

Visit to Capitol Hill

By Frederick Wolfmeyer, President

Union sisters and brothers, I recently attended the APWU National Presidents Conference in Washington, D.C. I was nearly stranded there because of the snow storm, but was able to get back to St. Louis although I had my flight cancelled and rescheduled three times. This Presidents Conference was the legislative conference that is held every two years in Washington with the purpose of visiting with our elected officials and informing them and/or educating them on postal issues. All local presidents who attend this conference are to schedule appointments with their congressmen and senators during the dates of the conference.

I scheduled appointments with Congressman Lacy Clay, Congresswoman Ann Wagner, and Senators McCaskill and Blunt. The Missouri State legislative director and president were also at this conference and they had additional appointments set with congressmen from the Kansas City area and with Congressman Luetkemeyer from the Jefferson and Washington County areas in Missouri.

I was able to speak with Congressmen Emmanuel Cleaver and Lacy Clay as well as Congresswoman Ann Wagner. I also had the opportunity to speak in person with Senator Blunt, but unfortunately I was only able to speak

with Senator McCaskill's staff member, Corey Dukes. All the appointments went very well as we spoke of postal issues such as the preservation of service standards, the pre-funding requirement, the refunding of overpayments into the CSRS and FERS retirement systems, and the preservation of six-day delivery.

Congressmen Cleaver and Clay are tremendous supporters of postal employees and have the same position as



we do on each of the issues I have mentioned. We presented them with evidence from the OIG concerning the pre-funding mandate and each of them agreed to co-sponsor the Postal Service Protection Act, HR-630, that would end the pre-funding mandate, refund all overpayments into the pension plans, preserve the service standards and six-day delivery.

Congresswoman Ann Wagner is a freshman representative who was not there initially. After speaking with her staff member for approximately 20 minutes, she walked in the room, and we were able to speak with her personally. She was very receptive to our causes and since I live in her district, she was very accommodating. She promised to consider our concerns and I believe after some future correspondence with her, she will co-sponsor HR-630.

After the congressional representative visits, I was off to the other side of the Capitol Building to keep my ap-

pointments with our Missouri senators. As I stated above, Claire McCaskill was busy in the Senate so we met with her staff members both of whom were very familiar with our issues. Remember, Senator McCaskill helped get Senate Bill 1789 passed last May. That bill would have helped the service back to financial stability, but was stalled in the House by Representative Darrell Issa. (As a side note, all the congressional representatives and both senators all cited Mr. Issa as the biggest stumbling block to postal reform.) Senator McCaskill's staff members pledged to support us in all of our efforts and will consider cosponsoring Senate Bill 316, the Senate version of the Postal Service Protection Act.

Next, I arrived early for my appointment with Senator Blunt's staff member, Zach Kinne. About 15 minutes before meeting with Mr. Kinne, Senator Blunt walked in, said hello and asked who I was there to see. I responded that I would like to see him and he said that it might happen. Twenty minutes later I was sitting at the same table as the senator speaking to him about our issues. He supports all of our issues. He is for preserving the service standards and Saturday delivery, and believes that the pre-funding mandate needs to be eliminated.

All in all it was a very productive day in that I had five appointments, and was able to visit with either a congress person or senator in four of those appointments. In addition, later that evening while at a restaurant, I saw Congressman Peter King of New York sitting across from me. I approached him after his dinner and introduced myself, gave him my business card, and asked him to support HR-630. He stated that he was a big supporter of postal employees and he would consider the bill. This topped off a great day of legislative lobbying and it felt great to put forth all the issues concerning the St. Louis Gateway AWPU membership. If these elected officials all co-sponsor and then vote for these two pieces of legislation, the Postal Service will be back on sound financial footing.

What can you do? Recently you should have received a letter from our national president, Cliff Guffey. In that letter he is asking all of us to contact our congressmen and senators to ask them to co-sponsor and support HR-630 and SB-316. Please take the time to either call or write your elected officials and ask them to take action. It is easy to do. If I can sit and talk with them face to face, anyone can, and anyone can write or call.

On another topic from the Presidents Conference, there was much discussion by Director of Industrial Relations Director Mike Morris on upcoming arbitrations. One case that had been heard and on which a decision was expected soon, involved the contracting out of the MVS craft in the state of California. The decision came down on Monday, March 4, 2013, and Arbitrator Stephen B. Goldberg ruled that the USPS decision to subcontract postal vehicle service work throughout California violated the contract. This is a huge win for the APWU because if the service had been successful in this case, MVS units across the country may have been subcontracted. This decision also has implications for all APWU represented crafts as related to subcontracting and Article 32 of the national agreement. This was a hard fought victory for the union, and demonstrates its commitment to representation of its membership.

Locally, I have met with senior plant manager Henry Dominguez on several issues. I have spoken to him about getting help on vacation selection and have received approval for a tour 1 steward to help out on tour 3. I have spoken to him and HR manager Pam Meehan concerning a tour 3 MDO. I expect something to be done about her in the near future. I have had discussions concerning the AFCS 200s, made a proposal to him regarding these machines and I am waiting for a response. I will be meeting with him again at the next Labor Management meeting on March 15, 2013. We will be discussing several agenda items that directly concern you, the membership. I will keep all of you informed through the *Workroom Edition* of the *Press On*. Thank you.

Your Retirement and Benefit Workshop APWU GATEWAY DISTRICT AREA LOCAL

Millennium Hotel St. Louis

200 South 4th Street, St. Louis, 63102-1804

314-241-9500

Date & Time: April 28 Workshop 11:30 a.m.

Free Food \$50 Visa Raffle

For More info Contact any Local Officer or Shop Steward.

Topics we will cover:

- Federal Employees Retirement System
- CSRS-Offset information
- Windfall Elimination Provision
- TSP In-Service Withdrawals
- Civil Service Retirement System
- Military Service Buy Back
- Survivor Benefit Options
- Retirement Package Completion
- Federal Employee Group Life Insurance



Helping APWU members understand their benefits so they do not make the mistake in planning for their retirement. As we know, a limited understanding on your benefits can cost you thousands of dollars during your working career and even more at retirement. If we work together in this challenging time, we can make a difference.

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OSHA Finds Post Office Guilty

By Vice President Melvin Sanders



OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act) has found the St. Louis Post Office (main office garage) guilty of violations and has issued a citation and notification of penalty.

The law requires that a copy of the citation and notification of penalty be posted immediately in a prominent place at or near the location of the violation(s) cited or where it will be readily observable by all affected employees. The citation must remain posted until the violation(s) cited have been abated or three working days (excluding weekends and holidays) whichever is longer.

Citation 1 Item 1

Type of Violation: Serious

1. On or about November 6, 2012, the disconnect for the brake lathe, 110 volt, located on the south wall, second floor of the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) had copper tubing instead of the appropriately marked and labeled fuse.
2. On or about November 6, 2012, the disconnect for the air handler 3-phase unit 230 volts, 30 amps, located on

the second floor of the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) had copper tubing instead of the marked and labeled fuse.

Is it just me or does it sound like the post office was putting a penny in the fuse box?

When employees see safety and health violations they should bring them to the attention of the union or report the violations to OSHA themselves.

The law prohibits discrimination against an employee for filing a complaint or for exercising any rights under this act. An employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against may file a complaint no later than 30 days after the discrimination occurred with the U.S. Department of Labor area office.

The post office does have the right to contest this citation and notification of penalty, but just like they do us in the grievance procedure, I'm sure it will come back "DENIED."

Oh, did I mention the penalty slapped on the post office was \$5,500? It would be nice if it was paid to the members in the VMF garage.

Spring is Springing EAP, a Ray of Sunshine

By Al Mickey Miller, Sergeant at Arms



Great day in the morning! Yes, it's a great day in the morning, afternoon and night when you have access to some of the most extensive services that any Employee Assistance Program can provide.

The St. Louis District, 631 zip codes and the NDC, along with the Annex are eligible for EAP services from our provider, Deer Oaks EAP. Deer Oaks has been providing all of our EAP services except for those members and other employees who work in the other zip codes area of 630, 633. These members and other employees are eligible for EAP services from the Magellan Group EAP.

You can talk to a counselor or make an appointment that meets your schedule by calling **1-866-327-2400**. When you identify your **work location** you will be directed to the correct office and EAP service provider.

I am sure that we all have, thus far, enjoyed the services of **Deer Oaks EAP** service. We keep our lines open for any complaints or suggestions. We meet bimonthly to discuss any problems and we have not been presented with any negative feedback. If any member or other employee has anything that you think should be brought to the EAP committee, please call the Union Hall at **314-231-7665**.

Take advantage of the month-

ly newsletter published by Deer Oaks EAP. The Deer Oaks

website at **Deeroaks.com** can be accessed by members and other employees with the user name, **USPSMO**. The password is the same, **USPSMO**. You can then create your account for an extensive array of services that are totally **free of charge**. They even provide identity theft services. Check it out, use the wonderful services that our **union contract** provides for us.

You won't be disappointed. **Solidarity forever**

Are You Next?

By Sheila Patton-Harris, Editor



Last year around this time I wrote an article about the critical need for portable automatic defibrillators on the workroom floor. Not many people paid much attention to the article because an emergency hadn't happened on the workroom floor in a while. Recently, sources close to the situation reported to me that a clerk suffered heart problems on the workroom floor and needed a defibrillator. Things did not go so well.

The clerk was working in automation, the same sources reported, when she slumped over the machine, losing consciousness. Her partner didn't know what to do so she went to another machine to try and get help. When the supervisor arrived at the machine, the clerk was on the floor. Other clerks and supervisors came to the area. They got moist towels and applied them to the clerk. One of the supervisors called 911. Another supervisor called one of the first responders on his cell phone. He was told to come to the machine, but he said he was not notified that it was an emergency situation. Precious minutes were lost. When he finally arrived he immediately started CPR and told the supervisors to call the postal police so that they could bring the defibrillator that they have in their office. The postal police and the paramedics arrived at about the same time. Luckily, they were able to get a pulse back on the clerk before they left for the hospital. The clerk was estimated to have been without oxygen for 17 minutes. The brain starts to die after 4 minutes.

Management is charged with providing a safe working environment. They need a plan in place so

that when someone has a medical emergency no time is wasted. More people need to learn CPR and know what to do in the case of an emergency. Are you the next person to suffer possible irreversible brain damage because there are no portable defibrillators available on the workroom floor? The union has been on a mission to get management to provide the life-saving devices.

First responders are a good idea, but there needs to be a better system to notify them of an emergency. Maybe the fire alarm intercom can be used. Maybe a system can be developed to call 911 and the first responders at the same time. On the day of the incident, there were other first responders in the building. Were they notified there was a problem? CPR is easier with a second person.

The union is working on getting a defibrillator for the union booth. Many of you know that I was a firefighter and paramedic before coming to the post office. I have volunteered to become a first responder. Call the booth, on tour 1, if you can't get anyone else **after** calling 911.

If you or one of co-workers feels ill, let someone know. Have the supervisor call 911 and the first responders right away. If it is a co-worker and they stop breathing and have no pulse, begin CPR if you are trained or call for help if not, and then call 911 and the supervisor. Time is of the essence. The longer the person is without oxygen the more damage is done to the brain.



PRAY
FOR THE SICK

Gwen Marks
Paul Reid

And all of the other sick
and injured members



Thinking about Retiring?

Did you know just by paying \$3 a month you may become an active member of the American Postal Workers Union Retiree Organization. You will receive the *APWU Press On* (union newsletter); you and your guest can attend the APWU picnic and the retiree luncheon at no cost to you.

Consider staying with the union even after you retire.

It's Time to Take Action

By Gene Hollenbeck, Director of Research/Education/Legislature



Once again it is time to renew our efforts to save the United States Postal Service. It is left up to us, the workers, who will be effected the most, to stop the destruction of the Postal Service. Changes ranging from sectional excessing to installation closures and reduction of the six-day mail delivery. We need to contact our congressional members now to get them to pass legislation to save the service.

There are two bills in Congress right now that will help save the service.

In the Senate, **S-316**: A bill to

recalculate and restore retirement annuity obligation of the USPS, to eliminate the requirement that the USPS prefund the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, to place restrictions on the closure of postal facilities, to create incentives for innovation for the USPS, to maintain levels of postal service, and for other purposes.

In the House, **HR-630**: To recalculate and restore retirement annuity obligations of the USPS, eliminate the requirement that the USPS prefund the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, place restrictions on the closure of postal facilities, to create incentives for innovation for the USPS,

to maintain levels of postal service, and for other purposes.

Both of these bills basically say the same thing. Return the overpayments, recalculate the current payments, maintain the delivery standards that were in effect and stop closures of plants and offices. They also require management to maintain post offices in rural communities.

This is now in our hands. Do we just sit back and wait for someone to save us, or do we get involved and take action?



By Shelia Patton-Harris

We are doing things that are hurting the clerk craft, especially in automation. Some of you complain about having to work the machines alone but do everything to demonstrate to management that you don't need any help. You allow management to work you like a rented mule while you are violating federal laws by not taking a lunch within 6 hours. I know you say so what, what's the big deal? The big deal is that the Postal Service looks at numbers. If you have so many clerks and so much mail, how many man hours does it take to process the mail? Upper management doesn't look at the fact that you are not taking breaks or lunches. Those are rights

guaranteed to you by the contract. If you chose to ignore your rights, upper management doesn't care. They only see that management is able to process the mail within the time limits with the clerks that they have and that the mail not only gets out, the clerks leave a half hour early. So what do you think the next step is? Excessing. If they can get 1 million pieces processed with say 80 clerks and they all leave early, now they don't need 80 clerks, they can work with 70 clerks. You never see upper management on the floor. They don't see any of the clerks that work the mail and couldn't care less about the conditions in which you work. They only look at the numbers.

All of you enjoy the perks that you get for working through breaks and lunches and leaving early, but it's only going to come back and bite you in the butt. Sure the supervisors don't say anything to you because they are getting their mail out. Upper management is off their backs. They are not doing you any favors. Don't fall for it. Don't get angry, get smart. Take your breaks and lunches on time and leave at your designated end tour.

The plant manager, Henry Dominguez, discussed the clock rings with the union. Those half-hour discrepancies are showing up as LWOP on the reports that he reviews. He has instructed the supervisor's to stop allowing the practice.

Union Wins MVS Subcontracting Case

By Jeff Cooper, MVS Director



Findings at Arbitration:

The APWU won an important arbitration case on subcontracting in the motor vehicle craft that has important implications for the entire APWU.

Summary of events leading to the filing of the grievance:

On June 7, 2012, Patrick Devine, USPS manager of contract administration, sent a letter to APWU President Cliff Guffey, advising Mr. Guffey that because of 2008 California emission regulations requiring the replacement or retrofitting of all Postal Service trucks in California, “the Postal Service has made the decision to subcontract postal vehicle service in all Pacific Area mail processing and network distribution facilities in the state of California.” The letter further stated that “No significant impact to the bargaining unit is anticipated.”

On August 10, Mr. Devine sent Mr. Guffey another letter, said by Mr. Devine to replace the June 7 letter, stating that because of the California regulations, “the Postal Service is proposing to subcontract postal vehicle service in all Pacific Area mail processing network distribution facilities in the state of California.”

On August 13, Mr. Devine wrote to Bob Pritchard, the union’s director, Motor Vehicle Services Division. The letter stated that the proposed subcontracting was based in part on compliance with California emission regulations and also on estimated savings of \$86,945,176.76, resulting in contracting out.

In a letter dated October 5, Mr. Pritchard challenged the accuracy of the Postal Service’s calculation of the savings to be accomplished by contracting out. Mr. Devine responded that the Postal Service had revised its calculations. The revised cost savings resulting from contracting out, according to Mr. Devine, were \$25 million, rather than the \$86 million.

The Postal Service made a final decision to contract out based on Article 32.2 in November. The union initiated a Step 4 dispute, alleging that in deciding to contract out all California postal vehicle service, the Postal Service had violated Article 32.1B, Article 32.2, the memorandum of understanding concerning contracting or insourcing of contracted services and the memorandum of understanding concerning workforce benefits, employment opportunities, training and education fund.

The case went to arbitration and on March 4, 2013, arbitrator Steven Goldberg ruled, “The Postal Service can no longer justify contracting out work that would be less expensive to keep in house on the ground that it has given due consideration to cost as well as the other Article 32.1 or 32.2 factors. To be sure, each of those factors must be considered, but if factors other than cost do not rule out keeping work in house, and the cost of keeping work in house would be less than contracting out, both the text and bargaining history of the contracting MOU require that the work be kept in house.”

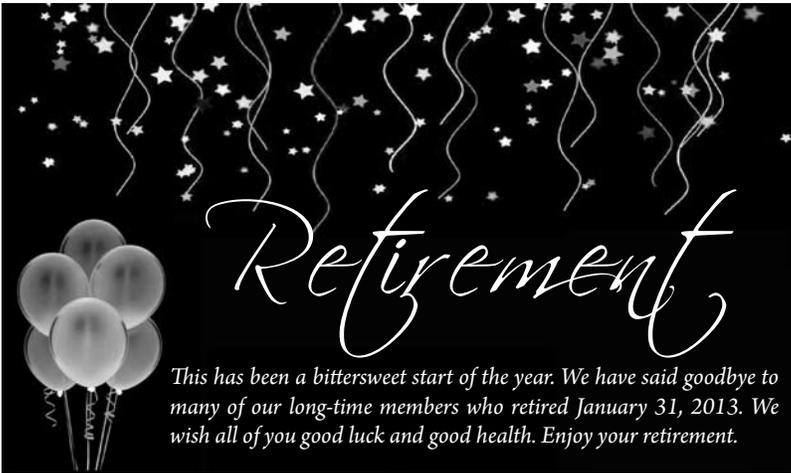
“This is a big achievement for the union,” said APWU President Cliff Guffey. “It confirms that the 2010-2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement gives us more teeth to protect APWU jobs.”

An unfavorable arbitration decision in this case would have opened the door for contracting out MVS all over the country. Jobs would have been lost and all crafts in the APWU would have been affected. This is another good example of the APWU fighting to keep union jobs.

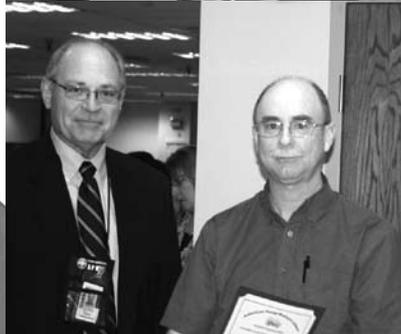
Thank You

I would like to thank all of you who supported me through this MVS craft appointment. Mid-August of 2012 I was appointed to take over the MVS craft director position. It is a learning process; I do have a long way to go. I would like to give a special thanks to the stewards who help and support me with processing MVS grievances. We are currently under the regular grievance procedures, so if you have a grievance that is contractual or discipline, members have exactly 14 days to expedite the grievance in a timely manner. Time is an essence so please try to submit the grievance to a union steward. There will be a steward training class on March 19. All willing participants should contact me or the union office.

cooper@stlouisapwu.org
MVS office 314-436-5027
Union office 314-231-7665



This has been a bittersweet start of the year. We have said goodbye to many of our long-time members who retired January 31, 2013. We wish all of you good luck and good health. Enjoy your retirement.



IT Recruiting

Note: This is a letter that the St. Louis IT recruiting team for the APWU is using to try and improve the membership numbers. Currently there are only about 30 members out of 95 IT employees who are dues-paying members. This letter is being used as a tool to try and improve this situation. — Brandon Kraft

Dear Saint Louis Solution Center Employee,

By now you've probably heard the sales pitch by one of our recruiters. Now as your appointed steward and fellow employee, I'm asking you to read this letter and request that you join our union. I am also willing to sit down with you and talk to you about any objections or concerns you might have concerning union membership. If you haven't considered joining before or have ruled it out completely, I realize that this might be a hard sell, but if you hear me out I hope that the recruiter and I will have made an impression on you.

Our History as a Union

Before really understanding the reasons for joining our union, it's probably best to understand the struggles of our union's past. Our union dates back to the year 1972 when the USPS created the St. Louis Postal Data Center. In 1971 there was a nationwide strike and the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) was formed out of a merger of several unions. Congress recognized the right of USPS employees to organize and collective bargaining was introduced into our work environment. Prior to this date, employees had to petition Congress for changes to working conditions and wage increases.

Employees at our center were earning around two to three dollars per hour and were not guaranteed 40 hours per week. This was true for most of the employees here at the data center, including supervisors. The APWU got wind of our new data center and asked headquarters if we were management employees (salaried exempt) or if we would be represented by a union. Washington told the APWU that they did not want us to be considered as management employees and that they wanted us to be represented by a union. The APWU was glad to represent us and they drew up a separate contract for us.

For many years we were represented by the maintenance craft in the APWU and our local members were not permitted by the APWU to vote to ratify the contract. That was something that had to be fought for and won which also led to the creation of the Support Services division of the APWU which brought with it the addition of our own national business agent. Today our national support services director represents all the accounting and IT solution centers and is responsible for leading up contract negotiations. I learned about all of this through talking to one of our past presidents who saw everything from 1972 until she retired in 1996. Rita Warren was our president when our local union was separate from the local that represents the plant employees. She was instrumental in merging our local union with the St. Louis Gateway District Area local. When this happened, things began to improve for us. But many of the struggles our union faced in those days we still face today.

Philosophy behind union membership

Being primarily libertarian in my approach to life, I view union membership as a simple matter of exercising liberty. I believe we live in a nation that recognizes the liberty of the individual and with that liberty comes the freedom of the individual to associate with other individuals. We live in a nation that provides freedom for individuals to form corporations and businesses. These corporations have freedom to associate with one another and to enter into commerce with one another. It's a wonderful thing that has contributed to the largest economy in the history of the world.

I celebrate the fact that this great country protects the freedom of people to go out into the world with a good idea and then capitalize upon it utilizing their God-given talents and the vast resources of this nation. But given that our form of government recognizes the freedom these corporations and businesses have (the USPS is technically a "quasi-government" organization but it is essentially run as a government owned corporation), it also recognizes the right of people to freely associate with one another in order to capitalize upon their combined labor. I mention this only because I know in today's media driven and hyper-partisan culture, union membership constitutes a certain political affiliation, but philosophically and conceptually it should not.

Practical reasons to join our union

Practically, there are numerous reasons for belonging to our union. But for me these can all be boiled down into two reasons: 1) quality of life and 2) freedom of the individual.

Reason #1 — Quality of Life

For me the absolute number one reason I'm a member of our union is the quality of life it affords me. You might be thinking I'm crazy for talking this way, but really have you been out there in the IT workforce lately? It really does not compare to working here at the center. Have you looked at what our management has to put up with? Would you want their job? I certainly wouldn't.

When was the last time you worked more than 40 hours? It may have happened recently, but usually we end up only putting in a 40-hour week. That is because if you work more than 40 hours, according to our contract you have to be paid overtime. This is a big deal.

In the corporate IT world, a lot of jobs are advertised as only requiring "40 hour" work weeks. But there is usually an expectation of more than 40, 50, 60, or even some case more than 70 hours, all depending on the employer and the situation at the time. This extra time is usually worked by the employee without overtime pay. Sometimes these positions come with "straight time" overtime pay, but what

I've heard from acquaintances of mine in the corporate world is what often happens is when a project goes into crunch mode, if one is paid hourly as a contractor, there are implied threats of discharge if the project requires overtime to be completed. Do you know what kind of stress this can put on an individual? I'm sure some of you know what I'm talking about. What happens then is the employee is forced to work many hours off the clock to complete the project "on time." With the contract our union has negotiated for us, we truly have an "eight and skate" schedule. We don't take our work home with us, and if we are called at home we are even paid for talking on the phone! I challenge you to come up with another place in St. Louis that is like this. Also, if management needs to have us on call all the time, they will actually pay us to carry a pager. In the corporate IT world, you're expected to carry a beeper, blackberry or cell phone and you better not ignore that phone call. Our home lives are much better off because of this.

Yes, it may be true in some instances that our pay is not as great as other places. We can fix that through greater leverage in negotiations. We need more members to do that. But our quality of life is so much better. And I would personally argue that it's even better than many of our immediate supervisors. Yes, our supervisors may be paid more than us in most cases, but I've personally witnessed business project leaders putting in many 12 and 14 hour days, spending hours on the weekend wasting their time on needless boring telecoms, all while having to carry a blackberry and having to scramble to get help at 3 a.m. in the morning when there is a critical incident ticket. And believe me; their taskmasters can be cruel and unrelenting. They won't tell you that part. They are currently under a pay freeze, and if you make the jump from DCS into EAS, it's only a 5 percent raise. Five percent for what!?! It's not worth it friends. Many BPLs have told me privately, "Brandan, take my word for it, stay in the bargaining unit. You'll be better off being covered by a contract." Bill Norman and Mac McCoy both told me that. I don't mind disclosing that because they have retired. Others that are working here now have confided with me the same thing. Chances are, your supervisor is stressed and overworked. I won't name names.

Break it all down, (divide total pay by total hours worked) and you will find that we can make more per hour, and in many cases, after many years of service with COLA (cost of living increases that we usually get through contract negotiation) we can make more as a bargaining unit employee than an EAS-23 or an EAS-24 employee can. This advantage over management does not exist anywhere else in the industry.

Finally, our vacation benefits are second to none! After three years of service, you will have four weeks of vacation and after 15 years, you will have five weeks and a day. This is all on top of our 10 paid holidays and two weeks of sick leave. You will be hard pressed to find anyone who provides that amount of time away from the office. Newly hired management employees don't get this amount of time away from the office. They just recently had their benefits cut. When you work under our contract, your life doesn't revolve around your job, but around your life and your loved ones. You can actually raise your little ones and spend more time with them while still enjoying decent financial stability.

The objection I've heard to this is that some other places of employment offer three and four weeks of vacation. But ask yourself, when was the last time you had your leave request denied? I dare say it's not a common event here in our bargaining unit. Management usually has to have a good reason to deny a leave request, and a denial is grievable! In the corporate IT world, companies have been known to entice potential employees with promises of paid vacation, but the sad reality is the employee's freedom to use this leave is often subjected to managers' whims and frequently denied. Also the corporate sick leave is usually much less than what we have. In most places of employment, five days of sick leave is considered to be good! Here, under our contract, we can actually bank enough sick leave for an event in which we might develop a terrible disease such as cancer.

In the corporate IT world, one usually doesn't know what their fellow employees are being paid. The amount of pay varies significantly between employees of equal skill. More often than not, pay is not tied to experience or years of service like it is here. Decisions regarding pay and schedules are entirely in the hands of management and can be changed at any time. Sometimes this works out to the employee's advantage, but usually not. These decisions to change pay can be fought by the employee, but they risk a lot by complaining. By complaining about working conditions or wages, an employee risks being assigned unfavorable work, working more hours, or even worse, losing their job.

The vast majority of IT shops are not unionized. Employees of these shops are not promised anything by their employer. Instead companies promise shareholders great returns. These promises ultimately fall on the backs of the employees. If profits happen to be down because bad management decisions are made or if the economy suffers a downturn, well the typical answer is to reduce benefits and/or increase employee contributions to health care or retirement by reducing company contributions. Companies will also lay off a significant amount of the workforce, but keep the workload the same. They will expect more for less from their dwindling employee resources. Essentially, companies often make their bottom line look better than it actually is or simply put extra money into the pockets of the shareholders – much of it at the expense of their employees.

Contrast this with working under our union's negotiated contract. If we were to deal with management one on one, we'd be no different than any other corporate IT office. But we know what everyone else is making. We can voice our opinion and even negotiate for higher wages and better working conditions. And even if we are assigned unfavorable work for speaking about something that is unfair, we can fight back through our grievance procedure. We have a process in place that can and will work for us when needed.

(to be continued ...)

It's Not a Done Deal

News from the United States Senate



Twenty-four senators, led by Tom Udall of New Mexico, are challenging the postmaster general's authority to discontinue Saturday delivery later this year without congressional approval.

In a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, the senators acknowledge the financial challenges the Postal Service is facing and urged him to work with Congress to address these problems through bipartisan reform, such as the Senate legislation passed last year.

They also point out that a shift to five-day service could lead to further declines in mail volume and revenues, worsening the U.S. Postal Service's overall condition.

Senators Tom Udall, Tom Harkin, Al Franken, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Debbie Stabenow, Mark Begich, Ron Wyden, Martin Heinrich, Jon Tester, Sherrod Brown, Max Baucus, Bernie Sanders, Jeanne Shaheen, Mazie Hirono, Joe Manchin, Jack Reed, Amy Klobuchar, Elizabeth Warren, Sheldon Whitehouse, Michael Bennet, Mark Udall, Brian Schatz and Heidi Heitkamp sent the letter to the postmaster today.

They note that recently the Postal Service itself recognized it lacks the power to terminate six-day service.

"As recently as last year, the Postal Service did not believe it had the authority to end six-day delivery without legislative action by Congress. For example, in the USPS' 'Plan for Profitability' released on February 6, 2012, savings for five-day delivery were categorized under the heading of 'legislative initiatives,'" they wrote.

Furthermore, you personally delivered testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on September 6, 2011, where you noted that "Congress must act ... (to) allow the Postal Service the authority to determine delivery frequency."

We believe your proposal does not comply with the existing statutory requirement to continue six-day delivery and rural delivery mail services at no less than the 1983 levels.

Such a move would impact 70,000 jobs and negatively affect the rural communities they represent.

"With the national unemployment rate at 7.8 percent, moving to five-day delivery will hurt middle class families," they said.

The text of the letter follows:

Dear Postmaster General:

We write to express our concerns regarding the recent announcement that the Postal Service intends to end Saturday mail delivery service later this year. We understand the Postal Service faces serious financial challenges, and we remain committed to working with you to find a solution to the Postal Service's long-term financial viability as we did last year to pass bipartisan postal reform legislation through the Senate. However, we believe a piecemeal strategy that focuses on cutting services and forgoes a critical competitive advantage is not the solution. Instead, we need a comprehensive postal reform bill that allows the Postal Service to modernize while protecting its crucial obligations and services.

First, we believe your proposal does not comply with the existing statutory requirement to continue six-day delivery and rural delivery mail service at no less than the 1983 levels. As such it is in violation of P.L. 112-175, the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, which extends the Consolidate Appropriations Act of 2012, P. L. 112-74. Section 101 (a) of P.L. 112-175 specifically extends the funding levels of the FY12 appropriations law, "under the authority and conditions provided" in the previous funding resolution, except as otherwise stated in the CR. The CR does not contain language abrogating the FY12 provision, which requires the USPS to maintain six-day delivery.

It appears that as recently as last year, the Postal Service did not believe it had the authority to end six-day delivery without legislative action by Congress. For example, in the USPS's "Plan for Profitability," released on February 6, 2012, savings for five-day delivery were categorized under the heading of "legislative initiative." Furthermore, you personally delivered testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on September 6, 2011, where you noted that "Congress must act... (to) allow the Postal Service the authority to determine delivery frequency." Accordingly, we request that you provide a detailed legal justification for this proposed change.

It is our understanding that this change is driven by an effort to reduce costs. However, it is unclear that the shift to five-day service will benefit USPS in the long-term. In fact, a 2012 USPS-commissioned survey found that service cuts resulting in a 7.7 percent reduction in volume will lead to a \$5.2 billion loss in revenue the first year alone. Similarly, an earlier 2011 GAO report found that moving to a five-day service would put mail volumes and revenues at risk. In other words, it could help push the USPS further down the spiral. Specifically, GAO noted that USPS may have overestimated savings by as much as \$500 million, especially periodicals who stated that they "will most likely accelerate shifting their hard copy mail to electronic communications or otherwise stop using USPS if it is unable to provide reliable service as a result of these changes."

Importantly, moving to five-day service will result in the loss of approximately 70,000 jobs. Of these, the National Rural Letter Carriers Association projects that a minimum of 20,000 would affect rural communities. With the national unemployment rate at 7.8 percent, moving to five-day delivery will hurt middle class families.

The change to five-day service is not simply a move to deliver mail on the next day; it will require an overhaul of mail collection and processing times that may affect estimated savings and hurt USPS in the long-term. The Postal Service has made several other unilateral decisions, such as terminating overnight mail delivery in the Midwest and Mountain West and accelerating consolidations that run the risk of making the Service irrelevant in large portions of the country. With members of Congress making progress on a comprehensive bill, further changes would set the precedent for a piecemeal approach and potentially further delay much needed legislation. We urge you to reconsider your decision and not take this action unless authorized by Congress.

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Step 3: Visit the dealership, the manager will assign you to a sales consultant, and confirm your selection. **Provide proof of identification/employment** and receive the **CPP pricing** on your desired vehicle and your trade-in.

Contact your representatives: Karen Macken-Goodman or Rick Buehne your "Corporate Coordinators" to assist you with anything you need and serve as a point of contact. Should you have any questions or if assistance is required, call or email:

Karen Macken-Goodman:

Office: (314) 983-4509

Cell: (314) 630-2900

Email: karenmacken@fusz.com

or

Karen.mackengoodman@gmail.com

Rick Buehne:

Office: (314) 983-4439

Cell: (314) 620-3526

Email: rbuehne@fusz.com

ATTENTION

**Nominations for the local's General Election will be held at
the June 1, 2013, General Membership Meeting at 9:30 a.m.
Location: 1717 So. Broadway**



2013 Scholarship Guidelines American Postal Workers Accident Benefit Association

1. The scholarship announcement, application and guidelines will be mailed each year to all local and state presidents and ABA Board of Directors, no later than March of each year. The announcement and application will also be printed in the *ABA Quarterly News Digest* as well as posted on the official ABA website. The deadline for returning the scholarship application will be set forth by the ABA.
2. All entrants must submit a completed application which will be verified by their local or state president or by the ABA home office. Properly completed applications will be entered into a drawing for a \$1,000 scholarship. Entrant must be a graduating high school senior who is the son, daughter or legal ward of a member of the ABA.
3. The scholarship award is limited to a one time amount of \$1,000. One scholarship will be awarded per calendar year.
4. The scholarship drawing will be held at the ABA home office no later than June of each year. This drawing will be strict "luck of the draw, meaning the entrant pulled will be the winner. No preferential treatment will be given to any entrant. All applicants will be assigned a random number for drawing. The winner will be drawn from amongst all applicants and notified by certified mail.
5. The scholarship will be paid directly to the school that the winner designated on their application. The winner will also be required to submit an acceptance letter and photograph accompanied by a biography which will appear in an issue of the *ABA Quarterly News Digest*.
6. The national director will coordinate the scholarship program with the authority to settle any or all eligibility requirements or disputes that may arise.

**APW-ABA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
HONORING
THOMAS HARTOS & MICHAEL TOSCHES**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE
MAY 15, 2013**

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED

NAME _____ **ADDRESS:** _____.

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____ **PHONE#:()** _____.

I will graduate from _____ **High School, which is located**
in _____, **in** _____.
(City - State) (Month - Year)

I will be enrolled for the _____ **term of** _____ **at** _____.
(Year) (School)
in _____ **. My father, mother or legal guardian is a member**
(City - State)

in good standing in the ABA and the _____ **Local APWU.**
(Local name)

ABA Members email address: _____ @ _____.

(Student - printed name & signature)

(Parent/Guardian - printed name & signature)

(This section to be completed by Local or State President or ABA Nat'l Director)

This will certify that _____, _____.
(APW-ABA members name) (SSN or EID# of member)

is a member in good standing of the Accident Benefit Association.

Date: _____ **Signature:** _____
(ABA Local or State President or ABA Nat'l Director)

All Applications Must Be Sent To: ABA Scholarship Program, PO Box 120, Rochester, NH 03866-0120

THE BELOW IS FOR ABA USE ONLY

Local Name _____ **Local #** _____ **Date Recv'd** _____ **100% Local** ___ Yes ___ No

This application has been reviewed and certified, _____ **- ABA Nat'l Director**



Who Discusses Step Ones? (Parody of "Who's On First")

By Fred Wolfmeyer, President



Spring is in the air. Flowers are blooming, the trees are budding and the temperatures are on the rise. Once again, the baseball season has rolled around. In recognition of this, I would like to take a humorous look at how grievances are handled by postal management. The grievance procedure is and should be serious business, however, we all need to laugh every now and then.

M = Management

U = Union Representative

Let's Play Ball!

M. We've established a new grievance team to work out and process all grievances quickly and fairly.
 U. Are you going to tell us the names of the supervisors on this team?
 M. Yes we are.
 U. Well, who discusses Step 1s?
 M. That's right!
 U. Who?
 M. Correct
 U. Who discusses Step 1s?
 M. Absolutely.
 U. I don't understand.
 M. No, he provides the information you request.
 U. Who?
 M. No, who discusses Step 1s.
 U. Who does?
 M. Yes he does.
 U. What?
 M. What? Oh, she works in labor relations.
 U. What?
 M. Yes, that's correct.
 U. I'm confused.
 M. She discusses Step 1As.
 U. Who does?
 M. & U. Who discusses Step 1s!
 M. That's right!
 U. What is the name of the person requesting discipline?
 M. No. She works in Labor Relations.

U. Just tell me the name of the person who requests discipline.
 M. Not Me.
 U. Not me requests discipline?
 M. That's right! If you want to know who requested the discipline or where it came from just ask your supervisor and they'll tell you, Not Me.
 U. Give us the name of the person who gives the reasons for the discipline.
 M. I Don't Know.
 U. You don't know?
 M. No. I Don't Know!
 U. So if I want to know the reasons for discipline, I would see who?
 M. & U. No, he discusses Step 1s.
 U. I'm confused.
 M. No, she discusses Step 1As.
 U. So just tell me the name of the Step 2 designee!
 M. Later.
 U. Why not now?
 M. No. Not Now is the person you see to ask for steward time. Later does Step 2s!

U. I don't understand!
 M. &U. He provides requested information. Right!
 U. Why can't management just do the right thing and treat employees fairly and abide by the contract?
 M. Because.
 U. Because?
 M. Right! He's our ninth player.
 U. Because is?
 M. Yes. We use him when we don't know what to do or say. If you ask us a question we can't answer, it will be answered by Because!
 So when grievances are discussed with management, it's no wonder that one might hear: I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'M CONFUSED and I DON'T KNOW **WHO** issued this, it was NOT ME. You want steward a time? Well NOT NOW. You want to discuss a grievance? See me LATER, BECAUSE I'M TOO BUSY!
 U. I'm too busy?
 M. Yeah! He's the manager!



Study Looks at Shift Worker Problems

Employees who usually work evening and night shifts are the most likely to suffer from chronic fatigue and have a higher rate of illness and death, according to a report released by the Conference Board.

The employer group said these shift workers can benefit from 24-hour resource and referral services and employee assistance programs.

The report said night shift workers often feel isolated from staff members who work during regular business hours and can be deprived of the same professional opportunities available to others.

It said that shift workers are essential to companies that require a 24-hour operation. It said that to have good morale among these employees and effective workers, companies must work harder to improve employer-employee relations by making sure treatment throughout the company is equal and that no employee is overlooked.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

March

Abernathy, Nancy
 Armbruster, Mark
 Arnoneit, Kenneth
 Babula, Irene
 Baeumner, Denna
 Baldwin, Charles
 Banks, Willie Jr.
 Bean, Sandra
 Blake, Yolanda
 Blythe, Janine
 Bolton, Nina
 Brown, Beverly
 Brown, Ramona
 Byrne, Patrick
 Chatman, Michael
 Coleman, Katrinka
 Culton, Denise
 Dancy, Lois
 Dancy, Patricia
 Darden, Algin
 Darris, Diana
 Daus, Mary
 Dieckhaus, Steven
 Dockett, Barbara
 Eastman, Wendy
 Estes, Christine
 Farrell, John
 Fitzpatrick, Gary
 Furlow, Debra
 Gagne, Janice
 Georges, Tom
 Gillon, Tony
 Goree, Dawn
 Hall, John Jr.
 Harris, Anita
 Harrison, Donna
 Haynes, Glenda
 Hemphill, Sharon
 Highsmith-Lee, Sandra
 Ingram, Dontilisha

Jackson, Danny
 Jackson, David
 Jenkins, Joann
 Johnson, Lamont
 Johnson, Lynn
 Johnson, Rick
 Jones, Kevin
 Kinnard, Ricky
 Kreke, Ronald
 Lanier, Allen
 Larkins, Howard
 Lawary, Willie III
 Lewis, Bruce
 Lickenbrock, Eugene Jr.
 Link, Dale
 Liska, Margaret
 Lucas, Ronald
 Madkins, Franklin Jr.
 Malawey, Stanley
 Malone, Kathleen
 Manzella, Rodney
 McDarby, Michael
 McGhee, George
 Merriweather, Anthony
 Moore, Sylvestine
 Myers, Barbara
 Nebbitt, Cynthia
 Nicholson, Scott
 O'Reilly, Paul
 Panicker, Elizabeth
 Paul, Stephen
 Pearson, Alfred Jr.
 Pearson, Barry Sr.
 Peludat, David
 Pou, Derrick
 Pyles, Robert Jr.
 Ransome, Evelyn
 Rapp, Richard
 Rawson, Larry
 Riley, Willie
 Roberts, Brian

Robinson, Kathryn
 Sanders, Jay
 Shackelford, Edward
 Simpson, Diane
 Smith, Mia
 Smotherson, Darlene
 Spotts, Janet
 Spratley, Richard
 Staats, Earl
 Steed, Anita
 Stephens, Michael
 Stone, Mable
 Straughter, Peggy
 Strickland, James
 Tankersley, Terry
 Viner, Ronald
 Watson, Rhonda
 Webb, Cheryl
 Weber, Joseph
 Williams, Annie
 Williams, Sherry
 Zielinski, Gerald Jr.

April

Algee, Beverly
 Allen, Brenda
 Allen, Jittaun
 Alvarado, Chris
 Arnold, Theresa
 Austin-Bastain, Celestine
 Barr, Kevin
 Bolden, Diana
 Bolden, Will
 Bredenkamp, Paul
 Bickley, Calvin
 Bunch, James
 Burns, Patricia
 Burns, Dorothea
 Buss, Michael
 Candela, Anthony
 Carmon, Sandra

Carroll, Debbi
 Collins, Marsha
 Cozine, Sandra
 Di'Lorenzo, Gerald
 Daily, Jeni
 Davis, Cedric
 DeRousse, Laura
 Doering, Debra
 Everett, Henry
 Fox, Michael
 Frazer, Virginia
 Fulton, Anthony
 Geppert, Howard
 Gordon, Orville
 Graden, Angela
 Hairston, John
 Hall, John
 Hardaway, Michael
 Harmon, Desiree
 Harrison, Shirley
 Heiman, Matthew
 Henderson, Deborah
 Hill, Paul
 Holtmann, James
 Hopkins, Lori
 Howing, James
 Hubbard, Arthur
 Jackson, Robert Jr.
 Johnson, Selma
 Jones, Cedric
 Kaufman, David
 Knaup, Alan
 Kyle, Robert III
 Laske, Steven
 Little, Keynon
 Lopez, Daniel
 Lumetta, Stephen
 Manning, Denise
 Marr, Charlene
 McDaniels, James
 McFowland, Arthur

Messick, David
 Middleton, Allen Jr
 Mingo, Carla
 Moore, Joseph III
 Morris, Deborah
 Moss, John
 Nanna, Thomas
 Nicks, Mark
 O'Leary, Candice
 Oakley, Michele
 Perrigo, Barbara
 Pritchett, Henry III
 Quinn, Alfred
 Quinn, Tamara
 Rawie, Robert
 Reynolds, Daniel
 Robinson, Calvin
 Roby, Arnelia
 Rodell, Kimberly
 Ross, Gerald
 Ross, Susan
 Rubino, David
 Sanders, Charles
 Simmons, Elbert
 Simmons, Mary
 Slater, Renee
 Smith-Scales, Wendy
 Sullivan, George
 Sydow, Joseph
 Taylor, Eusebio
 Thirdkill, Cornell
 Thomas, James
 Thomas, Richard
 Valiant, Tamika
 Veal, Joseph
 Vlasak, Chester
 Walker, Steven
 Williams, Michael
 Yanick, Patricia
 Young, Roy



AGOD

Bell, Marianne
 Berry, Kishwana
 Brown, Neshauana
 Coffey, Ronnetta

Cox, Perry
 Craig, Aaron
 Downs, Gail
 Fifer, Reginald
 First, Annetta

Floyd, Symantha
 Gaebler, Matthew
 Ganett, Amecia
 Griffith, Kenneth
 Haynes, Camille
 Henson, Patrick
 Holmes, Ginette
 Ibtissam, Sholy
 Jennings, Latoya
 Keiser, Mark

Kimbrough, Steven
 King, Kia
 Lewis, Otis
 Manuel, Zahmill
 Martin, Odysse
 Mckinney, Turella
 McPherson, Erica
 Powell, Kelley
 Robinson, Eugene
 Scott, Dwayne Sr.

Sherrard, Brenda
 Singleton, Stephanie
 Smart, Ezell
 Smith, Alpha
 Turner, Shontee
 Watkins, Barbara
 White, Nikita
 Wieringa, Dennis
 Williams, Tara

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Sheila Patton-Harris ... Editor
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Steward Booths, Downtown
Clerk ... 314-436-5331
Maintenance ... 314-436-4668
MVS ... 314-436-5027

GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR

April 10 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
April 13 (Saturday)	General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)
April 15 (Monday)	Steward's Training (9 a.m. & 7 p.m.)
May 1 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
May 5 (Sunday)	General Membership Meeting (3 p.m.)
May 13 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 7 p.m.)
May 27 (Monday)	Memorial Day Holiday
May 29 (Wednesday)	Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)
June 1 (Saturday)	General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)
June 3 (Monday)	Stewards' Training (9 a.m. & 7 p.m.)

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.