



**Paul McKenna
President**

Over the past several articles I have written, I talked about the national contract negotiations and how they were progressing. The last report stated that they were headed to arbitration and it would be a while until we have a new contract.

Since that article, the National APWU reported on what some of the sticking points are, and just how far apart the two side are from reaching an agreement. According to the March issue of the APWU Web Page, Below are some of the proposals from both the union and the Postal Service. The APWU put forward proposals that reward postal workers for our hard work.

The Union's proposals include:

- Solid annual pay raises,
- Two COLA increases every year,
- Adding top Steps to the lower career pay scale,
- Reduction of the non-career workforce and increasing the career workforce,
- Automatic PSE conversion to career after a set time of service,
- Increased company contributions to health insurance premiums,

Raising the pay of PSEs USPS economic proposals are nothing short of draconian and regressive. Their proposals include:

Disrespecting The Workforce

"As you can see by the Postal Services proposals, they don't think much of their employees."

- No increase in pay rates – a freeze for current employees;
- One lump-sum payment in lieu of the usual annual pay raise;
- Lump-sum payments in lieu of COLAs.

Decreasing the career workforce:

- Increasing the percentage of non-career employees to 25% in the clerk craft;
- Reintroduction of 10% PSEs into the maintenance workforce, undoing the all-career maintenance craft;
- Reintroduction of 10% PSEs into the MVS Craft.

Pay and benefits substantially cut for all future conversion to career and future hires:

- A converted PSE would take a pay cut of almost \$1.00 per hour and work into year three before getting back to the PSE rate.
- Current career employees with less than six years seniority must work 15 years to gain "no lay-off" protection.
- Elimination of no lay-off provision for all future workers.

USPS management also had made numerous regressive proposals including: Universal PSE Clerk with no restrictions on working the window, PSEs allowed to work in Level 18 offices and then replace career jobs; replace career PTFs with non-career PSEs; eliminate the 50-mile limit on excessing employees; sub-contract custodial work under conditions of unforeseen long-term absences; eliminate penalty pay; elim-

inate all existing Local Memos; eliminate any on-the-clock steward union time to represent employees.

As you can see by the Postal Services proposals, they don't think much of their employees. It looks like the PO is blaming all of the made-up financial crisis on us workers. Instead of trying to increase revenue with Postal Banking, allowing alcohol to be shipped with us and pressuring Congress to stop the Pre-Funding mandate to make us expand our customer base, they propose to take it all out of the employees who do the work.

With almost every post office in the state of Wisconsin being short staffed and making our members work longer hours and do more work with less employees, they now are proposing that we do all that for less money, less job security and turn the Postal Service into a Non-Career workforce.

I don't like to get political in my newspaper articles, but our members better start waking up and pay attention to what is going on around us with our jobs, our rights as working people and the pay inequity that is happening in this country. We can't sit back anymore and expect somebody else to do our fighting for us. We need to start getting out on election day and start voting for people who will protect the middle class workers. Someday soon, we are going to wake up from the fog we are living in and realize that all of our rights as workers are gone. We will have no one to blame but ourselves.

Obey Now Grieve Later

by Willie Mellen, APWU NBA Clerk Division

“Under this well-established rule, an employee must obey supervision even when he or she disagrees with an order. The reason for the rule was best explained long ago by Dean Shulman in Ford Motor Co., 3 LA 779, 781: “An industrial plant is not a debating society. Its object is production. When a controversy arises, production cannot wait.” Disobedience to this very fundamental principle warrants discipline, often including summary discharge.

There are certain narrow and limited exceptions to the “obey now, grieve later” principle. One such exception is when employees have cause to believe that their safety or health would be endangered by complying with the order. However, when an employee is capable of performing the supervisory directive without risk to his health or safety and refuses to do so, he is, in effect taking the enforcement of his contractual rights into his own hands, thereby violating the “obey now, grieve later” rule.”

The above quotation is from an arbitration award written by Arbitrator Ann Kenis. In the past few weeks our office has fielded several calls from employees, stewards and officers on this subject. I am familiar with this “rule” as I have been a steward or officer at some level since 1987; however, it appears many of our members are not familiar with such a rule. Based on that I thought I would put out an article on the subject.

I generally have been hesitant to write on subjects like this as these types of articles seem to find a way into an arbitration hearing or two. But the recent influx of questions related to this subject has prompted me to write.

Please note that the employee who was the subject of the Kenis award had no previous discipline, yet the Arbitrator upheld the removal issued by the USPS. It should have come as no surprise to the Grievant or the Advocate as Arbitrator Kenis has removed others on their first offense of this nature. I have been speaking for years on how several arbitrators view the refusal of a directive, order, instruction, or whatever you want to refer to it as, to be a removable offense.

I recently had a person say to me that Management had to call it a “direct order” otherwise the employee did not have to obey the directive. That simply is not true! There are no magic words that Management has to utter to make it something the employee needs to do. It really does come back to obey now and grieve later. Request your steward, it may very well be a violation of our contract to comply with the direction, but let the steward deal with that.

Those that know me have heard me say for years these two words on almost any subject: “It depends”. While the fact circumstances might bear out a different result, most do not. Not obeying or complying with an “order” can get you fired and most certainly discipline at some level.

I recently brought to a District Manager’s attention that a Postmaster was ordering clerks out in the field to do the opposite of one of his directives. The clerks in the office complied with the directive as it did not put them in harm’s way. The clerk asked for a steward to question the directive, and it went from there. I know there are dozens, if not hundreds, of stories (I have a few myself) where two different supervisors told someone to do something totally opposite of what the other supervisor told them.

There are ways to handle that such as telling the supervisor I can do that but you might want to check with other supervisor so I do not get in trouble with them for doing what you said.

One thing that might have changed the outcome before Arbitrator Kenis would be some level of remorse. A simple “I’m sorry” goes a long way in an arbitrator’s view. Being defiant could cost you your postal career. Being apologetic for your actions could still result in some level of discipline but at least you should not be looking at a removal notice.



Greg Becker
South Sectional Director

I recently had a disagreement with a supervisor about whether management can request documentation for a sick leave absence of 3 days or less. As expected, the supervisor told me that management can do whatever they want. This, in turn, led to another disagreement. The fact of the matter is that the Union has prevailed on many grievances regarding this issue after we were contacted by members who knew their rights were being violated.

The language in the ELM is clear, ***For periods of absence of 3 days or less, supervisors may accept the employee's statement explaining the absence. Medical documentation or other acceptable evidence of incapacity for work or need to care for a family member is required only when the employee is on restricted Sick leave or when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interests of the Postal Service. Substantiation of the family relationship must be provided if requested.*** A careful reading of this language states only two reasons that management can request medical documentation.

The first is if the employee is on restricted sick leave. Restricted sick leave is a multi-step process which involves placing the employee on

Request For Documentation: Absences Of 3 days Or Less

"...these requests for medical documentation may be arbitrary and capricious."

notice and following up for many quarters of his/her sick leave usage. As this is a tedious and time consuming process, I am not aware of one employee on Restricted Sick leave.

The second reason is, *"...when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interests of the Postal Service."* On its face, this wording seems to give carte blanche to anything management decides to do. Not true. I have never had a grievance where management has contractually justified using this reason to request documentation. Most of the time management cannot come up with a reason at all. Ultimately, the decision rests on what an arbitrator would believe is a reason that satisfies the "protection of the interests of the Postal Service."

Therefore, it must be concluded that management has a very high burden to justify requesting medical documentation for absences of 3 days or less. If they cannot justify their request for medical documentation, then this request is clearly arbitrary and capricious...and a violation of the contract.

For years, management has used the ERMS/RMD database for everything regarding attendance. Management can checkmark a "box" in ERMS where the system automatically "deems" medical documentation "desirable" if an employee

calls in. Many Clerks have been requested to bring in medical documentation on their PS Form 3971 because of this "computer nurse" which seems to "care" so much about their health! Usually this request happens around holidays or summertime when someone in management checkmarks this "box" in ERMS. Again, these requests for medical documentation may be arbitrary and capricious.

The FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) also has requirements for medical certifications. As a general rule, management can request certifications at reasonable intervals, and/or when circumstances change. Sometimes, there is confusion when it is unclear whether an absence is protected by the FMLA or the language in the ELM. There may be a circumstance where certification is requested for a one day absence if it qualifies under the FMLA. A clerk should request a Union Steward if there is confusion about whether medical documentation is required.

WHENEVER you are **REQUIRED** to bring in medical documentation for a sick leave call-in of 3 days or less, you should request a Union Steward. If the request for medical documentation is not made at the time you notify management of the absence, this increases the likelihood that this request violates the contract. Each instance is based on the fact circumstances of each case. If you feel that your rights are violated, contact your Union Steward or Officer.



Marvin Rivera
West Sectional Director

Having been a Union Steward for several years, I am sure you have all heard from myself and other Union Stewards... "If you sign it you own it." What I am referring to is when you sign a PS Form 3971.

3971's

Most employees do not fill out their own 3971s when they return to work after any type of absence. I highly recommend that you do that. This way you remember what you called in for. This way you can make sure that if you requested sick leave, you receive sick leave, not annual leave. If you requested FMLA you can make sure it is pending approval or that you actually received that protection.

All too often most employees do not sign their 3971s until they are in a Day in Court for an attendance related issue. At this point most do not remember what they had called in months later.

If you are ever presented with a 3971 and you do not remember what you called in for whether it be sick, annual or FMLA, DO NOT sign it.

Whatever ever you sign can and will be held against you. This is where the

Anything You Sign Can And Will Be Used Against You

"If you sign it you own it"

term "If you sign it you own it" comes from. If you do not agree with what is in the comment section of the 3971, cross it out and change it or refuse to sign it.

Service Talks

When you are being asked to sign a generic sheet for a Service Talk... most of these generic sheets do not state what the service talk is about. What is most likely to happen a few months or a few years after that Service Talk, you will be presented with that same generic sheet of paper with your name on it. Management will claim that you violated whatever rule was allegedly discussed at the service talk.

Bottom line, Members need to also remember that they are not required to sign any document. You can simply opt not to sign it! Management requires supervisors to turn in forms for employees in attendance for any sort of talks they give and you may not even be aware you were present.

So, to recap...if you sign it you own it. Make sure you read the PS Form 3971 before you sign it. Make sure it states in the comment section what you really requested at the time of your call in.

Do not sign any generic sheets at any Service Talk. Any thing you sign can and will be held against you.

APWU Steward Training Class

Wednesday, May 15th 10am-2pm

**APWU Hall
417 N. 3rd St.**

**Learn about the duties and responsibilities
of being a Steward.**

**Interested in attending? Contact the APWU
at 414 273-7838 no later than May 14th**

**ALL members are encouraged to get involved in their union!
Lunch and Beverages Provided**

Pay Parking Available at 3rd St. and St. Paul Ave.



John Miceli
Treasurer

If you're an active participant of a certain age, then consider this unique opportunity to boost your TSP savings with "catch-up contributions."

What are catch-up contributions?

Catch-up contributions allow you to save more in your TSP account than the maximum amount allowed by the IRS through regular contributions. You can make your first catch-up contribution starting in January of the year you turn 50. Your catch-up contributions come from basic pay through payroll deductions and you can designate them as traditional (pretax) and/or Roth (after-tax).

Who is eligible to make catch-up contributions?

In addition to meeting the age requirement, you must be:

- an active federal employee and in pay status; and
- making regular contributions to a civilian or uniformed services TSP account (or both), and/or an equivalent employer plan that will equal the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 2018 maximum elective deferral limit of \$19,000. You must be on track to reach the full elective deferral limit by the end of the year while you're simultaneously making catch-up

Should I Catch Up My Contributions?

"TSP Website: tsp.gov"

contributions. You must make a separate election for catch-up contributions.

How much can I contribute to the TSP?

Once you have determined you are eligible, you can make catch-up contributions up to the IRC catch-up contribution limit of \$6,000 for 2018. Because catch-up contributions are in addition to your regular contributions, they do not count against the IRC elective deferral limit or the total IRC annual addition limit for the year.

Will I receive any matching contributions on my catch-up contributions?

No. There are no matching contributions on catch-up contributions.

When can I make a catch-up contribution?

Once you become eligible, you can make your election at any time. It will become effective the first full pay period after your agency or service receives it. The election will only be valid through the end of the calendar year in which it is made. This means that you will have to make a new catchup contribution election each year.

Do special rules or conditions apply to uniformed services participants?

Yes, there are some special rules:

- You cannot use incentive or special pay (including bonus pay) to make catch-up contributions.

- If you are receiving tax-exempt pay while serving in a combat zone, your traditional (pretax) catch-up contributions will stop. Only Roth catch-up contributions are allowed from tax-exempt pay.
- If you have both civilian and uniformed services accounts and are contributing the maximum amount of regular contributions, you can also make catch-up contributions to both accounts. The total in catch-up contributions for the two accounts must not exceed the catch-up contribution limit for the year. If you exceed the maximum limit for catch-up contributions, the TSP will refund the excess amount, plus earnings, from your uniformed services account first, no later than April 15 of the following year.

How do I get started?

1. Read the Catch-Up Contributions fact sheet on tsp.gov and watch the Catch-Up Contributions video on youtube.com/tsp4gov to learn more.
2. Make catch-up contributions using your agency's or service's payroll system. If that option isn't available to you, complete and submit Form TSP-1-C, CatchUp Contribution Election, or TSP-U-1-C if you are a member of the uniformed services.
3. For more information, call the ThriftLine at 1-877968-3778 and press option 3 to speak to a Participant Service Representative.



Nicole Anthonasin
Manual/Mechanization
Director

Union Sisters and Brothers, thank you for voting and electing me as your Clerk Craft Director of Manual/Mechanization. I am honored and humbled for the outpouring of support that I have received. Rest assured that I will continue to work hard for each and every one of you, remaining focused on you, the members and our jobs, as well as our future. I am excited to work with an amazing group on the executive board, who I can grow and develop further with.

To my opponent, Trent Canady, thank you for a good clean race. AMAZING job, you ran a great race, you fought a good fight ;-) ! I appreciated the inspirational and motivational words that you gave me many times. THANK YOU, my friend! A special thanks to the Election Committee (Catherine & Rick Bystra) and Chairperson (Julie Slotty-Williams). It is demanding and not an easy task, and they did an outstanding job! These are dedicated union members and should be commended! I encourage all members to get involved in some capacity, this is your union!

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to those who helped me in my campaign and the fabulous supporters

Let Me Introduce Myself

“...I will continue to hold management accountable for all of their contractual violations...”

who spread my name and the great words about me (you know who you are). Your support means the world to me & I will always remember you and your dedication to me and our union!

During my term in office, I will continue to hold management accountable for all of their contractual violations, as I have always done as a steward. I encourage each and everyone of you, that if you see a violation, to write a statement and report it to your steward. You are our eyes and our ears. As much as we try, and would like to be everywhere, it is impossible. You are essential to our success as a union, as you are our union.

By keeping track of the jobs in the sections that I oversee and watching the hours worked, in addition to the tracking the utilization of overtime hours and PSE hours in those sections, I hope to maintain those positions and keep those positions from reversions. As well as hopefully obtaining additional desirable positions in these sections. Additional jobs will benefit everyone. Career clerks may finally get the off days they have been desiring. The jobs that end up residual, eventually will open up the door for PSE's to be converted to career. Thus, giving everyone a more stable and happy work life.

As new jobs are open up and new people enter those positions, I often see the lack in the training that they are receiving. The lack of trainers

seems to be a huge issue and the lack of time that management allows people to be trained is an even greater issue. More often than not I have basically have seen the old sink or swim motto put into play. I plan to gain more knowledge on our training programs and the goals that are supposed to be met in those programs.

In turn, I will do my best to make sure that they are utilizing these training programs. I feel that it is a huge safety concern that should be addressed. If you are not properly trained when working in an area, you are at a greater risk to be injured. If you are properly trained to do the position you would be more productive with the confidence in your abilities to perform that job. These jobs are our future, we should be trained properly to ensure a successful and lasting future not only for ourselves but the future generations. (future retiree's that we are currently pre-funding healthcare for...LOL).

As I acquire new additional knowledge and skills in my new position as Clerk Craft Director of Manual/Mechanization, I will have more of the essential tools and abilities to fight for you and our jobs.

Keeping our union strong and ensuring a long and prosperous future for all of us, that is my goal! By keeping an open mind and taking every opportunity brought my way to educate myself further. I will continue to learn and to grow in knowledge, skills, and in my abilities as your director.



Chris Czubakowski
Vice President

A Veteran ID Card (VIC) is a form of photo ID you can use to get discounts offered to Veterans at many stores, businesses, and restaurants. When you have this card, you won't need to carry around your military discharge papers or share sensitive personal information to receive discounts.

If you have a VIC, you don't need to request another type of photo ID card to prove you're a Veteran or to get retail or business discounts. You may be eligible if you meet both of the requirements listed below.

Both of these must be true. You:

- Served on active duty, in the Reserves, or in the National Guard (including the Coast Guard), and
- Received an honorable or general discharge (under honorable conditions)

If you received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable character of discharge, you're not eligible for a Veteran ID Card.

If you have an uncharacterized or unknown discharge status, they'll have to verify your eligibility before we approve your application.

Veteran ID Card Open For Registration

"If you have a VIC you don't need to...prove you're a Veteran..."

How do I apply for a Veteran ID Card?



To apply for a VIC, veterans must first create an account at vets.gov and then click on the link that says "Get Veteran Id Cards".

What do I need to apply for a Veteran ID Card?

When you apply, be sure to have these on hand:

- Your Social Security number
- A digital copy of your DD214, DD256, DD257, or NGB22 that you can upload. This could be in a .pdf, .jpeg, or .png file format.
- A copy of a current and valid government-issued ID, such as a driver's license, passport, or state-issued identification card.

You'll also need a digital color photo of yourself from the shoulders up. The photo should follow all these standards:

- Show a full front view of your face and neck (with no hat,

head covering, or headphones covering or casting shadows on your hairline or face), and

- Be cropped from your shoulders up (much like a passport photo), and
- Show you with your eyes open and a neutral expression, and
- Be taken in clothing you'd wear for a driver's license photo, and
- Be a square size and have a white or plain-color background (with no scenery or other people in the photo), and
- Show what you look like now (a photo taken sometime in the last 10 years), and
- Be uploaded as a .jpeg, .png, .bmp, or .tiff file

What happens after I apply for a Veteran ID Card?

Once you've submitted your VIC application, we'll check your eligibility and verify that:

- Your character of discharge meets eligibility requirements, and
- The ID you submitted (driver's license or passport) is valid, and
- The image you've chosen to appear on the card meets the photo requirements

The VA will send you an email letting you know the status of your application after your eligibility has been verified.

Scapegoating Unions For The Postal Service's Phony Crisis

by Brian Wakamo

Blame it on the unions. When corporations, governments, or public agencies are facing financial challenges, this is often the default explanation.

We saw this knee jerk response at a recent Senate hearing on the U.S. Postal Service. The Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs called the March 12 hearing to discuss recommendations from a task force appointed by President Trump that include cutting or privatizing various postal services, increasing delivery prices, and — you guessed it — eliminating employees' rights to collective bargaining. Committee Chair Ron Johnson, a Wisconsin Republican, seized on the anti-union proposals. He repeatedly inquired about the wages and benefits that USPS employees enjoy compared to private sector employees and questioned whether postal workers should be allowed to continue to collectively bargain over wages. This hardly comes as a surprise. Johnson was an ardent supporter of Governor Scott Walker's efforts to undercut public sector unions back in his own state. Why wouldn't he be just as eager to cut union rights for postal employees? As the Trump task force notes, postal service employees have more rights than other federal workers to bargain over wages and benefits. The workers won these rights during what's known as the Great Postal Strike of 1970. Over the course of a week, as many as 200,000 postal workers walked off the job or called in sick to protest their meager pay, poor working conditions, and long hours. They shut down post offices in 13 states. When the Nixon administration finally reached a settlement with the workers, wage bargaining rights were part of the deal.

Nearly five decades later, the Trump task force now argues that postal workers don't deserve these rights because they don't face "the same level of risk that their company will go out of business" as private sector workers do. The postal worker unions beg to differ. Over the past decade, they point out, the postal service has endured tremendous insecurity, with the closure or consolidation of 485 of its 685 mail processing facilities, more than 200,000 career job cuts, and reduced hours of operations at 13,000 primarily rural post offices. Despite these cutbacks, the postal service is still a vital source of good jobs in every community — and union rights are a key factor. Research has long shown that collective bargaining rights lead to higher pay, narrower racial wealth gaps, and more generous employer pension contributions. Unionized workers are also likely to be covered by employer health insurance.

Attacking postal workers' union rights is merely an ideological distraction from the real cause of the postal service's financial losses. In 2006, Congress created this crisis by passing the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), which requires the USPS to set aside reserves sufficient to cover the cost of its employee post-retirement health benefits 75 years into the future. Without this pre-funding mandate, the Postal Service would've made money in every year since 2013. To strengthen the postal service, Congress should repeal this onerous mandate and embrace other solutions, like integrating USPS retirees into Medicare and supporting expansion of revenue-generating services like postal banking. However, at the senate hearing, Margaret Weichert, Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget, agreed with Senator Johnson about the virtues of abolishing collective bargaining rights and ignored the pre-funding mandate. OMB has taken a particularly hard line on the postal service. In a June 2018 report, OMB called for a shocking and unprecedented amount of service cuts. That, combined with their recommendations to end collective bargaining and to cut postal worker pay and benefits, is aimed to help "prepare [the USPS] for future conversion from a Government agency into a privately-held corporation."

Fortunately, the postal service and its customers and employees have a strong advocate in Vice Chairman of the USPS Board of Governors David Williams. At the senate hearing, Williams dismissed the notion that ending collective bargaining rights would do anything to put the service on a stronger financial footing. Instead, he honed in on the burden that the prefunding mandate places on the USPS, saying that "It's been devastating. It wiped out our entire ability to make capital investments [...] We're having to cut back so fast, we can't understand fully the impact of what it is we're doing. It's been very, very serious." Getting rid of collective bargaining, as has been suggested, is not the way to ensure the sustainability of the postal service and its role as a provider of good middle class jobs. We need to can the pre-funding mandate so we can keep moving the USPS forward.



Jeff Worden
North Sectional Director

On April 28th of every year the Unions of the AFL-CIO unite in observance of "workers Memorial Day". It's a day when working people throughout the world set aside to remember those who have been injured or killed from "on the job" accidents and recommit to the struggle for a safe workplace.

On this day in 1971, the Occupational Safety and Health Act became effective and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was formed. Since the law was passed, significantly fewer workers have been killed on the job each year; however, there is still a very long way to go.

Each year more than 700,000 workers are injured and of course some are killed due to work related hazards. The union continues to fight for safer work places and to enforce the already existing rules/regulations concerning work place safety. With the current White House administration there is a good chance that current work rules on safety will be... Thrown Out The Window!

This day should be more than a remembrance; it should be a time to renew our fight for strong safety and health protections. It is important that

Get Ready For Workers Memorial Day

"Stand Up For Safe Jobs"

we stand firm to enforce the current safety and health rules for ALL workers.

This year we are standing united against ongoing attacks on workers' rights and protections. Stand Up for Safe Jobs!

Former (late) APWU National President William Burris stated, "Workers Memorial Day is an opportunity to focus on reducing the toll of job injuries and deaths and on keeping good jobs in America".

Like Mother Jones said, "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living!"

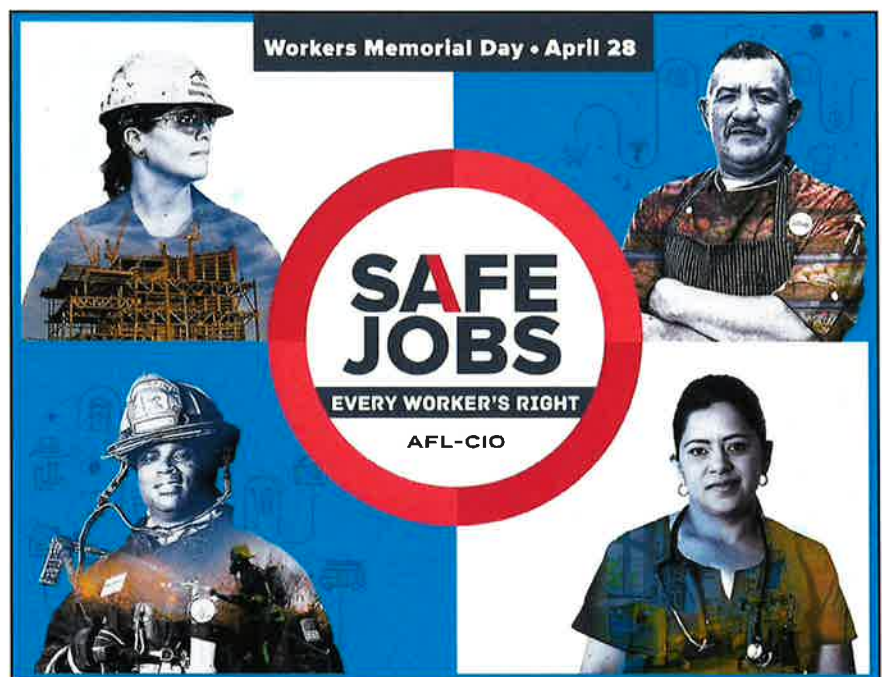
This year the theme for Workers Memorial Day 2019 is...

"SAFE JOBS EVERY WORKERS RIGHT"

The Milwaukee Area Local union hall has been the headquarters for this event for many years. This year the **brunch** will be **FIRST!** The brunch will start at **1:00 pm** at the APWU Union hall in Milwaukee, which is located at **417 N. 3rd St.**

The Memorial Procession will **BEGIN** at the American Postal Workers Union Hall (**After the Brunch**) to **ZEIDLER SQUARE** which is located at; **301 W. Michigan St. Milwaukee** for a prayer/vigil.

If you have any questions, call the Milwaukee County Labor Council at (414) 771-7070 (ask for Emily) or call me directly at (414) 530-7186.



Letter Carriers' Annual Food Drive Saturday, May 11



The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) will conduct its 27th annual national food drive on Saturday, May 11 in 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. The Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive, the country's largest single-day food drive, provides residents with an easy way to donate food to those in need in the community.

Customers simply leave their donation of non-perishable goods next to their mailbox before the delivery of the mail on Saturday, May 11. Letter carriers will collect these food donations on that day as they deliver mail along their postal routes and distribute them to local food agencies. To learn more, visit www.nalc.org/food to use this link to find and download high-quality versions of the PSA, in English and Spanish.

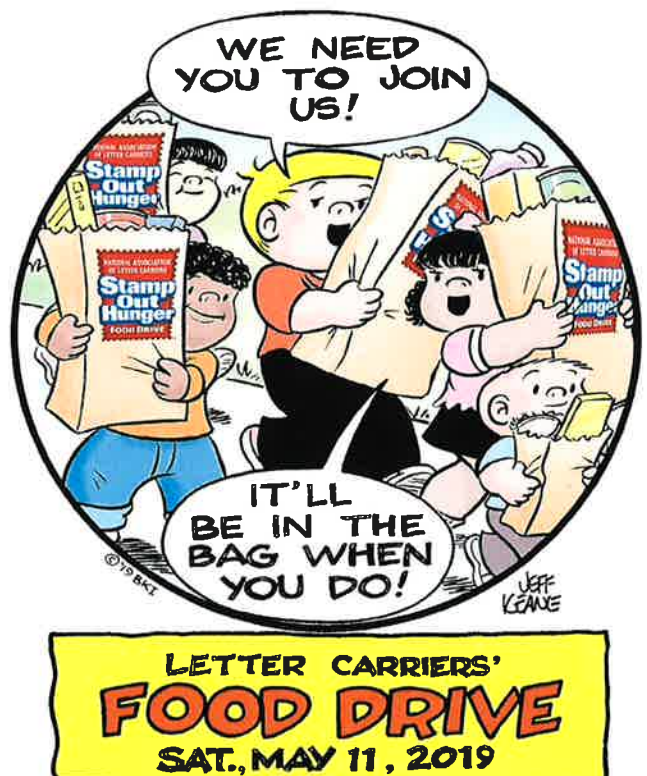
With the economic struggles many Americans face, the Letter Carriers' Food Drive is as critical as ever. Not only do millions of Americans go hungry, organizations that help them are in need of replenishments. Hunger affects about 50 million people around the country, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans. Pantry shelves filled up through winter-holiday generosity often are bare by late spring. And, with most school meal programs suspended during summer months, millions of children must find alternate sources of nutrition.

Letter carriers see these struggles in the communities they serve, and they believe it's important to do what they can to help. On Saturday, May 11, as they deliver mail, the nation's 175,000 letter carriers will collect donations left by residents near their mailboxes. People are encouraged to leave a sturdy bag—paper or plastic—containing non-perishable foods, such as canned soup, canned vegetables, canned meats and fish, pasta, peanut butter, rice or cereal, next to their mailbox before the regular mail delivery on that Saturday.

Letter carriers will take that food to local food banks, pantries or shelters. Several national partners are assisting the NALC in the food drive: the U.S. Postal Service, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA), the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), Valpak, United Way Worldwide, AFL-CIO, Kellogg's and Valassis.

Since the first national Food Drive in 1993, the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has collected more than 1.5 billion pounds of food; last year's drive brought in a record 80 million pounds of food.

People who have questions about the drive in their area should ask their letter carrier, contact their local post office, or go to: nalc.org/food, facebook.com/StampOutHunger, or twitter.com/StampOutHunger.



AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO MILWAUKEE AREA LOCAL

PROUDLY ANNOUNCES OUR SIXTEENTH SCHOLARSHIP YEAR



Two (2) \$500.00 Scholarships will be awarded

- * The John Akey Memorial Scholarship
- * The Milwaukee Area Local Scholarship

RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. This scholarship application is offered to current graduating high school seniors.
2. The applicant must be a child, stepchild or legally adopted child of a current active member in good standing or of a deceased member of the Milwaukee Area Local.
3. The local's Recording Secretary will verify member's eligibility before any application will be considered for an award.
4. The scholarship recipient must attend an accredited college, university or vocational technical school of their choice leading to a two year or four year certificate or degree.
5. Winners must be accepted into an accredited school within 4 months of naming the winners.
6. When the recipient notifies the Milwaukee Area Local Treasurer that he/she will be accepted, the Treasurer will send (to the school's business office) a check in the school's name. The scholarship will be paid directly to the educational facility.
7. In the event that the student does not attend or drops out, any monies refunded must be returned to the Milwaukee Area Local.
8. Students can win the scholarship only once.
9. The application and the completed essay, must be received by **May 20, 2019** in order to be considered for an award.

The winners will be notified the week of **May 24, 2019**.

Disputes concerning eligibility must be made to the scholarship committee and the decisions of the committee will be final.

Scholarship entries sent through the mail should be directed to the below address.
Please enclose the **completed application** along with the **required essay** to:

APWU Milwaukee Area Local
c/o John Miceli
417 N. 3rd St.
Milwaukee, WI 53203



AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO MILWAUKEE AREA LOCAL

ESSAY INFORMATION:

The completed essay must be attached to:

1. A one-page cover sheet showing the student's name, address, phone number, name of graduating school and the name of the parent who is a union member. **Do NOT put your name on the essay.**
2. All applicants must submit an essay. This year the students will be required to write an essay that answers the following question;

**How has the APWU improved the lives of
Postal Workers and their families?**

3. Essays must be typed written and double spaced. Essays must be 500-700 words in length.
4. The Scholarships will be awarded primarily on the basis of the essay's worthiness, clarity, and originality.

OFFICIAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION:



Scholarship applicant's name: _____

Telephone # _____

Home Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I will graduate from _____ High School, located in _____ (city)
in _____ (month and year).

I will attend _____ (college, university or vocational school)
in _____ (city and state). I will be enrolled for the _____ (term)
of _____ (year).

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name _____

Signature of Student Applicant _____

Trump's budget request slashes retirement benefits for 2 million federal workers

by: Alexia Fernández Campbell, The Vox

Each federal worker would lose about \$75,000 in retirement savings.

President Donald Trump's grand vision for America in 2020 can be summarized this way: spend billions more dollars on the US military and immigration enforcement; cut billions of dollars from the social safety net. And do nothing to close the \$1 trillion deficit Republicans created with their 2017 corporate tax cuts. The president's 2020 budget proposal managed to anger everyone from retirees to childhood cancer researchers. It also angered millions of federal employees and retired government workers, who would see their pensions cut under the president's budget request.

Randy Erwin, president of the National Federation of Federal Employees labor union (NFFE), blamed Trump for trying to make federal workers pay for the 2017 tax cuts, which disproportionately benefited the wealthiest Americans. "President Trump again sacrifices the middle-class families on behalf of the wealthy through his proposed pay freeze and needless cuts to earned benefits for federal workers," Erwin said in a statement released Monday. "We saw during the 35-day shutdown earlier this year that many federal workers live paycheck to paycheck."

The proposal would cancel cost-of-living increases to pension income for retirees in one program, and would lower the annual adjustment to another pension program by 0.5 percent. The budget also scraps certain retirement benefits for employees who stop working before they are eligible for Social Security. Current federal employees would also end up paying more for their retirement benefits, without getting anything in return.

All in all, the president wants to cut \$148.9 billion from employee pensions in the next decade — roughly \$75,000 per federal worker, according to NFFE. And it's not a small workforce, either: The US government is the largest employer in the country, with 2.1 million civilian employees. The vast majority of them live outside the Washington, DC, area.

It's unlikely that Trump will persuade Congress to pass his version of the budget, especially with the new Democratic majority in the House. He was unable to scale back retirement benefits for federal workers last year, even with Republicans in control of both legislative chambers. But his latest budget request reflects his growing hostility toward the federal workforce he oversees — a relationship that nearly reached a breaking point during the 35-day partial government shutdown that ended in January.

Trump doesn't want federal workers to get annual raises. Trump has tried many things to keep civilian government employees from getting annual raises since he took office. He first announced the across-the-board pay freeze in August, saying the federal government couldn't afford the automatic 2.1 percent pay bump employees were supposed to get in 2019. Trump's decision was swiftly met with widespread criticism from labor unions that represent federal workers, calling it "a slap in the face." The president is allowed to cancel raises in the event of a "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," and past presidents have eased up on scheduled raises for federal workers. President Barack Obama, for example, issued a two-year federal pay freeze in 2010 in response to the financial crash. And in 2012 and 2013, House Republicans stepped in to freeze pay for both federal workers and congressional staff.

But with today's expanding economy, it's hard to justify withholding raises from 2 million government workers, most of whom live outside of the nation's capital. But Trump tried anyway. In a letter he sent to Congress over the summer, he said the raises were "inappropriate" in light of the government's fiscal crisis, which includes a \$1 trillion budget deficit. He said employees should only get raises based on performance and merit, disregarding increases in cost of living or other factors. "We must maintain efforts to put our Nation on a fiscally sustainable course, and Federal agency budgets

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cannot sustain such increases,” Trump wrote. The letter made no mention of the 2017 Republican tax bill, which slashed corporate tax rates and blew a hole in the federal budget. Trump officially canceled the pay raises in December — just days after he shut down the government and withheld paychecks for nearly 800,000 employees. That included Border Patrol agents and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. Trump’s later decision to reopen the government for three weeks — without funding for a border wall — did not include a raise. Members of Congress, though, tried to override his decision.

In January, the House passed a bill that would give civilian workers a 2.6 percent cost-of-living increase for 2019. Senate Democrats introduced their own version of the bill calling for the 2.6 percent raise, which would match the increase given to military service members. But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell never brought it to the floor for a vote. A few weeks later, both chambers agreed to give federal employees a 1.9 percent pay raise, adding it to the 2019 spending bill that Trump signed in February (the workers are still waiting to get it). Now Trump is hoping to save money by scaling back retirement benefits for the federal workforce too. But he can’t do that without Congress’s approval, and budget negotiations are starting to heat up. In the next few weeks, lawmakers will have to reach a new deal over budget caps to prevent automatic spending cuts, because of a sequestration policy that Obama negotiated with Republicans in 2011. The government recently surpassed the federal debt ceiling, which limits how much money the government can borrow, but the Treasury Department used extraordinary measures to buy Congress more time to make a deal.

Trump Proposes Cutting Postal Employees Pay & Benefits

by Eric Katz , Government Executive

President Trump has once again proposed a slew of changes to the operations of the U.S. Postal Service and its employees’ benefits, with the White House estimating the plan would save \$98 billion over the next decade. In addition to a renewed push for offering postal employees lower pay and benefits, Trump pushed changes proposed by the task force he created last year. Those include raising prices for mail and packages not deemed “essential,” reducing delivery frequency, outsourcing some mail processing and licensing access to individuals’ mailboxes.

Additional savings would result from government wide efforts to require federal employees to contribute more toward their pensions and health insurance benefits. Trump also suggested making specific changes to USPS employee compensation to align it more closely align with the rest of the federal workforce. His task force previously proposed eliminating pay and benefit issues from collective bargaining negotiations, as is the case for all non-postal unions representing federal employees. Many of the task force’s proposed reforms were met with criticism from lawmakers and postal management just last week at a hearing before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. David Williams, for example, one of only two members sitting in the nine Senate-confirmed slots on the Postal Service’s board of governors, accused Trump’s task force of doing the bidding of the agency’s competitors through “discredited economic theory.” “Private shipping companies find value in using cost attribution models to weed out unprofitable customers,” Williams said. “In contrast, we deliver to each American doorway.”

Trump’s previous budgets largely mirrored legislative proposals to put USPS on firmer financial footing, in addition to the compensation cuts. The fiscal 2020 document called for the Postal Service to re-amortize its outstanding liabilities for future retirees’ health care. The administration has rejected a popular proposal in Congress to require all eligible retirees to use Medicare as their primary health insurance provider. While the White House said in budget documents that its proposed reforms mirrored the recommendations from the task force Trump created by executive order last year, not everything aligned. The document broke with testimony Gary Grippio, a Treasury Department official who spearheaded the task force, delivered last week. Grippio said the Postal Service should not take on any new business unrelated to its “core competencies,” while the budget suggested USPS provide additional services at post offices.

How Millennials Can Save The Postal Service

By: Sarah Holder, CityLab

***A new report suggests snail mail makes young adults feel special.
USPS sees that as a chance to stage a turnaround.***

One reason snail mail feels so good to receive is because it wasn't easy to send. When a letter lands in your mailbox, you know the mailer put thought into it—writing a note, scrounging up stamps and an envelope, and seeking out a blue box to drop it in. Paradoxically, it's that same effort that makes the U.S. Postal Service less and less appealing to use. It shouldn't surprise anyone to learn that the rise of the internet hasn't been great for the Postal Service. Americans are sending less mail than they used to, with overall volume falling 43 percent since 2001. That decline is especially pronounced among millennials. In 2001, Gen X-ers between the ages of 18 and 34 received 17 pieces of mail per week. By 2017, that number fell to 10 pieces of mail for millennials in the same age range.

The financial toll has been significant, too—to the tune of \$2.7 billion in losses in 2017. While e-commerce has been a boon, with package deliveries expected to raise USPS's total revenue by half a billion dollars this year, that growth comes alongside a steep decline in first-class mail, which includes letters and postcards. That part of the business is projected to fall \$800 million this year. As the Postal Service scrambles to stay afloat, it's hoping those two weak links— young people and personal mail—hold the answer to success in the future. A new report from the USPS Office of the Inspector General suggests it might not be so hard to pull off.

Getting personal

The key, it seems, is to focus on feelings. While pen pals and fan mail aren't the cool traditions they once were, the OIG report bets that the emotional sentiment behind them can be bottled up and repackaged. In fact, 75 percent of survey respondents said receiving personal mail “made them feel special”—and we all know how much millennials are supposed to like that. Moreover, USPS market research shows that even though younger Americans send and receive less mail, they feel pretty good about the Postal Service overall: 80 percent of millennial respondents said they were either somewhat or very satisfied with USPS. Still, only 44 percent pick up mail at least six days a week, compared to 60 percent among Gen X and 73 percent among Baby Boomers. How to bridge the generation gap? To really understand how to reverse the decline of mail use among young people, postal historians say you must first understand how it came to be popular in the first place.

At the birth of the Postal Service in 1775—when Ben Franklin was appointed the first postmaster general—few people used it except for merchants, who were wealthy and important enough to send things long distance. It became a more common way of staying in touch by the second half of the 19th century, when rates went down. But it wasn't until the invention of Valentine's Day in the 1840s (yes, it's always been a Hallmark Holiday) that young people got interested in sending notes to their beaus. “It was a young person's appropriation of the medium,” said Richard R. John, a Columbia Journalism School professor who wrote *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*.

Then there was the postcard, introduced in the early 1870s. “It was promoted as a way to send really quick messages, sometimes in code, if you care about such things,” said Dianne DeBlois, an ephemera dealer and collector. With the advent of Rural Free Delivery in the 1910s and 1920s, people who lived along the same rural delivery routes would use postcards to invite friends over for tea later that day, or to dances later that night. But anything that went through the mail in postcard form was restricted in size and automatically made public. Even gossiping via postcard was a libelous offense, because anyone could see it. What attracted young people to all these mediums was that they were tactile, they were fun, they were reasonably quick, and they were personal. But one day, an invention disrupted them all: not email, but the telephone. “The key shift there... was the *Bye Bye Birdie* culture of the 1950s and 1960s,” John said. Friends were now calling each other up on landlines to share gossip, not sending postcards along rural mail routes. “Phones are

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very fundamentally different than letters because the telephone is synchronous”—meaning you’re talking to each other in tandem, not waiting for a response—“but there was a desire to be in touch via the phone probably from post-WWII and through the ’90s and on.”

Something to hold on to

Still, the desire to hold notes close has never gone away. Even the telegram, developed in the late 19th century, didn’t become the new social outlet some expected. “When you get the telegram, you don’t have the evidence of the physical presence of the sender,” said John. “People did not conduct love affairs or intimate long-term correspondences via telegram.” (The large-type STOPS probably helped kill the vibe.)

Email hasn’t killed romance, obviously. *You’ve Got Mail* showed just how titillating the *swoosh* of a new digital message could be, even between two bookstore owners who ostensibly loved the feeling of paper. But servicemen and -women abroad crave mail just as they did during World War II. Now, loved ones can send emails to the military through the post office, and the service will promise to print the messages out. “It’s so they can have something to fold up and put in their pockets,” said DeBlois.

It’s that desire for the physical that the post office needs to capitalize on, says Amanda Stafford, who co-wrote the OIG report. While millennials like paying bills online, they prefer giving and receiving birthday cards the old-fashioned way. “If you want to send something to your girlfriend that no one else can read—something she can hold on to—even, good heavens, a print photograph she can put under her pillow, you should mail it,” DeBlois said.

Snail mail, but tech-savvy

But survey respondents also want the post office to adapt to a more technological world. They like convenience, self-service options, and advanced notice of mail delivery. They want a rewards program, like the one at their local coffee shop. If the post office wants to engage the next generation of mail users, they’re going to have to reconcile the tension inherent in these findings, says John Althen, the other co-author. “The effort is intrinsically valuable, but that doesn’t mean that the process can’t be frictionless.”

An extreme version of the post office digitizing the personal is its experimentation with augmented reality. Grandma could send a recording of her singing “Happy Birthday” along with a card; or colleges could accept you with a letter and an admissions video. “If there was a way to make postcards or actual cards have an augmented reality like that I would consider using the USPS much more often,” one respondent said. “I would look forward to receiving advertisements in the mail from companies that would use that.” And while things sometimes get lost in the mail, at least they aren’t as susceptible to NSA surveillance. As data breaches and Russian hacks get more common online, DeBlois says the Postal Service could encourage young people to use mail as a more secure alternative: “Your snail mail isn’t going to be hacked.”

A new generation

A less promising finding showed that millennials’ level of engagement with the mail service correlated closely with their living arrangements. Those who co-habitated with a partner were 44 percent more likely to send personal correspondence than those who lived alone, with parents, or with roommates. Bonus points for millennials with kids, who were 57 percent more likely. That demographic is shrinking, though in 1975, 57 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds lived with a married spouse; in 2016, it was only 27 percent.

The solution for USPS might be “getting engaged with them at several points of their life,” Althen said. If millennials are renting more, they’re moving more. What many of them don’t know is that the Postal Service will send you online coupons for things like home decor when you file for a change of address.

I am the worst kind of millennial—one who loves to get mail, but is loathe to send it. I don’t own a single stamp, nor one envelope. My dad, a Gen X-er, has several of both on hand, and takes pride in this fact. He volunteers at a fire depart-

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Millennials...

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ment, where everyone has to take an annual physical. When he asks young officers to self-address an envelope so they can receive a copy of their blood test results, they stare at him blankly. “They don’t even know how to address an envelope,” he tells me—not in a crotchety way, but with a sort of awe. “How did this happen?”

Because of my own mail phobia, I was a bit skeptical of the OIG’s findings, so I conducted an informal Twitter poll asking my followers (many of them millennials) if they keep stamps around. I expected most of the answers to mirror my own, which is “no, and I am a disappointment to my family.” But almost everyone said they did: In their offices, wallets, and drawers; Forever stamps, Peanuts-themed, and scratch-and-sniff; for rent checks and for fun. My neighbor offered to lend me some if I was ever so inclined.

Maybe some of this was confirmation bias—only the ones that could prove they were stamp-carrying adults wanted to chime in. But it also speaks to the hopes of the Postal Service: Millennials haven’t totally forsaken it, and some even take pride in it. “You can blame millennials for a lot of things,” said John, who is 59 years old and has a teenaged daughter. “But you can’t blame them for killing mail.”

* * *

APWU Enters Mediation

APWU News 4/9/19

In our continuing efforts to get the contract the members deserve, the APWU invoked mediation on April 3, 2019 – sending a letter to the Acting Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and to the Postal Service. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) is a federal agency that provides public and private-sector labor-management mediation, and by law it is responsible for facilitating the APWU’s demand for mediation with the Postal Service.

In mediation a neutral expert with the experience and training to develop information about the parties, their industry, and their issues will help them look for common ground towards reaching agreement. A mediator may offer suggestions and recommendations to either or both sides, but does not have the authority to impose a settlement, set contract terms, or require that the parties end mediation with any kind of agreement. The process is expected to take approximately forty-five (45) days.

Even when mediation fails to get a total resolution, this step may help narrow and focus disputes. Such narrowing of some disputes could make interest arbitration more successful for the members.

As the mediation process moves forward, the APWU national officers, members from the field, legal counsel, and staff members are working daily in preparation for interest arbitration. Internal meetings are occurring and will continue on a regularly scheduled basis. Craft officers, the core committee, the Industrial Relations Department, and the President are developing persuasive evidence and arguments, concerning your work and the appropriate compensation for your service, to present to the Postal Service and to an arbitrator.

“Mediation is just another one of the APWU’s efforts to ensure that no stone is left unturned in our continuing battle to get the members what they deserve in their next contract,” said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman.

“Management’s recent final proposal showed their disrespect for the hard work of the postal workers by demanding a new 4th tier of employees with lower pay, fewer benefits, less leave, no cost-of-living increases, limited lump sum pay increases for current employees, and the threat of layoffs,” President Mark Dimondstein said. “This next step in the process is one more tool we can utilize to help get the workers of today—and tomorrow—the wages, benefits, and work environment they deserve. We truly are fighting today for a better tomorrow.”

The Great 1970 Mail Strike that Stunned the Country

by The American Postal Worker

In March of 1970, the United States had been in a financial and commerce standstill for two weeks. Tired of poor working conditions and low pay, postal employees went on strike at 499 post offices in 13 states. Mail piled up and went undelivered while the eyes of the nation were focused on the strikers. Time magazine wrote that it was “the strike that stunned the country.” “Being a union member, I told [everyone] it was my duty to join [the strike],” recalled APWU Northeast Region Retiree Convention Delegate and striker Dolores Young. “I said, ‘well if this means there’s going to be improvements and changes, I have to get involved.’ ”

‘We Were Hungry’

Postal workers did not go on strike lightly. The pay for the average worker was extremely low and working conditions were dismal. “When I first made regular, my salary was \$145,” said Young. That was “for two weeks, working 80 hours.” “We were hungry,” added now-retired APWU clerk Eleanor Bailey. Many workers qualified for food stamps and other government assistance. Workers had no ability to negotiate for wages and Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increases. At the time, career employees did not know how many hours they would work. Workers would wait in the breakroom, or “swing room,” off-the-clock for mail to arrive. It could take 11-12 hours to work a full eight-hour shift. “My father was a postal worker, and he sat around for possibly only two hours of work,” said Bailey. “He had to wait and be called.” On March 12, 1970, Congress gave itself a whopping 41 percent pay hike and offered postal workers only a 5.4 percent raise. Outrage spread in postal facilities across the country.

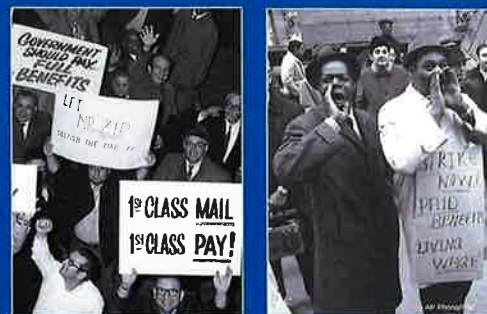
Strike!

Irate letter carriers of New York City’s Branch 36 voted to strike on March 18. Members of the Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union (MBPU) refused to cross the picket line, and voted to join the strike on March 21. Many others followed and by the end of the strike, over 200,000 workers had walked off their jobs. “You got to have a goal,” said Bailey. “Our goal was for a better salary and a lot of changes in the workplace.” In an effort to break the strike, U.S. President Richard Nixon sent more than 23,000 military personnel to New York City postal facilities with orders to transport, sort and deliver the mail. “We have the means to deliver the mail,” he claimed. The President’s words were false, as the strikebreakers could not perform the tasks without training. Negotiations between the Post Office Department and the postal unions started on March 25. The strike drove Congress to enact the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970. Postal unions won the right to negotiate with management over wages, benefits and working conditions. It also established the U.S. Postal Service as an independent agency, funded by postage sales and services.

‘Stick with the Union’

The following year, on July 1, 1971, five of the eight postal unions merged together to form the American Postal Workers Union. The members of the United Federation of Postal Clerks, the National Postal Union, the National Association of Post Office and General Service Maintenance Employees, the National Federation of Motor Vehicle Employees and the National Association of Special Delivery Messengers were now all APWU sisters and brothers. Shortly after its founding, the APWU negotiated a contract with a significant pay increase, faster step increases, a COLA and ended the practice of waiting off-the-clock in a swing room. United together, the new union has continued to bargain collectively to achieve secure, safe and good paying jobs across the different crafts. The improvements to postal workers’ salary and conditions “happened because of the union,” said Bailey. She urged today’s APWU members to recruit co-workers to “join the union, because it makes us so much more powerful.” “Stick with the union,” added Young. “That’s the number one thing!”

When we stand
united, we prevail.



The Great Postal Strike
March 18 - 25, 1970

APWU

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2019



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