



Q3 2023

Malcolm T. Smith News

MTS Local 152 Newsletter



APWU
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO





President's Report

by **Trina Wynn**

Understanding our Collective Bargaining Power

Union membership gives strength in numbers. All workers benefit from unions. Why? This is because unions set pay standards and workplace protections. As a union member, you benefit most from our collective bargaining power as union workers can negotiate with employers on your behalf. This fundamental right gives you as a union member more power than if you tried to negotiate as an individual (non-union member).

Did you know?

Union employees make an average of 30% more than non-union workers. 92% of union workers have job-related health coverage versus 68% of non-union workers. Union workers are more likely to have guaranteed pensions than non-union employees.

Unions help protect employees from unjust dismissal through collective bargaining agreements (CBA). As a result of this, employees cannot be fired without a “just cause.” This is unlike many non-union workers who are considered “at will” employees and can be fired anytime for almost any reason. Even though our APWU does not have the power to strike, we do have the power to stand together and rally. We can unite, show management our solidarity, and let our voices be heard.

Working America unites working people who don't have a union on the job. Anyone can join in solidarity with people across the country to fight for our common interests – good jobs, affordable health care, education, retirement security, corporate accountability, and real democracy. Unions allow more low-wage workers to escape poverty and create a stronger middle class, which is one of the reasons unions are constantly being attacked.

Labor Day

Labor Day is considered the unofficial end of summer. Since 1894 it's also when we pause to celebrate America's unions and union workers. Before workers organized and formed unions, there were no regulations surrounding employment. This allowed employers to take advantage of employees, permitting them to abuse their power. Employees were often required to work long hours, there was a lack of protection from discrimination, and there was often violence in the workplace. Once people began organizing and bargaining collectively to advocate for better working conditions, we celebrated the first Labor Day in New York City on

Tuesday, September 5, 1882. Following the deaths of 13 workers during the Pullman Strike in June of 1894, President Grover Cleveland made reconciliation with the labor movement a top priority of his administration. That priority resulted in Labor Day being named a federal holiday in 1894. Before Covid, our local annually participated in the Labor Day Parade in Wilmington. We proudly marched with our sisters and brothers of other unions to show solidarity. I must say the experience is like no other! This Labor Day, take the time to reflect and be proud of being part of your union. Honor those who fought for us all to have better wages, paid holidays, overtime, paid vacations, better working conditions, and so much more. Please don't allow management to deceive you into thinking we have all these benefits because they care about you and want you to have these benefits.

What Is the Union Busting?

Management will try to divide and conquer by pinning employees against each other and against the union to get their way. Do not fall for this tactic. The union has a right to enforce the contract. If your supervisor or manager tells you that the union is filing grievances against you, that is false! When a grievance is filed, it is always against management for violating the contract, our handbooks, and manuals.

Another union-busting tactic is for management to attempt to put fear in you for seeking advice from your union. You have a right to request to see your shop steward without intimidation and/or retaliation. You have a right to file a grievance without the fear of intimidation or retaliation from your supervisor. We have come too far as a union organization fighting for our rights to allow management to set us back or attempt to take our rights away. Knowledge is power! Knowing your rights will compel you and empower you to stand in solidarity with your union. Management is aware of this, which is why they attempt to bust the union.

APWU MTS News

A word from the Vice President

by **Jacqueline Bishop**

How to Bid

There are three ways a clerk can Bid.

1. By telephone- make sure you have your 4-digit PIN. If you need to order another PIN, please contact Shared Services.
2. Computer- log in to Light Blue

3. Manual Bid cards/form- you can get this card from your Union Rep. Or In-Plant Support (Dot Thompson& Terrance)

Where are the Bids and awards posted?

All bids are posted on the bid board and light blue website for ten calendar days during the 1st week of each month. Remember, there is no moving into jobs during the month of December.

What does Pending qualification mean on bids?

You must qualify before you are put into that bid/job. If you have pending sales and service training, management has ten days (about one and a half weeks) to have an employee in the training class and 28 calendar days to start your bid job. If you fail the sales training, the employee must wait 180 calendar days from the test date to bid on another sales and service job.

Limited / Light Duty

Employees on LIMITED (injury on the job) and/or Light (injured off the job) duty must submit appropriate medical documentation before the close of the posting for P&DC. The documentation must be placed in the Medical Certification box on the North wall by the job bid board. For All STATIONS, YOUR medical documentation MUST BE PROVIDED TO THE MANAGER AT YOUR STATION. Medical documentation must state that the employee will be able to fully perform the position's duties within (6) six months from the bid date.

Employees are limited to (5) five senior unsuccessful bids during the contract.

What does it mean when a duty assignment has the phrase “other duty?”
The prospective bidder(employee) may be assigned to duties other than those listed on the posted bid.

If you are on a DETAIL or 204B assignment. YOU ARE INELIGIBLE TO BID.
REACH OUT TO YOUR SHOP STEWARD IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO BID.

APWU MTS News

Secretary-Treasurer's Words of Wisdom

by Karen Jester-Witkowski

Hello everyone,

I hope everyone is enjoying the warm weather.

Lite Blue

In July, the Postal Service informed our National APWU that they had corrected employees' problems with Lite Blue. The Postal Service stated that applications were logging on using anonymous virtual private network connections and changing direct deposit and net to bank allotments. They say this was accomplished because employees gave these apps access by giving them their log-on information. Therefore, the Postal Service is cautioning employees to refrain from giving out their EIN, password, or multi-factor authentication information. On their end, they have instituted new policies to safeguard employee account information. You can read more about this on APWU.org.

What do unions do for workers? Let me count the ways....

The Economic Policy Institute, an organization that tracks the differences between workers with a union and those without, unions helped during the pandemic by keeping people in jobs and being paid. They cite that during the pandemic that “union workers were ten percentage points more likely than nonunion workers to be paid by their employers for hours not worked.” Job losses over the pandemic were 40,000 jobs more for non-union workers than union workers. And they noted that union wages held steady during the pandemic. As you will remember, our National union was able to negotiate safety procedures and paid time off during the pandemic.

Another area they cite where unions positively affect workers is that they can reduce the public-sector pay gap. The Economic Policy Institute reports that in States where local government workers have collective bargaining rights, there are smaller pay gaps between union and private sector workers. But in States with lower union membership, there are larger pay gaps.

Finally, another area where unions play a positive part is for communities and democracy by helping to reduce disparities and strengthen democracy. For communities and democracy the Economic Policy Institute found that unions not only give workers a voice in their work place, unions also give workers a voice in their communities. This is evident through higher minimum wages, higher median annual incomes, higher than average unemployment insurance, lower uninsured (health insurance) population, are more likely to pass paid sick leave and paid family medical leave (FML) laws, and significantly fewer restrictive voting laws. “Unions also reduce racial disparities and raise women’s wages.” The Economic Policy Institute has a wealth of information on how union’s positively affect unionized workers. I only glossed over some of what they talked about. So if you ever wonder what the union does for you, check out that website. It is very informative and factual.

As we continue to grow in membership, let's bond together and unite to help strengthen our union, our communities, and our democracy. And let's support those workers who are fighting to organize and form a union. Workers in Starbucks and Amazon just to name a few.

APWU MTS News

Notes From the Legislative Director

by Rick Walker

Greetings, brothers, and sisters,

I hope everyone has had a safe, fun, and fulfilling summer season. As we work our way into the fall and the opening assaults of the holiday season, I want to remind everyone how fortunate we are. As union members and represented people, we hold a privileged position within our communities. We have security in times when most do not. We have protection and coverage for illness, injury, or even death. We can rest well knowing we and our families are far more secure than most, even in the most troubling times.

These benefits, and more, are a direct result of collective bargaining and the work of the APWU and all unions throughout history. The history of collective bargaining goes back to the Industrial Revolution and, in fact, even before then. The most important tool we possess is the ability to work together to bring about the changes we desire.

Legislatively, the USPS is not even an afterthought at the moment. This is sometimes good news, but right now, this allows the Post Master General to ride roughshod over the unions and our current and future rights. Much is going on with the PMG's ten-year plan, and it's a very dangerous situation for the future of the service. I cannot encourage you all enough to reach out to your representatives, even if to voice general concern for what is occurring. Letting our representatives know our concerns is the first step to having them as allies in our fight when the hard times come.

We need every member to get involved, even in a small way. If all you can do is send an email, it's a help. If you would like to get involved as a steward or other local official, there are always ways we need help. Remember, many hands make light work. If we all do a small part, we can change our work lives and the world.

Let's join together and do our parts.

APWU MTS News

Industrial Relations

by Deidre Kerr

On July 18 and 19, we did a safety walk-around. We did correct any issues that we could on the spot. However, others will require a work order. This time we found fewer safety issues than the last time.

The door at the employee entrance is awaiting a new replacement door to arrive. The first was the incorrect size.

No news on when the new refrigerator will be in.

Everyone is complaining about the bathrooms. We did address this issue. We should also do our part not to flush things like paper towels and gloves. This is causing many of the problems as well.

If you see any safety hazards please fill out 1767's. Please make a copy and hand them to your supervisor

The hazmat situation happened a few months ago. The final result was that no asbestos was present. It will be discussed at the next safety management meeting.

If you are not able to do certain things. You and your doctor must complete limited duty paperwork if it is an on-the-job injury. If you are not hurt on the job, then the paperwork to be filled out is light duty. Please see a steward if you have any questions about what needs to be filled out. Notes from your doctor may not be acceptable any longer.

APWU MTS News

Clerk Craft Director

by Charlie Phillips

If you are ever part of an investigation by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and/or the U.S. Postal Inspection Service for an on or off-duty offense, please follow this advice.

1. Keep your cool. Do not get upset or aggressive.
2. When asked, state your name accurately.
3. Most Importantly, request a Union Shop Steward/Representative or an attorney.
4. Do not answer any questions until your shop steward or attorney has arrived, and you have consulted with them first.
5. If they say they have a search warrant, request to see it. If the search warrant is not available, do not consent to a search.
6. Do not resist if you are arrested or resist the search of your person or property.
7. Ask them, "Am I a suspect in a criminal matter?" If the answer is "yes," exercise your right to remain silent until you consult with an attorney.
8. Do not admit or deny any allegations without consulting your representative first.
9. Do not sign any forms waiving your rights.
10. Do not write, say or sign any statements without representation.

And remember, Management does not have to remind you of your "Weingarten Rights." It is your responsibility to request representation.

APWU MTS News

Maintenance Craft Director

by John Harris

I hope everyone is enjoying these hot summer months. First and foremost, I want to introduce myself as your new maintenance craft director. I am very pleased and thankful to be allowed to lead the maintenance craft for local #152. I have been a part of this union for the last ten years and have been a steward for about 8 of those years. I have attended Advanced Postal Labor school and plenty of Tri-state and national conferences to better prepare me for my duties for this local. I thank the executive board for granting me this opportunity, and I am ready to fulfill my duties as your new maintenance craft director.

New Hires and Promotions

Over the past few months, we have had several new hires and promotions within the maintenance craft. We have acquired four new custodians and about five maintenance mechanics. Also, there were a few promotions in the MPE and ET occupations. Since our brother Vince Falkowski has retired, there will soon be some movement in the BEM occupation. Congratulations to him. Our union president Trina and I are also working on getting some of these jobs back in the building that have gone external and have them filled using the in-service register list instead of hiring off the street. We successfully got one MM7 job back, and hopefully, more will come.

Line H

I will be requesting a meeting soon with management to go over the 2023 Line H. The 2022 Line H grievance is currently pending arbitration. We will have more on Line H in the coming months.

Maintenance Training

Maintenance and qualifying training is an up-and-coming issue in these last couple of months in maintenance. According to our contract, if the position you have or have been promoted to requires training, "YOU MUST GO TO TRAINING." If you don't complete training, Article 38.5.C states:

That an employee who receives a promotion predicated on the successful completion of training and fails that training is declared inactive on the promotion eligibility register (PER). The PER shall be annotated with an asterisk indicating the employee's inactive status. The employee may request an update for score improvement, but it is not required.

After six (6) months, the employee will be activated on the PER, the asterisk will be removed, and the employee will be ranked accordingly.

Difference Between PAR and PER

PAR(Preferred Assignment Register) is the document you submit within your occupational group listing in numerical order to which job assignments you would like to have in the next bid. PER (Promotion Eligibility Register) is the register your name is placed on when you have completed the 955 exam and have passing scores for a higher-level position. You need a passing interview to be placed on the PER

for whatever job you have a passing score. For example, if you are an MM-7, you cannot put a PAR in for MPE-9, but your name can be on the PER for MPE-9 with a successful score and Interview.

I hope everyone enjoys the rest of their summer. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at September's meeting.

APWU MTS News

Motor Vehicle Craft

by Glen Davis

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

DE P&DC Logistics Management, while under new leadership, continues to violate the CBA however they can. The Mail Handler grievances have been settled by both the APWU and the Mail Handlers Union. We are currently waiting for the settlement agreement in writing. Drivers will no longer be required to load or unload their trucks by themselves. A mail handler will be present and assist. We also settled the driver training (Higher Level Pay) grievances. Drivers should check their pay and make sure it reflects adjustments for the days they trained.

The Vehicle Dispatcher grievances are at Step 3 and are expected to be settled soon. Our new Business Agent, Shana Parker (formerly Lindberg MVS Craft Director), is awaiting the Labor Representative's settlement offer.

You may have noticed a new 90-Day Detail Posting for Schedule Examiner. The Schedule Examiner grievances being filed have prompted management to make this posting. The APWU is seeking 3 (one per tour) 40-hour full-time positions for Schedule Examiner. The fight continues.

We have three drivers willing to be trained for Shop Steward Duty. Once we get them trained and in place, I will announce who they are.

Until next time.

BE SAFE OUT THERE.

APWU MTS News

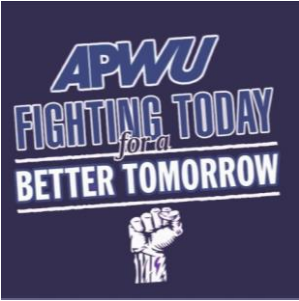
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Q1 2022 APWU MTS Newsletter