be and are the subject of the grievance procedure. The point is to check with your union steward about any questionable issue. Do not automatically believe what your supervisor tells you. When in doubt check with your steward.

Alzheimer's Disease: A Race Against Time.

Recognize the signs and know your treatment options to preserve your quality of life.

Forgetfulness is a common complaint among older people. This is widely known. But, in some cases, forgetfulness is an early sign of something more serious than just advanced age. It can be one of the early warning signs of Alzheimer's, a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. About one in three seniors dies from Alzheimer's and women are twice as likely to get Alzheimer's than men. According to the Alzheimer's Association, every 67 seconds someone in the United States develops the disease, a disease that increased 71 percent from 2000-2013, while other fatal diseases dramatically decreased over that same period of time. Although there is no cure for Alzheimer's, there are treatments for the symptoms of Alzheimer's so it is important to seek medical advice at the first onset to manage the disease.

The Alzheimer's Association lists the following as early warning signs:

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life.
- Challenges in planning or problem solving.
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.
- Confusion with time or place.
- Trouble understanding visual images or spatial relationships.
- New problems with words in speaking.
- Misplacing things and losing the ability to find them.
- Decreased or poor judgment.
- Withdrawal from work or social activities.
- Changes in mood and personality.



The Alzheimer's Association website at www.alz.org is a valuable resource to learn more about the disease. And, remember, as an APWU Health Plan member, our 24-hour nurse line at (800) 582-1314 is another great resource available to you.

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Catholic Faith Clear on Matters Related to Working People

By Pat White, St. Louis Archdioceses Review

As a devout Catholic and advocate for working people, I want to address some important perspectives on my faith and its tenets related to labor. I have always viewed my faith and my advocacy for workplace rights as inextricably linked. Each reinforces the other. Therefore, I have been troubled by attempts by some to drive a wedge between Catholics and working people, attempts driven by an agenda of corporate greed and complete ignorance of some of the most basic underpinnings of the Catholic faith. The most egregious of these attacks has been the push for a “right to work” law in Missouri.

The proponents of attacks on workplace rights have resorted to contrived associations and ad hoc arguments as they have sought to connect unrelated issues to the rights of working people to speak up together for workplace safety protections and wages and benefits that sustain families.

On the contrary, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops very

clearly lays out the true association within the teachings of the Catholic faith. **“The economy must serve people, not the other way around,”** the conference states on the bishops’ website, www.usccb.org. **“If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected — the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative,”** the conference concludes. These principles are closely linked to actual Scripture and are irrefutably part of the Catholic faith, both historically and in present day.

For his part, Pope Francis has also openly discussed these issues. Recently, on the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, Pope Francis lamented that society is increasingly putting profits ahead of human dignity. **“What point have we come to?”** he asked. **“We do not get dignity from power or money or culture. We get dignity from work,”** Pope Francis asserted.

Catholics in Missouri would be wise to follow this circumspection and leadership. The attempts in state government to pass a “right to work” law in Missouri go against these fundamental principles. Such a law would make workplaces less safe and wages would drop at a time when we can scarcely afford it. States with such laws have less health insurance coverage and less quality education.

My faith tells me that I need to protect the worker and treat him or her fairly. It tells me to heal the sick and feed the hungry. It therefore tells me that I should oppose any law that hinders me from doing that for others and hinders working people from doing that for themselves.

As for the individuals putting forth untrue associations between working people and unrelated matters, I can only say this: Forgive them, for they know not what they do.

White serves on the archdiocesan Peace and Justice Commission and is president of the Greater St. Louis Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Federal Employee Health Benefit

2015 OPEN SEASON

November 9 - December 14

Support Services Report

By Orlando Anderson, Support Services Director



Hello again sisters and brothers. It's time again to begin the process of contract negotiations for IT/AS division of support services. As you all may remember, it took three years to get a new contract after the 2007-2011 contract expired. In August 2014, the membership voted to ratify the 2011-2016 contract. This contract will expire on January 19, 2016. Therefore, we are beginning the negotiations in November 2015. We have tentative dates scheduled to meet with the HQ's Postal Service negotiation team. These meetings will take place in Washington, D.C. and in most cases, will alternate the meeting locations between the National APWU Union Hall and HQ L'Enfant Plaza. When there isn't a face-to-face meeting, we will have telecom sessions for discussions.

The union hopes, as I'm sure you all do, that these negotiations do not take as long as the last one did. In a previous article, I gave a description and explanation as to some of the factors that lead to those delays. I believe that the key players from both sides are set in place currently, leaving only room for negotiation rather than other obstacles from the past round.

Many members have asked for a variety of things that they would like to see in the new contract. I must be honest when I say, "Some of those things may not happen." Not because they are not good ideas, but because they may not be practical. For example, we can't ask that everybody receive a 20 percent pay increase. That's simply not reasonable.

I am scheduled to attend the

All Craft Conference in October. At this conference, everyone is asked to bring their proposals so that they can be reviewed and consolidated with the other accounting and IT centers. I have and still request that anyone who has a proposal that they would like to see implemented into the new contract to please provide it to me no later than September 30, 2015. There are certain protocols that you must follow. First, no emails through the Postal Service computers. Next, I will need your proposal with a detailed and defined justification as to why this should take place or be implemented. You can't just say, I want an upgrade, for example. You have to justify why the upgrade is in order. In other words, prove your case. You are not expected to use all the technical terminology and high priced verbiage. Nor are you expected to cite contracts and ELM

language. That's what I will be doing from the end of September until we meet at the conference in October. Putting your proposal in format with the proper language.

If I don't receive anything, I can't propose it. With that, I do have a proposal of my own and have mentioned it to those who would be affected. Finally, once the negotiations start in November, and all the proposals from both parties are on the table, we cannot add to the list. So please, give me what you have or give it to any IT/AS steward and they will ensure that I get them. I never make promises about this sort of thing, with one exception, "I promise to fight hard and with long suffering" on your behalf.

In solidarity



A Very Special
“Thank You!”

Special thanks to my APWU St. Louis Gateway District Area Local family.

Family Day 2015 was a success!! We would like to thank all the volunteers, vendors (EAP and retiree benefits), catering (Persons'), grilling (MVS in full effect), Compass Rose (mini carnival), The Clown, and DJ Herb Irons (maintenance craft).

The members and retirees made this day a success!!

****Success and Solidarity work hand in hand!!****

#UNIONSOLIDARITY

Retirees show up and show out at the annual Family Day.



FAMILY DAY 2015



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GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR

September 30 (Wed.)	October Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
October 3 (Sat.)	General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)
October 5 (Mon.)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
October 12 (Mon.)	Columbus Day Holiday
November 4 (Wed.)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
November 8 (Sun.)	General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
November 9 (Mon.)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)
November 11 (Wed.)	Veterans Day Holiday
November 26 (Thurs.)	Thanksgiving 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.