

St. Louis Gateway District Area Local American Postal Workers Union AFL-CIO

Volume 99 Issue 3 May/June 2021

Contract Negotiations Begin Tuesday, June 22, 2021!

WAGE INCREASES

JOB SECURITY

PTF CONVERSIONS

IMPROVED AND EXPANDED SERVICES

GOOD BENEFITS

UNION STRONG

ALL DAY

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFTERS

CONVERSIONS TO CAREER

WORKPLACE SAFETY

LEAVE AND HOLIDAY PROVISIONS

TO PROTECT OUR JOBS





President's Report

By Becky Livingston

Can't We All Just Get Along?

"I think it's time to come together. You and I can make a change. "Maybe we can make a difference, make the world a better place. "Look around and love somebody. We've been hateful long enough."

hese are just a few of the words to one of my favorite song, "UNDIVIDED" by Tim McGraw and Tyler Hubbard. If you get a chance, please take some time to listen to this song. This song can apply to everything the country is facing, but really applies to what is happening in the workplace every day.

Right now, the United States Postal Service is facing challenges like we have never seen. Postmaster General DeJoy is restructuring and reducing management positions, which is prompting retirements of experienced supervisors. This is forcing management to rely on inexperienced Form 50 supervisors and 204-Bs.

This leads me into why I felt as though I needed to say how important it is for everyone to make sure we treat each other with dignity and respect on the workroom floor; flat out just come together to make work a better place. You are the only ones who can help make that change.

It doesn't matter if you are taking direction from a supervisor or talking with a co-worker. The zero tolerance policy was put in place for a reason. It must be adhered to by all postal employees, not just some. Last time I checked, a supervisor or a 204-B is considered a postal employee. The union has been addressing one incident at a time, but just like the grievance system, it can take time to get issues resolved. That's why it is important for us to all get along in order to have a hostile free work environment.

Over the last few months, we have seen a rise in emergency placements due to physical and verbal assaults between co-workers. It is postal policy that both parties be placed in an off-duty LWOP status until the alleged incident can be investigated. Management then solicits statements from co-workers who were witnesses to the alleged incident. If you'll notice I continue to say alleged because from my experience there are always two sides to every story and then the complete truth falls somewhere in the middle.

Management relies on witness statements to determine if or when the parties are even brought back to work. Every time I hear someone say they were the victim, I have only one response: If you engaged in the conversation that escalated into something egregious enough to being put off the clock, you were no longer considered the victim. It is never easy to walk away or to let someone physically or verbally assault you, but there are a lot more success stories for employees who attempted to walk away and didn't engage being brought back to work and receiving back-pay than the employee who was seen as the aggressor. Co-workers are stepping up to write statements and working with management in order to help co-workers lose their jobs. These statements most often not only address the alleged incident, it will cover things that have happened over the last 10 years. The union represents both parties as fairly and equitably as we can based on the facts as they are presented about the current incident. Please keep this in mind as you write statements against co-workers. Bottom line; it is management's responsibility to make sure you are working in a hostile free and safe work environment. If an employee is displaying unacceptable behavior, there are tools in place for management to use. It is not the responsibility of co-workers to help management issue discipline. All you can do is treat others the way you want to be treated. IT IS GOING TO TAKE ALL OF US TO COME TOGETHER TO MAKE A CHANGE!

On behalf of the officers and stewards I would like to say we thank you for your continued support and we appreciate your membership in the APWU. I have always encouraged members to request a steward if you see a contractual violation or have an issue. The officers and stewards are also available at the Union Hall if you have questions and concerns. All I am asking is that you treat your officers and stewards with the same dignity and respect that you expect. Phone calls that begin with yelling, the use of foul language and disrespect never go well. We can only address issues if they are presented in a respectful way. Conversations and phone calls will be ended with "thanks for calling and have a good day" every time the conversation starts to take a turn for the worst. I will let members talk disrespectfully for only a few minutes before the conversation is ended. Under my direction I have told stewards that I do not expect them to take verbal abuse from our members. They are there to help you in any way they can, but dignity and respect goes a long way in getting your issues resolved. We cannot investigate or resolve complaints if **WE ALL CAN'T JUST GET ALONG!**

I hope everyone has a fun and safe summer. While the number of daily reported positive COVID-19 cases continue to decline, we must continue to follow Postal Service guidelines and properly social distance and wear masks within postal facilities. As the union receives updated information we will keep you posted.

Executive Vice President

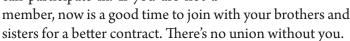
By Gene Hollenbeck

n April 24 we welcomed 21 new career employees. That makes 60 conversions since March. We are slated to hire more new PSEs with the latest group going through orientation starting April 26. We welcome them to the family.

We had 30 unassigned full-time regulars prior to the last bid posting closing. The senior bidder notice for that posting was posted on June 2. It shows that there were 13 no bidder positions. Out of the 30 UARs, only six received bids. That leaves us with 24 UARs. These employees can be forced into one of the no bidder positions. Management should send out a preference sheet to all UARs instructing them to select from the list of 13 residual bids. They will be assigned by seniority. If there are not enough UARs who select, then management will assign these positions by inverse seniority. This has to be done before they put these jobs on E-reassign or convert any more PSEs to career.

We are about to go into contract negotiations at the

national level. All members should go to *APWU.ORG* to get the latest information on the contract. There are also zoom calls that members can participate in. If you are not a



Union Strong, All Day Long

In order to have a better tomorrow, we must do our jobs to the best of our ability today. Come to work, be on time, work together and provide the best service that we can. That doesn't mean work yourself to death to get the mail out. A fair day's work for a fair day's pay. It doesn't matter if you work downtown at the Plant or at the Priority Annex, or a station/branch, or associate office. We all have to make the best of our job.

We are all in this together. **FIGHTING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW.**



t's that time again. Contract negotiations will start on June 22. Our goals for the new contract are to protect and enhance.

Protect: Building on the gains of the Great Postal Strike of 51 years ago, our contract contains hard won rights that need to be protected from any attempt by management to eliminate or reduce them. The no lay-off clause, 50 mile limit on excessing, just cause protections against discipline are just some of the gains that we have obtained.

Enhance: Postal workers have put forth great efforts in light of the pandemic and the election and deserve a good new contract. Some of the enhancements that we seek are good annual pay increases, stronger safety rights, bridging the differences in the two-tier career pay scale, quicker and clearer path to career status for PSEs, and expanded postal services for the people of this country.

President Dimondstein along with Industrial Relation Director Zimmerman makes up the spokespeople for the negotiations team. Other core members are Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy, Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Powell, Clerk Director Lamont Brooks, Maintenance

Director Idowu Balogun, MVS Director Michael Foster, and Support Services Director Steve Brooks.

To build our power we must field the strongest team where every member stands strong in the fight for a new union contract that respects and rewards our dedication and hard work.

As a shop steward, I see too many employees put off the clock and removed because of attendance. If you are not reporting, please call in and let management know. AWOLs appear on your permanent record. That may not mean anything to you now, but in the future if you ever want to transfer, or apply for a non-bargaining position, those AWOLs may come back to haunt you. You can file a grievance for your AWOLs and get the time changed to LWOP or SL. You have 14 days to file a grievance.

Your stewards and officers do the best they can. We all try to represent the membership to the best of our abilities. We need your cooperation. Disrespecting the steward is not the way to go. We did not issue you the discipline; we are trying to get the discipline thrown out. So don't get mad at the steward for asking questions. They need to know how they are going to defend your actions.



JUNETERTH

uneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19 that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and the enslaved were now free. Note that this was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863; The Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on the Texans due to the minimal number of Union troops to enforce the new executive order. However, with the surrender of General Lee in April 1865, and the arrival of General Granger's regiment, the forces were finally strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance.

General Granger's first order of business was to read Executive Order Number 3 to the people of Texas which stated:

"The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a proclamation from the executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired laborer."

The reactions to this profound news ranged from pure shock to immediate jubilation. Many newly freed slaves left their former plantations and headed north. For many this represented true freedom. Juneteenth was a celebration of that day in June of 1865 and its festivities would serve as motivation as well as a release.

Economic and cultural forces led to a decline in Juneteenth activities beginning in the early 1900s. Classroom and textbook education taught very little about the lives of the former slaves. The Depression forced many people off the farms and into the cities to find work. This further diminished Juneteenth celebration.

The civil rights movement of the 50s and 60s sparked renewed interest in Juneteenth activities. The Poor Peoples March called for all people to come together. Many people returned to their communities and initiated Juneteenth celebrations.

In 1980, Juneteenth became an official state holiday in Texas. This bill marked Juneteenth as the first emancipation celebration granted official state recognition.

Today, Juneteenth is enjoying a phenomenal growth rate throughout the country. They share in the mission to promote and cultivate knowledge and of General Granger's mission. Juneteenth today celebrates African American freedom and achievement, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures. As it takes on a more national and even global perspective, the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten.







American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Rebecca R. Livingston, President Phone: (314) 231-7665

1705 South Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63104 Fax: (314) 231-5709

Dear APWU Members,

The Union is working every day to address the hostile work environment and zero tolerance policy violations that you are facing. The behavior being displayed by management needs to be addressed with the Postmaster and Plant Manager. This is a very serious problem and the workplace environment needs to improve. You all deserve to be treated with dignity and respect starting with being able to come to work every day knowing you will be walking into a hostile free workplace. Please help the Union help you.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORMS AND RETURN TO EITHER THE APWU STEWARD BOOTH, OR YOU MAY MAIL TO THE UNION OFFICE AT:

ST. LOUIS GATEWAY DISTRICT AREA LOCAL #8 1705 S. BROADWAY ST. LOUIS, MO 63104

YOU CAN ALSO FAX THEM TO THE HALL AT: 314-231-5709

Thank you for participating in these surveys.

In Union Solidarity,

Rebecca Livingston

President St. Louis Gateway

District Area Local #8





ABUSIVE SUPERVISOR PROFILE

Supervisor's Name	
Duty Station	Section
RFCOGNITION	DATA (Check All That Apply)
Supervisor Seems to Target S	
	pecific Group(s) (Race, Color, Creed, Religion,
Handicapped, etc.) Supervisor Seems Abusive to	all Employees
Supervisor's Mood Depends of	
•	nange With Mail Volume
Mood Imported From Home of	
Supervisor Seem to Have Mul	tiple Personalities
NATURE OF ABUSIVE 1) Overly Demeaning 3) Sarcastic Remarks 5) Threats of Discipline 7) Other Specific Threats 9) Physical Threats 11) Physical Contact	4) Yelling6) Threats to Take off Clock8) Profanity10) Threatening/Obscene Gestures
SUPERVISOR WILL	DO ANYTHING FOR "NUMBERS"
Will Become Abusive	
Will Ignore Safety Rules and Proto	ocols
Will Collinic Fradu (Restaining Ing	711, C(C.)
Other Specifics	
Completed By	Date



Chases	tha	response	that	hact	cuite	VOLIE	Work	location
CHOOSE	uie	response	unat	nesi	Suits	your	WUIK	iocation.

1. I w	ould desc	ribe the	work	morale	in	mv	area	as:
--------	-----------	----------	------	--------	----	----	------	-----

1	2	3	4	5
Hostile	Tense	Difficult	Fair	Cooperative

2. Management communicates openly in our work area.

1	2	3	4	. 5
Hostile	Tense	Difficult	Fair	Cooperative

3. In our work area we resolve service-related issues in a cooperative way.

1	2	3	4	5
Hostile	Tense	Difficult	Fair	Cooperative

4. The labor-management relationship in our work area is:

1	2	3	4	5
Hostile	Tense	Difficult	Fair	Cooperative

5. How would you describe the way Managers and Supervisors treat you and your cor-workers in your work area?

1	2	3	4	5
Hostile	Tense	Difficult	Fair	Cooperative

6. Do you look forward to coming to work on a daily basis?

1	2
Yes	No

7. The two or three things that I think could be done to improve the cooperation, climate and performance in our work area are:

Press On



8.	Are there any specific Supervisors or Managers that you belie	eve go out of thei	r
wa	ay to be hostile or disrespectful?		

1 2 Who?
Yes No

9. For those of you that run the DBCS Machines please note for our records how often manageemnt requires you to work alone on the DBCS.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Daily Once a week 2 times a week 3 times a week All the time Never

10. Please note for our records how long you do run a machine alone.

11. For those of you who work in other sections, LCTS, Handcases, SPBS, Flats etc; How often does management pull you from your section to work in other areas?

1 2 3 4 5 6

Daily Once a week 2 times a week 3 times a week All the time Never

12. When management moves you to another work area do they do so by juniority?

1 2 3
Yes No Sometimes

Associate Office Director's Report

By Melani Brown 3971's The Golden Ticket

here seems to be a lot of misunderstanding on how a 3971 is to be filled out and used. You should always fill out the 3971 in duplicate. You should always hand the 3971 to a supervisor to be signed. There is a box on the lower right side that the supervisor signs and dates when the 3971 was received, this only shows that the 3971 was received, it doesn't mean that it is being approved, only that it is being accepted. This is important as every office has a different time frame that these forms have to be given back by for approval or denial purposes.

Next if you have scheduled appoint-



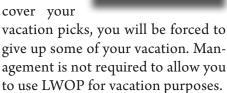
Congratulations to our own Melani Brown. She came in second place for the national slogan contest. You go, girl!



ments, you can turn the 3971 for these in as soon as you become aware of the appointment, this is the one time that the 30-day rule does not apply. Also, if you know you have some type of appointment for your scheduled day off give this to management in writing so that they are aware that you are unavailable for overtime that particular week.

Now let's discuss incidental leave. Leave of this sort can be requested up to 30 days in advance and is usually given on a first come first serve basis. You must have enough leave to cover all your annual leave picks to even be eligible for any other incidental leave. If you find yourself in a position

where you do not have leave to cover your



Last, but not least, please turn your 3971 in duplicate for your yearly vacation picks and hang on to your signed copy because management is known for "misplacing" annual leave slips and without your "golden ticket" you might not be going on that dream vacation you have been waiting on for your whole life.



Andre Redden retired from the Postal Service. His friends and coworkers put together a little retirement party. Enjoy your retirement.



Howard Richie has worked for the Postal Service for 50 years. Congratulations, Howard!



Jink Guyton retired from the Postal Service. Have fun!



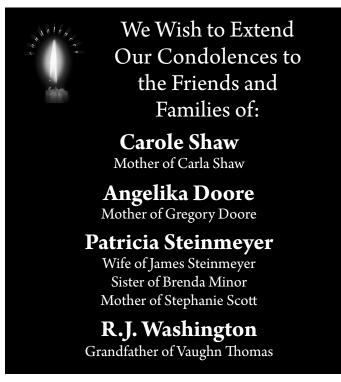
Bargaining Unit Work and You

By April J. Johnson, Stations and Branches Steward

nion brothers and sisters, as we enter the second half of 2021 I would like to discuss those outside the clerk craft performing clerk duties and what we as the union can do to combat the loss of bids and clerk work hours. It has become a growing theme in stations and branches that due to management's decision to revert bids upon vacancy, management will then attempt to have carriers and/or management officials perform clerk work (i.e. sorting parcels, sorting letters, flats, UBBM, etc). There are limited instances that allow for management to perform clerk work, Article 1.6(a) prohibits supervisors from performing bargaining unit work at post offices with 100 or more bargaining unit employees, except:

- 1. In an emergency
- 2. For the purpose of training or instruction of employees
- 3. To assure the proper operation of equipment
- 4. To protect the safety of employees; or
- 5. To protect property of the USPS.

As we all know, management hardly ever trains anyone (can't train someone when you don't know the answer) on the operation of equipment ... well I will leave that for another article; and for the safety of employees, which is not always at the top of management's list of priorities; and an emergency is of a nonrecurring nature, and limited staffing is always an issue. All of the aforementioned reasons rarely happen within stations, it's



mostly a staffing issue. Many of you have also been lead to believe that CCAs (city carrier assistants) are allowed to sort parcels or perform other clerk duties when distribution will be "late." This is false! Management desiring for the carriers to get to the street at a certain time, is no valid reason to reassign clerk work to the carrier craft. Article 7.2 does allow for the combination of duties (i.e. crossing crafts) for particular reasons which management never meets because they don't know or care about the criteria. It is also being told to clerks that carriers can perform clerk duties (specifically UBBM) when the carrier has an on the job injury, that is also false. UBBM is a clerk function, all day every day, and should not be done by a carrier at any time for any reason. We as union members have to file grievances on these issues to protect our jobs. Filing bargaining unit work grievances is a crucial tool that the union utilizes to justify the bids within a station when management attempts to revert a vacant bid. If you have observed management or carriers performing our work, please request a steward from management immediately or please contact me at the hall at (314) 231-7665. Remember, we are in this together!

Just say no! to the Postal, Pulse

Financial Health Warning:
Management has a history of using
the survey results to justify lower
wages for postal workers.

All APWU members are asked to submit their unopened Postal Pulse Surveys (2) to enter a drawing for cash prizes.





GATEWAY

Blanchard, Jazmyne Bozeman, Sonya

Branch, Tiffanie Brooks, Victoria Brown, DaMar Brown, Roger

Brown-Sanders, Meca Brown-Williamson, Criscia

Bujnak, Lisa Cameron, Anthony Curry, James

Demond, Ivy Dickson, Briana Duncan, Davion Eiland, Porshea Felder, Ashley Felton, Alexis Fisher, Armandos



Franklin, Tiffany Frisch, Bryant Galmore, Javon Gray, Shanee Gray, Terry Green, Theophilus Griffin, Kenyotta Hall, Khalia Henderson, Jhirmaya Herron, Zachary Hubbard, Vickie Hughes, Kardea Idleburg, Phoebe Johnson, Angelene Jones, Gregory

Keaton, Randy

Knoch, Alexander Lawson, Shanell Ledbetter, Dominic Lee, Yakiya Lenore, Charda Lott, Dominique Loving, Michaela Lumpkins, Najah Marable, Juan Mayes, Brenda McInnis, William McNatt, Collin McNeal, Aaronae Mickles, Makayla Miller, Frederick Murray, Artis

Nichols, Cortez Parks, Marcel Price, Danielle Primus, Mercedes Remer, Crystal

Robinson-Combs, Sherreace

Rockett, Laura Smith, Eric Stevenson, Avion Towns, Richard Trail, Jeff Turner, Joseph Wachowski, Joseph Wade, Adrienne Wallace, Ronald Washington, Staci Watts, Nyge White, Samiyyah Williams, Cayla Williams, Christiana

Williams, Delione

Workers Win: Missouri Supreme Court Rules Paycheck Deception Unconstitutional

Missouri AFK-CIO President Jake Hummel

he Missouri Supreme Court ruled House Bill 1413 unconstitutional in its entirety. The court ruling found, in part, "The exemption of public safety labor organizations in section 105.503.2(1)1 creates a scheme that effectively disfavors non-public safety labor organizations and violates public employees' right to bargain collectively through representative of their own choosing."

"The Missouri Supreme Court made the right and legal decision today by striking down Paycheck Deception," stated Missouri AFL-CIO President Jake Hummel. "The court found that the law violated the Missouri Constitution, which guarantees equal protection. It is sad that workers had to take their fight all the way to the Supreme Court due to politicians trying to take away their rights and interfere in their lives."

Missouri's anti-labor Republicans set out to destroy public-sector unions. HB 1413 was another tactic to take power away from workers and allow the government to dictate workers' decisions. The ruling for the Missouri Supreme Court set in stone what we all knew — that the law was unconstitutional. Public sector workers already have to jump through unnecessary hoops to belong to a union that they chose, but with this ruling, they are able to continue to get the protections they deserve. Today, the workers of Missouri scored a big win, but the AFL-CIO and our affiliates will continue to fight for all workers of Missouri to ensure that they are protected on the job.

In Solidarity

St. Louis Gateway APWU 1705 S. Broadway St. Louis, MO 63104 Address Service Requested PRST STD US Postage PAID St. Louis, MO Permit No. 860

Press On

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

Shelia Patton-Harris ... Editor

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GATEWAY LOCAL CALENDAR

June 9 (Wednesday) Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)

June 12 (Saturday) General Membership Meeting (9:30 a.m.)

June 14 (Monday) Steward Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)

July 4 (Sunday) Independence Day Holiday

July 14 (Wednesday) Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)

No July General Membership Meeting

July 19 (Monday) Steward Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)

August 11 (Wednesday) Executive Board Meeting (2 p.m.)

No August General Membership Meeting

August 16 (Monday) Steward Training (9 a.m. & 6 p.m.)

There will be no General Membership Meetings in the months of **July** and **August**. The Union Hall will be closed on holidays.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom meetings will replace in person meetings and training until further notice. A close caption interpreter is available for all General Membership meetings.

More information is available on the website stlouisapwu.org



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.