



The Hi-Lites



The official publication of Milwaukee, WI Area Local APWU, AFL-CIO

(Proud Postal Press Association National Awards Winner)



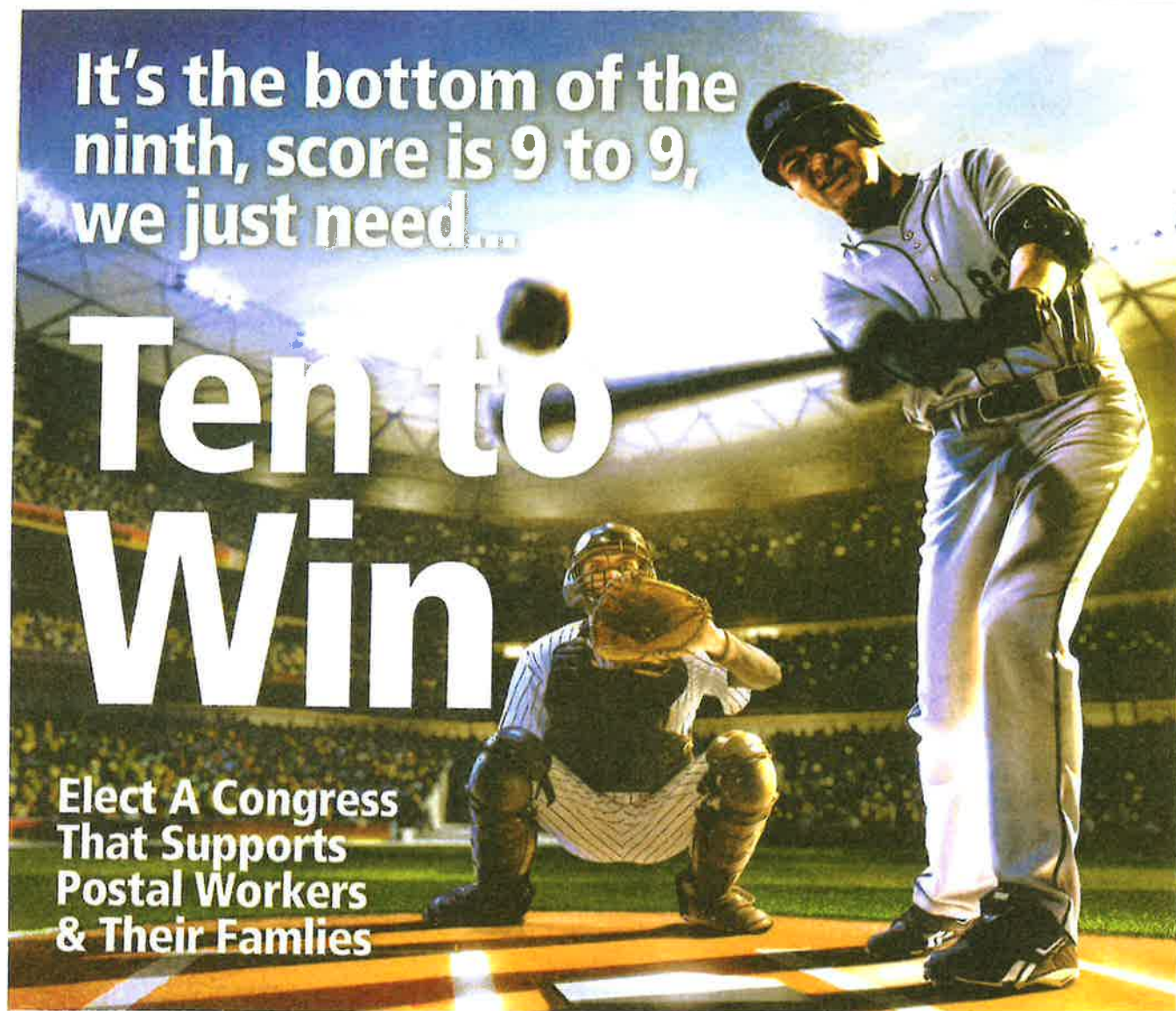
FEBRUARY 2018

Volume 40 Issue 2

It's the bottom of the
ninth, score is 9 to 9,
we just need...

Ten to Win

Elect A Congress
That Supports
Postal Workers
& Their Families



Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

Big Bend Brookfield Burlington Butler Cedarburg Cudahy Darien
Delafield Delavan East Troy Elkhorn Elm Grove Franklin Fredonia
Germantown Grafton Greendale Hales Corners Hartford Hartland
Jackson Kewaskum Lomira Milwaukee Menomonee Falls Mequon-Thiensville
Muskego Mukwonago New Berlin Oak Creek Oconomowoc Oakfield
Okauchee Pewaukee Plymouth Port Washington Salem Slinger S. Milwaukee
Sussex Wales Walworth Waterford Watertown Waukesha Whitewater



**Paul McKenna
President**

Over the past several months, I have talked at union meetings and written in the Hi-Lites about how management was planning on excessing over forty clerks out of the Milwaukee Installation (as well as a few of our Associate Offices). I explained the process for those affected and what the union was doing to fight management and stop this unnecessary reduction of our workforce.

After many months of this battle, and many meetings with management, they have finally realized that reducing the workforce wasn't the right thing to do. Several weeks ago, we finally convinced management to cancel all the excessing without any clerks being excessed.

Now the union must continue to fight to get back all the jobs that they reverted and eliminated for the past six months. This will not be an easy task, and will take time to complete. In order for us to prevail in the grievance procedure, will have to graph all of the PSE hours to show that the PSE's are working the same jobs that management reverted over the past six months or so.

As a union, one of our goals is to make sure that we maintain career jobs with good pay and benefits for the non-career employee to get pro-

National Contract Negotiations

"Any member can submit proposals to be discussed at our State Convention."

moted into. This is another fight that we encounter on a regular basis with management. Management wants as many non-career jobs as possible to keep the payroll down and keep as much flexibility in the workforce as they can.

However, our contract language states that if the non-career PSE's are working the equivalent of a Full-Time duty assignment, the union can file a grievance to get those hours and off days posted as a career job, especially if management recently reverted a similar job.

Believe it or not, our National Contract expires later this year. With the task of negotiating a new contract steadily approaching, some of the APWU Officers from around the State of Wisconsin will gather in Oshkosh at the end of April at our State Convention.

At this convention, we will discuss our upcoming National Contract negotiations that our National Union will enter into with the Postal Service later in the year.

One of the main objectives at the State Convention is to propose changes to our existing National Agreement. During the convention, all the delegates discuss in depth what we feel needs to change in the contract and why it needs to change. We also discuss what new additional benefits we would like to see added to benefits package.

Any member can submit proposals to be discussed at our State Convention, and if adopted, they will be proposed at our National APWU Convention later in the year.

If adopted there, the APWU National Negotiations Committee has an obligation to include those proposals that were adopted during National Contract discussions with the Postal Service.

So, if any member has ideas or benefits that you would like to see changed or added to our National Contract, put your ideas in writing to any local officer so it can be submitted for consideration at our APWU State Convention.

Talkin' Shop

Accrual and Crediting of Annual Leave for Full Time Employees

104 hours of annual leave (13 days) is credited if you have less than 3 years of creditable service.

160 hours of annual leave (20 days) is credited if you have 3 years but less than 15 years of creditable service.

208 hours of annual leave (26 days) is credited if you have 15 or more years.

Voluntary Early Retirement Has Potential Side Effects

The Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) recently announced for eligible Clerk Craft employees by the USPS has generated many questions. Members are asking, “Should I accept early-out retirement?” It is not the place of the National APWU to give advice on whether to retire or not. That is a personal decision. However, it is a decision with implications that members should consider.

APWU Pushes for Incentive

USPS management did not discuss the VER with the APWU in advance. APWU National officers initiated a Jan. 10 meeting with postal management to address concerns about the VER including why the VER was not offered to all crafts, the need to halt all plans for excessing in light of the VER and the process for retirement counseling. Management has committed to respond to the APWU’s questions, which we will share as received. In this meeting, the union also pressed its views that:

The USPS is not overstaffed, and service is suffering due to understaffing; and, If the Postal Service moves forward with its misguided plans to reduce the workforce, they should offer a monetary incentive for those eligible for regular retirement, as well as for employees eligible for an early-out. Incentives have been offered numerous times in the past for both bargaining unit and supervisory employees. If you are eligible for the VER, you should have received a package from the USPS containing vital information about the opportunity for an early-out. You are eligible for USPS-sponsored retirement counseling – both group and individual. Information on whom to contact and how to arrange counseling will be in the packet. The packet, along with your counseling session(s), will explain eligibility for any annuity supplement, your health insurance premiums, how your FEGLI life insurance can change, and other issues. According to a previous grievance settlement with the APWU, local management must arrange a reasonably private space for employees who wish to receive on the clock, individual counseling. Your spouse can participate in the counseling session(s). Take advantage of every opportunity to learn the specifics about your retirement benefits.

Some Points to Consider

As of now, there is no financial incentive to retire early, unlike the 2009 and 2012 VERs. Also, in its Aug. 22, 2017 request to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for VERA approval, the Postal Service said that 10,522 APWU-represented employees will shortly be “impacted” by “differing personnel actions” and “repositioning initiatives.”

Those who take the early-out will see financial/income impacts, including:

- If you are an employee covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), you will have your annuity reduced by 2% for each year you are under age 55.
- If covered by FERS, you will only earn 1% of your salary as an annuity for each year worked.
- If you are under the Minimum Retirement Age (MRA), you will not receive the Social Security Supplement until you reach the MRA. If under normal conditions, you retire after reaching the MRA but are not yet eligible for Social Security, you receive an “annuity supplement” until you reach the age of sixty-two (62). An “early-out” is different; so, for example, if you are age 50 and your MRA is 57 you will not receive the supplement until age 57.
- Under FERS, you will not receive Cost of Living Allowances (COLAs) on your annuity until age 62. With an early retirement, you can’t make additional contributions to TSP or receive employer contributions.
- Your life insurance coverage and cost may change.
- Your health insurance premiums may increase, depending on your plan.
- Make your decision based on complete and accurate information about your retirement benefits. Postal management has verbally committed to the union that they have no intention of capping the number of employees who can take this VER offer.

The APWU will continue to share important information on the VER. Visit apwu.org for the most up-to-date information. If you are having trouble getting USPS-provided counseling, you can call the APWU Retirees Department at 877-279-8669.



Larry Brown Jr
Automation Director

I ended my last article by saying, Recover from all the Christmas overtime."Ok, maybe not. The overtime has been going strong as of late and I have encountered a couple of issues that I will discuss with you all this month.

Penalty Overtime

A full-time employee is entitled to receive penalty overtime pay for work beyond the limits stated in Article 8.5.F, excluding December, which are:

- Work over six days in a service week. *(Self-explanatory. Your seventh day is considered V-Time)*
- Work over eight hours on a non-scheduled day. *(Also, self-explanatory. Any overtime on your off day is considered V-Time)*
- Work over ten hours on a regularly scheduled day. *(Also, self-explanatory. V-Time once you go over 10 hours on a scheduled day.)*
- Overtime worked on more than four of the employee's five **scheduled days** in a service week.

Overtime

"...the employee's tour of duty shall be terminated once he or she reaches the 60th hour of work."

I guess the last one isn't self-explanatory. This does not mean that if you work overtime on five days out of the week, the overtime worked on the fifth day is considered penalty. Some believe, if they work ten hours on one of their off days, that puts them into the fifth day category for V-Time. The wording says, five scheduled days. Your off days are not considered scheduled days.

The simplest way to approach this is to look at your regular schedule. *(Never mind your off days, they mean nothing in this scenario.)* On the last day before your off days, if you have worked overtime on every other day that week, the last day's overtime, if called, is considered V-Time.

Also, management paying V-Time for the fifth day does not obligate them to call everyone for fifth day penalty overtime. A couple weeks ago I had employees questioning the overtime call because management did not utilize them on their fifth day. Their argument was, management call "so and so" for penalty yesterday. It was their fifth day, I should get called today. Not true. "...the Employer is not required to utilize employees on the "Overtime Desired" list at the penalty rate if qualified employees on the "Overtime Desired" list who are not yet entitled to penalty overtime are available for the overtime assignment."

Sixty Hour Maximum

"...the parties agree that excluding December, once a full-time employee reaches twenty hours of overtime within a service week, the employee is no longer available for additional overtime work. Furthermore, the employee's tour of duty shall be terminated once he or she reaches the 60th hour of work." Article 8.5.G JCIM

The key words in the paragraph I just quoted are the ones that I put for you in bold, the parties agree. The parties are...Management and the Union. We have this thing that we like to say as Union members. It sounds like this, "The Contract Says!" Every time I'm approached by someone the first thing they want to say to me is what the contract says. Being a Union steward, I have no choice but to uphold the contract.

What's funny though, is that when the contract says something that we don't like, we don't want to hear it.

(...and our money is one of the biggest issues we don't want to hear about.)

No matter how many times I tell members that they are not supposed to be working beyond the twenty-hour cap, they still do it. It's not just management that is supposed to make sure you're not going over your twenty-hour ceiling, it is your responsibility also.

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I referenced that, **the parties agree**, line quoted earlier. And now it's my turn. **THE CONTRACT SAYS**, you are not supposed to be working beyond 20 hours of overtime in a service week.

I have been approached by members wanting me to file a grievance for them because they know of someone that snuck a couple of extra hours beyond the twenty-hour cap. One employee even told me that a steward told him, if one-person works over twenty hours then everyone should be allowed to work over twenty hours. The Contract specifically states the grievance that should be filed if someone works beyond twenty hours. **THE CONTRACT SAYS**, "In those limited instances where this provision has been violated and a timely grievance filed, full time employees will be compensated at an additional premium of fifty percent of the base hourly straight time rate for those hours worked beyond the twelve or sixty-hour maximum."

Where does it state, in the contract, that the Union will file a grievance for all employees that did not work beyond the sixty-hour maximum? It doesn't. So once again, please stop sneaking hours in beyond the cap. Why does Management have to start disciplining employees before they begin to follow the simplest of rules? *(But wait, I can't say that because I'm a Union steward, and I should never bring up the fact that management has the right to discipline someone, whether it is warranted or not. You're right, my bad!)*

What I will say is, everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. That goes both ways. Dignity and respect involves being honest and trustworthy. So, when you sneak your couple of hours in beyond the cap, are you being honest? Are you treating management with dignity and respect by causing a grievance in which you weasel an additional fifty percent of pay out of them? Are you treating your co-workers with dignity and respect, when they see you being dishonest? Besides all that, the contract says, you shouldn't be doing it! So, let's follow the contract.

* * *

Local Tidbits - Part 1.

by: Karen White, Recording Secretary

LBA - Local Business Agent Mark Ferrari has been busy reporting on upcoming contract talks and what issues APWU will be working on for the upcoming contract. He has also announced that a stewards training class will be held in May.

Ten to Win- Vice President Jeff Worden has recently announced that Milwaukee APWU is the number one local in the country for COPA contributions and that there is currently a national campaign called "**Ten to Win**", for members who contribute ten or more dollars per pay check to COPA.

General Membership Meetings-These meetings are for you, the member. It is important that you attend as many as you can. All the meetings rotate on different dates and times so that it is possible for you, the member, to attend. I realize that some cannot attend for various reasons but those that can, please do. I cannot emphasize enough how important these meetings are. The Executive Board and the stewards are there to listen to your concerns and to share information with you. The next General Membership meeting is Friday, February 23, 2018 at 6:30 a.m. If your schedule permits, make plans to attend. Thank you.

Retiree Dues-To all the retirees who have paid their \$10.00 annual dues for the year- Thank you for your support of the Milwaukee Area Local. For those retirees who still want to continue to receive the union's newsletter and be able to participate in the retiree monthly and holiday socials please submit your dues via mail or stop by the Union hall to pay up.



Chris Czubakowski
North Sectional Director

The understaffing of Associate Offices sadly continues to place an overwhelming and heavy burden upon the clerks at those offices. This remains an ongoing contentious issue that the Union is continually trying to address. The understaffing is the result of two broad dominant issues; Management either abolishing or reverting duty assignments under their flawed Dashboard Complement Staffing Program and/or their inability to retain PSEs.

The current widespread elimination of duty assignments via "Dashboard" is based upon office "Earned Hours" and not the contractually agreed upon "Work Hours". Therefore, it is the Union's position that any of management's data derived from the "Dashboard" program is in violation of our National Agreement. There are multiple abolished/reverted duty assignments being grieved based upon this.

Simply put, while management has reverted or abolished duty assignments, the actual work that has remained has been thrust upon those left working in a skeleton crew environment. This has led to management overworking and burning out their workforce. Thus, non career PSEs end up quitting for other jobs with

Understaffed And Overworked

"Do not fill out 3189s when you are forced to do a schedule change."

less onerous schedules. This, in turn, has left certain offices even more desperately understaffed.

The desperation to PSEs has gotten so bad that management has actually allowed some to dictate their schedules (so they don't quit) only to then fill in the gaps by forcing schedule changes upon the FTR clerks. This is exactly opposite of what should be happening as the PSE workforce is contractually supplemental to career employees

While most clerks don't have a problem with changing their schedule once in a while to be part of a "team effort" to get the mail out, management's continual reliance on forcing overtime and schedule changes has evolved into a case study of disrespect, abuse and indifference. After all, what use is there in being a full time regular if you're being scheduled to work like a PTF? Even worse, many clerks who are being forced to change their schedules are not even being properly compensated for those changes. Talk about underhanded!

The current business model at many of the Associate Offices is so egregiously flawed that management should be ashamed of this gross dereliction of staffing. Ironically, most supervisors and postmasters are in agreement with the union yet remain helpless to adequately staff their offices because of directives coming from on high. It must be noted that those on high are com-

mitted to "business as usual" as long as the mail is getting out without any repercussions of having to pay for wages due or grievance remedies. If management is going to continue to understaff your office it may be time for union members to start sending a message.

Sending a message

If you have NTFT in your office management should not be requiring non-volunteers to work overtime. If you are forced to work non-volunteer overtime that is an infraction and a grievance should be filed. The remedy for a grievance of this nature starts out at an extra 50% and may compound if the infraction does not cease and desist.

If you are denied annual leave and the quota is not filled and/or you are denied sick leave because of "needs of the service" you need to contact your director immediately and file a grievance

Do not fill out 3189s when you are forced to do a schedule change. Management should be putting you on a 1723 detail assignment order no later than the Wednesday prior to the service week in which the schedule change occurs. If you fill out a 3189 management will claim that the change was for "personal convenience" and use that as a reason to deny you out of schedule pay.

Ensure that your supervisor is putting

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you in for out of schedule pay each week. This is a simple process as all they have to do is click a box within the TACS system to make sure they system pays you all of the out of schedule due. Far too often and for various reasons, including “cooking the office books”, they fail to do this. If you are working out of schedule and not being compensated contact your director and file a grievance. However, if you fail to report infractions there is no way for your director to know that they are happening. Please remember that you are the eyes and ears of the union. Understand this and enforce your contractual rights.

Understanding Out-of-Schedule (OOS) Premium

OOS premium is paid to eligible personnel in addition to the employee's hourly rate and at 50 percent of the hourly rate for qualifying hours worked up to 8 hours in a service day or 40 hours in a service week. Payment of out of schedule (an extra fifty percent) depends on whether an employee is given a timely notice by Wednesday of the preceding week. OOS premium is paid for those hours worked outside of, and instead of, the regular schedule. Some examples of out of schedule premium are as follows;

Example: An employee is notified by Wednesday of the preceding service week to work a temporary schedule the following service week from 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., instead of his or her regular schedule from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The employee is paid 2 hours out-of-schedule premium for the hours worked from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 6 hours' straight time for the hours worked from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. If in this situation the employee continues to work into or beyond the balance of his or her regular schedule (2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.), then he or she is to be paid for hours worked in accordance with Exhibit 434.614.

Exhibit 434.614-Computing Out-of-Schedule Premium Hours

Hours Worked	Total Work Hours	Out-of-Schedule Premium Hours	Straight Time Hours	Overtime Hours
6:00 AM-2:30 PM	8	2	6	0
6:00 AM-3:30 PM	9	1	7	1
6:00 AM-4:30 PM	10	0	8	2
6:00 AM-5:30 PM	11	0	8	3

Example: An employee's regular schedule is Monday through Friday and he or she is given a temporary schedule of Sunday through Thursday. The hours worked on Sunday are out-of-schedule premium hours provided they are worked instead of the employee's regularly scheduled hours on Friday. If, however, the employee also works his or her regular schedule on Friday, then there can be no out-of-schedule premium hours; the hours worked on Sunday would be paid as regular overtime hours worked in excess of 40 in the service week.

Understanding Guarantee Time

If management fails to notify and employee of a temporary schedule change by Wednesday of the preceding service week, the employee is entitled to work their regular schedule. Therefore, any hours worked in addition to the employee's regular schedule are not worked instead of their regular schedule. Such additional hours are not considered OOS premium hours. Instead, these hours are paid as overtime hour in addition to the hours you are guaranteed to have worked per your bid schedule

Example: An employee is not notified of a temporary schedule change by Wednesday of the preceding service week to work a temporary schedule from 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., instead of his or her regular schedule from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The employee is paid 2 hours of overtime for the hours worked from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 6 hours straight time for the hours worked from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. If the employee leaves work at 2:30 p.m., however, the employee is also guaranteed to be paid 2 hours (for the time between 2:30 p.m and 4:30 p.m)because they were guaranteed to work it.



Glenn Griggs
Customer Service
Director

I am happy to announce that the \$15,000 dollars the membership approved a few months ago to fight against excessing and job reduction at stations has not been used. Not one cent.

When we first became aware of the excessing, 64 people were targeted to be excessed. We fought hard to keep the impact to our union brothers and sisters to a minimum. I am happy to report the excessing has since been cancelled.

Now that the excessing has been cancelled I can focus back on station staffing, as well as security measures for our window clerks. I know every area might be facing staffing issues, but if you work at a city station, I think you would agree we face challenges like no other. For whatever reason, management refuses to post jobs in areas where they are needed.

Over the next several weeks we will be filing grievances for most of the city stations to get jobs posted. Loads of overtime, carriers/supervisors doing bargaining unit work, and NTFs working outside their bid hours shows me that more jobs are needed. I am asking that all members continue writing statements and make punches into the operation you are

Good Start, But Still More To Do

“Your personal number should not be used for scheduling purposes.”

working in. This will help in our efforts to try and get jobs posted.

As everyone is aware by now the 204-B grievance for customer service has been settled and paid out. I would like to thank all the stewards, and officers that made this possible, but special thanks goes to Manual Director Kim Smukowski, West Sec. Dir., Marvin Rivera, South Sec. Dir. Greg Becker, and steward Kenni Liggan. Without the help of these individuals it would have been almost impossible for me to do all those 204-B cases by myself. It takes a lot of work putting these cases together. I would also like to thank President Paul McKenna, LBA Mark Ferrari, and Vice President Jeff Worden for putting together the list and negotiating the final payout.

The 204-B payout was the second one we received within the last 6 months. By law, even the non-members received it. I think it's time for the non-members to start paying their fair share like the rest of us. I am asking all our union

brothers and sisters to ask a non-member to join the union. No more free rides. Lets all take the union challenge to make our local scab free in 2018.

Another topic I want to discuss is management calling clerks at home to come in early or to work overtime etc. It is very important that we do not make deals like that. Your personal number should not be used for scheduling purposes. Your number was put on file for emergencies only.

Understaffing at the stations is not an emergency, and your never going to get the help you need if you keep allowing management to call you to come in early when you are not at work. I am asking all our union members to tell management or put a letter in writing explaining that you do not want to be contacted at home for scheduling purposes. If they contact you after that you should be filing a grievance. Thanks for being a union member.

***Together we stand strong,
divided we fall!***

FIGHTING TODAY
for a BETTER
TOMORROW



Jim Arneson
Maintenance Director

Recently, yet another employee was injured while working on a machine. This employee was struck by a rear door that was hit by an APC. This should not have happened.

Managements response was to get new plastic barriers. Yet a plastic barrier is not going to stop an APC. This is why, we, as Maintenance employees need to be proactive in our safety. If we are working behind a machine we need to have the equipment moved away from the area we are working. Also, if we are going to be inside the machine where our movement is restricted then we should request; 1. Either the clerk crew working on the machine being repaired cease operations or 2. Have someone watching out to make sure that nobody moves equipment near our working area.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. However, rules and practices will not keep us safe unless we are aggressively following them and making sure that management does more than give empty platitudes. On a side note, the Union filed a safety grievance when the boards behind the machines were moved. Management was insistent that those boards were not there for safety, but were there to protect the machine. Apparently, the

Safety Is Everyone's Responsibility

"...the machines are more important to management then the employees."

machines are more important to management than the employees.

With the winter season upon us, the custodians at the stations should be noting how often they have to mop the lobby and the workroom floor. Upper management is under the premise that, even during winter, we only mop the lobby three days a week and never mop the workroom floor. Make a calendar and write down the dates and times that you mop these areas.

With new contract negotiations coming up, now is the time to submit resolutions to change or add language to the contract. It was Maintenance members that pushed to have PSE converted to career.

Many times, we are at the forefront in getting benefits and upgrades included in the negotiations.

Lastly, I have been hearing more and more that MM7s are providing area assurance. While it is within the job description of the MM7 to replace gates, belts, etc. it does not include troubleshooting. So if a jam keeps occurring at the same place, the removal of the jam could be MM7 work but the actual finding of the cause of the repeated jams would be higher level.

This is not to say that an individual MM7 couldn't figure this out, but the agreed upon wage compensation for said ability is at a higher level.





Greg Becker
South Sectional Director

This Article was written by me back in 2016, however, I still receive questions from PTF's who are scheduled to work at other installations than their own.

This article spells out the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the "Assignment of PTF Hub Clerks." PTF's can state a preference to not work at other offices, and your request shall be honored in accordance with the "Pecking order." By sharing this article again, I hope it is read by PTF's who can take advantage of this contractual language.

Frequently, I talk to PTF Clerks who work at small A.P.O.'s that I represent. Some of the questions often asked by PTF Clerks begin with..."Can they send me to...?" or "How can I get more hours?" Of course, the answer to both questions depends on the facts and circumstances provided.

But, there is no doubt that the struggle for PTF's usually involves the amount of hours worked each week. Do you get enough hours to pay the bills and support your family at the end of the month versus do you get enough time to spend with your children and spouse after frequently being sent to other offices during the week for whatever reason.

The Struggle Of PTF Clerks

"In recent years, the parties agreed that PTF's could only work in Level 20 and below offices."

This is the dilemma that many PTF Clerks have to navigate during their career in the U.S.P.S.

As many of us experienced, we started out as PTF Clerks in offices, big and small. This was the way we were hired. We all knew that we had to serve our time while making a fair wage with benefits, usually a year or three, and then we would "make" regular with a fixed schedule of 40 hours a week for the rest of our career.

Then the USPS and APWU agreed to a new category of new hires called PSE's. In recent years, the parties agreed that PTF's could only work in Level 20 and below offices.

These small office PTF Clerks could wait many years before being converted to a "Regular" Clerk, if ever.

In the contract recently arbitrated and settled by Arbitrator Goldberg, the parties negotiated a new "pecking order" for the assignments "out of the installation" by PTF Clerks.

I have given reports on this topic in recent meeting reports.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) could greatly add to the hours worked by PTF Clerks who want more hours and reduce the hours of PTF Clerks who would like less hours.

The text of this MOU is from the National Agreement:

***RE: Assignment of PTF
Hub Clerks***

This provision covers PTF Clerk craft employees who may be required to work in installations other than their home office (installation).

PTF's shall be scheduled for work outside their home office (installation) in accordance with the following:

1. Within thirty days of the effective date of the 2015 National Agreement, PTF's shall notify their postmaster in writing their preference not to work in offices in other installations. PTF's unavailable for the entire thirty day period due to leave shall provide their written preference within thirty days of returning to work.
2. Newly converted or assigned PTF's shall, within two weeks of the effective date of the conversion or assignment, notify their postmaster in writing their preference NOT to work in offices in other installations.
3. If a PTF wants to change his or her preference to NOT work in offices in other installations the employee must provide a two week notice to his or her postmaster in writing.
4. If a PTF wants to rescind his or her preference to not work in offices in other installations, he or she must

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provide written notification of his or her rescission. The change will be effective no later than seven days from the date of notice.

5. Preference changes will be allowed no more than three times in a calendar year. Upon request, a copy of each written preference change will be provided to the appropriate Union official.

6. The Pecking order for assignment will be: a. PTF's who have not indicated a preference to only work within their installation, b. Available and qualified PSE's, c. PTF's that have preferred not to work in offices in other installations. END of MOU.

I would always recommend that you always keep a copy of your letter to the Postmaster and get it date stamped if possible. If you are a PTF and you believe that management is not following the wording of this MOU, contact me. This new language negotiated by the parties means nothing if it is not enforced. I can be reached at 414-530-3449. Thank you.

* * *



Marvin Rivera
West Sectional Director

Art. 1.6 Section 6. Performance of Bargaining Unit Work

Supervisors are prohibited from performing bargaining unit work at post offices with 100 or more bargaining unit employees except:

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

If You See Something, Write Something

"A statement is a valuable piece of evidence in the grievance procedure..."

I'm still hearing that management is performing Clerk Craft work but far too many members are reluctant to write statements.

A statement is a valuable piece of evidence in the grievance procedure, especially if the case must go to Arbitration. I understand that some members who work at the small offices may feel intimidated by their supervisors but if we continually stay silent or look the other way we will never be able to protect our work. Not being able to protect our work may lead to excessing.

If you see a violation, report that violation to your union steward. Include who, what, when, and sign the statement. Any time a duty assignment is reverted or abolished,

you can bet a part of the reason for this happening was because managers were performing clerk craft work.

You may feel that Management is just helping you get the mail out, but as long as the facility is properly staffed there should be no need for Management to HELP.

***So again, if you see something,
write something.***



See something

Plain Talk: Power Play Shows Money's Grip On State

by: Dave Zweifel, The Capital Times

*The good people of Wisconsin witnessed this week
why it's next to impossible to loosen the grip of money on our politics.*

A blustering state Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, simply because his Republican Party controls all of state government, including its Supreme Court, exercised his unchecked power and not unlike a Mafia don made it clear that if you have the audacity to mess with us, we'll get even. And Fitzgerald did just that, effectively firing the administrators of the state's Ethics Commission and Elections Commission because they once worked for the defunct GAB (Government Accountability Board), which a few years ago did what it was supposed to do and joined in an investigation to determine if Scott Walker and his collaborators had violated the state's campaign finance laws.

The GAB, charged with independently enforcing elections and ethics laws, cooperated with Milwaukee County DA John Chisholm's probe into the possible violations. Chisholm had convened a second John Doe probe, a uniquely Wisconsin investigative tool, to examine records and question witnesses. A first John Doe, focused mainly on Walker's behavior as Milwaukee County executive, had already resulted in several convictions. But you don't question those in power in Wisconsin these days, even if the smell of corruption is distinctly in the air.

The second John Doe probe was squelched by a Supreme Court whose majority was elected with money from the same pots that greased the skids for Walker, Fitzgerald and even Attorney General Brad Schimel. And then the vendetta began. It has cost two innocent state workers their jobs (those decisions might be challenged in court) with promises that there's more to come.

Not even the publication by Britain's Guardian newspaper of 1,500 pages of leaked documents from the second John Doe slowed the Republican leadership's desire to get even. The leaked documents showed why Chisholm had launched his probe.

Walker brazenly cooperated in what was nothing more than a shakedown of big money figures — everyone from Sheldon Adelson to Carl Ichan — to funnel money into his 2012 recall campaign.

There was evidence of what could reasonably be considered bribery, like a donation of \$750,000 to a third-party group aligned with Walker from the owner of a lead paint manufacturer seeking immunity to suits filed by families of kids who had suffered lead poisoning. Or the secret routing of \$700,000 to the Walker cause by the out-of-state mining company seeking legislation to open an open-pit mine in Wisconsin's Penoque Hills. But Wisconsin's Supreme Court insisted investigators were misreading the campaign finance statutes and ended the probe.

Now one might think that legislators — even highly partisan ones — might want to examine the influence of astronomical donations on the political process and perhaps clean it up for the benefit of Wisconsin's future. No, not Scott Fitzgerald or his Senate colleagues. First, let's make sure there's no one left in state government who was remotely connected to that investigation of government corruption. Joe McCarthy would be proud.

In 1887 British historian John Acton famously said, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." That, ladies and gentlemen, is what Scott Fitzgerald and his wrecking crew have shown us is still very much the case.



Jeff Worden
Vice President

*In order for us to shape the future and have a positive impact on issues important to us, we must have a **STRONG POLITICAL VOICE!** The one way to do that is by having a strong COPA program.*

COPA (COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL ACTION) was created to raise voluntary political campaign contributions to support the election of representatives who support working families and help defeat those who do not. We rely on active, retired and auxiliary members to build a strong APWU COPA Fund. All contributions, no matter how large or small are vitally important to our success.

COPA

"A recommended goal for active members is a reoccurring \$10.00..."

TEN TO WIN

A recommended goal for active members is a reoccurring \$10.00 contribution per pay period, but we welcome whatever amount you feel is right for you. We strive to have members contribute automatically through COPAMATIC.

COPAMATIC contributors are any member, retiree, auxiliary or eligible APWU COPA contributor who gives ongoing contributions through PostalEase, Ten-To-Win, EFT (checking account), automatic repeat credit card contributions, OPM and payroll deduction.

All COPAMATIC contributors are currently recognized based upon contributions made between July 1st, 2016 and June 30th, 2018. A random drawing will be held at the

APWU National Convention this August in which all of those COPAMATIC contributors (during that timeframe) will be entered into a drawing to win;

Grand Prize— A fabulous trip for two from the APWU COPA Once in a Lifetime Trip List

2nd Prize— The winner will receive a Wi-Fi enable iPad.

3rd Prize— The Winner will receive a 42" flat screen TV.

Please consider filling out the form at the bottom of this page to become a COPAMATIC member. Once completed, please give it to an officer of steward so that it can be forwarded to the National Legislative Department.

Take Care.

Yes! I Want to Join the Team.

I authorize a payroll deduction to COPA in the amount of: ☐ \$10 per pay period ☐ \$_____ per pay period

These contributions will appear on a line identified as VBP on your paycheck. You can adjust or cancel your contribution at any time by contacting APWU at (202) 842-4211.

Name: _____ Employee ID # _____

Should we need to contact you, please include your email address and phone number. Please write clearly.

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Signature _____

PSE

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Want To Beat Trumpism In 2018? Get Organized

by: Zach Messitte, President, Ripon College

It will take more than pink hats or marches to defeat Trumpism in the mid-term elections; it will take well-organized politics.

So maybe you've gone to a march and even knitted a pink pussy hat. You've written to your senators (unsuccessfully) to oppose cabinet nominations and you laughed at Melissa McCarthy's impression of Sean Spicer on Saturday Night Live. You expressed solidarity with Elizabeth Warren's persistence in reading Coretta Scott King's letter on the Senate floor, but it still feels kind of empty.

Ready to do something tangible that pushes back against Trumpism? It's all about the 2018 elections. And you'd better start thinking differently right now. It is no longer enough to make a nominal contribution. This time it's going to require a real commitment of time and energy. Get ready to hammer some yard signs, stump for local candidates and own the topics that swing voters care about the most.

President Donald Trump has about a year a half to show tangible results to "make American great again." A short checklist of what he needs to do based on his campaign promises might include: improving the health care system, creating more jobs, justifying the building of a border wall, improving infrastructure, providing middle-class tax relief, rolling back the heroin epidemic and restoring a culture of civility and respect to American politics.

So instead of getting sucked into the daily morass of Kellyanne Conway-Nordstrom-Russia-popular vote loser-pray-for-Arnold Schwarzenegger-mess, focus on the issues. Repealing and replacing Obamacare didn't happen on Trump's day one, as previously promised. And as the days pass, the timetable gets murkier. And the 20 million people who experts say will be affected if Trumpcare (whatever that is) becomes law suddenly have emerged as very motivated 2018 voters. The president says that he has a cheaper, more affordable plan for everyone that also will allow people with pre-existing conditions to keep their coverage. Given that the Affordable Care Act was passed seven years ago, when do we get to see this magical new proposal? Anyone want to bet that if there is a Trumpcare by 2018, it will cover fewer people, cost more and be less effective than what's currently on the books by the time we go to the polls again?

In the end, it's always going to be about the economy, and Wisconsin's top two trading partners are Canada and Mexico. The Trump administration's wished-for renegotiation of NAFTA needs to show an improvement in the export economy that will lead to jobs for people in Manitowoc and Mequon. The Mexican president canceled his January visit to Washington and scored political points at home for doing so. Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has perhaps less in common with Trump than any other international leader.

A new NAFTA by 2018 looks bleak. True Reagan conservatives and liberal internationalists found common ground around free trade because they both believed in Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" maxim, "if a foreign country can supply us with a commodity cheaper than we ourselves can make it, better buy it of them with some part of the produce of our own industry, employed in a way in which we have some advantage." Where are the new jobs? Even if the stock market continues to roar as the new administration cuts corporate tax rates and tears down post-recession regulations, when does that start to help the self-employed plumber in Sheboygan who voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, but switched to vote for Trump this last time around?

Unless you believe in quick trickle down economic miracles, it's not going to happen before 2018. And didn't Trump promise to fix La Guardia Airport and all sorts of bridge-road infrastructure, too? So-called fiscal conservatives should

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have anxiety about an exploding national debt if he does so. Is Trump a real conservative on fiscal issues? And what about that big, beautiful wall? New estimates show it will cost \$21 billion to build a barrier on the U.S.-Mexico border. And now, to even get started on construction, we will have to spend our own treasure first. As the entire nation, including rural Wisconsin, reels from a growing heroin epidemic, 2018 candidates can ask voters: spend billions on a border wall 1,900 miles away from Fond du Lac or help our fellow citizens and law enforcement officials struggling to contain rising addiction and drug violence closer to home? And then there is the general undertone of it all. Think there are any Trump supporters out there who might now have a twinge of regret about their decision to “drain the swamp?” Maybe billionaire Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross will lead the charge to change the culture in D.C., but it’s hard to see how Trump’s cabinet appointments speak to voters in Two Rivers or Omro.

In 2018, it’s no longer going to be a choice between Trump and Hillary Clinton. She’s not on the mid-term ballot. The election in 2018 will be a referendum on Trump’s politics and policies, and on those career elected officials who have stood by while the new president has (take your pick) denigrated the federal judiciary, the intelligence community, diplomatic relations with allies and respect for honesty and transparency in government. Outside of Trump’s diehard supporters, many Republicans and Democrats know that America can do better than this.

No, in fact, they know that we must do better than this. The 2018 elections will be the first time to prove it.

* * *

Local Tidbits-Part 2.

by: Karen White, Recording Secretary

It has been brought to the union’s attention that our members are not receiving the right information regarding their FMLA coverage and approval. This has also caused our members to be issued discipline regarding their attendance. To often we learn during the grievance procedure for attendance discipline that dates cited should have been recorded as FMLA. Below are some answers to common questions/concerns regarding FMLA (this is not an exclusive list but a few common issues):

- Make sure when you apply for FMLA for the calendar year 2018 that you have 1250 work hours. You must have 1250 work hours to apply for FMLA.
- Have your doctor fill out the CORRECT forms for the coverage you are seeking. This is very important. The wrong forms only delay the approval process.
- If you receive any mail from HR Shared Services open it immediately. Don’t wait. Often HR will send out either an approval letter or a letter stating items that may need to be corrected on your FMLA form. Don’t wait. There is always a time limit to submit any corrections.
- If you have done everything correctly, and still have not received an approval letter from HR Shared Services, there are a few options: You can call HR Shared Services and inquire if your FMLA was approved. If it was, ask them to send you a letter. Make sure to write down the name of the person who you talked to and the FMLA case number. You can also have a steward investigate these issues for you or have your supervisor check on the status of your submitted paperwork.

Hopefully, this information will help.

Any questions or concerns about FMLA please see a steward/officer or call the Union Hall at 414-273-7838.

Thank you.

DOL / OWCP

by: Dr. Jonathan Saigh

After a very thorough vetting, the Milwaukee Area Local Executive Board recommended at the January 4th, 2018 Executive Board meeting that Dr. Jonathan Saigh, DC., and ACS Advanced Care Specialists be able to offer free consultations, free OWCP claims assistance, free case management and other OWCP related services to our Local Membership. This recommendation was approved at the January 24th, General Membership Meeting.



Dr. Jonathan Saigh, DC is a physician focused on Department of Labor/Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (DOL/OWCP) in Southeast Wisconsin. He owns and operates Advanced Care Specialists, the only DOL/OWCP-specialized clinic in the state. Dr. Saigh comes to Wisconsin from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan where he was a four-year varsity letter winner in football. He played on the offensive line and was part of Michigan's most recent Big Ten football championship team.

Dr. Saigh attained the starting guard position for what would have been his fifth-year season, until a career ending neck injury put an abrupt halt to his playing days. This injury, coupled with the experience with his medical team at the time, shaped Dr. Saigh's medical professional future, and it continues to impact how Advanced Care Specialists is run today. Dr. Saigh's goal is to make sure patients know he's invested in their care and cases, and the philosophy at Advanced Care Specialists is simple: everyone is treated as family, and no one gets cookie-cutter care. Each treatment plan is individualized to each patient.

Dr. Saigh takes a special interest in federal work injuries and the complexity of getting cases accepted. He communicates openly and directly with any outside specialists, including MRI facilities and orthopedic surgeons, to help the patient receive necessary treatment. Dr. Saigh also communicates with claims examiners in each case to decrease processing time. Indeed, his communication with those handling each case is what makes Dr. Saigh the only provider in the state who can help open a denied case. He does this because he knows when patients can have their cases opened right away, it saves them time, money and frustration. And as a result, he keeps them on a productive road to healing.

Advanced Care Specialists, with a multidisciplinary setting and specialties ranging from rehabilitation and massage to chiropractic and family medicine (MD), is the only clinic in Wisconsin that stands behind their knowledge of DOL/OWCP cases. So much so that they will not charge federal workers out of pocket if they cannot get the case opened. ACS will also start treatment right away to ensure injuries do not worsen, even if the case is not accepted, and they offer free claims help. With DOL/OWCP reimbursing driving miles for medical appointments related to work injuries, Advanced Care Specialists is the right choice for all of your DOL/OWCP needs.

Visit advancedcarespecialists.com to learn more and set up an appointment today.



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***Milwaukee
Area Local 3***

People are bragging about becoming 401(k) millionaires and posting their balances to social media

by: Sally French

The latest sign of investor euphoria: Sharing your 401(k) balance has become a thing. How are Americans' 401(k)s doing? Just check Twitter. In what many will see as the latest sign of investor euphoria — and of our society's oversharing epidemic — sharing your 401(k) balance on social media seems to have become a thing.

- Meet a Reddit user going by the name “Subject—Beef.” He wrote that he has contributed \$308,000 to his 401(k) since 1995, and posted a detailed rundown on his yearly contributions and resulting balance of \$1,007,375.50. “I strived to become a 401(k) millionaire someday, and this week, thanks to years of consistent savings and a long bull market, that goal has come to fruition, at the ripe age of 45,” the post reads.
- Another Reddit user posted this screenshot of his \$1,007,375.50 vested 401(k) balance.
- Meet another Reddit poster “EquativeFib,” whose 401(k) account has \$475,000 in it. He also shared that his total investments are worth \$2.2 million.

With the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the S&P 500 index hitting record after record since President Trump's election, the question “How's your 401(k) doing?” has become a staple in his speeches at campaign-style rallies and fundraisers. And 401(k) balance shoutouts have become a staple among his supporters — and detractors — on Twitter.

It's worth noting, however, that for every person bragging about his or her fat retirement portfolio, there are hundreds more who have none at all. Only about 54 million American workers put money into a 401(k) plan in 2015, according to the Investment Company Institute, while 150 million were employed in that year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Sharing financial information on Twitter, Reddit and Facebook may not be anything new. There are many pages on Reddit dedicated to traders crowing about their latest trades and finance-oriented groups on Facebook where people post their money questions, concerns and goals (Market Watch's Moneyist group being one of them).

But the outpouring of 401(k) celebrations comes at a time when many market watchers are wondering if investor euphoria is getting out of hand, and if average investors are ignoring the many warning flags and risk factors on the horizon.

Americans seemingly are feeling more confident in the economy than they have in years. Data out today show consumer spending climbed 0.4% in December, capping off the biggest increase in household buying since 2011. Soaring stock prices and the best labor market since the turn of the century is giving households confidence to spend more money. Meanwhile, the savings rate has been on a steady decline for years, potentially indicating that Americans are spending beyond their means.

More people reportedly are willing to withdraw from their 401(k) accounts as much as \$20,000 to \$40,000 to fund dream vacations or home improvements, according to the Washington Post. Of course, most financial advisers strongly recommend against taking a loan out on your 401(k). By some estimates, someone in his or her 20s borrowing \$10,000 today could end up losing \$380,000 (or \$2,000 a month) in retirement.



Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Labor 411

MAKING IT EASY TO SUPPORT GOOD JOBS

LOS ANGELES | SAN FRANCISCO | WASHINGTON, D.C. | PHILADELPHIA

A Brew and a Bite On St. Patrick's Day

March 17 is the day we go green and grab a frosty brew, and Labor 411 has more than a few great options. Our beer list has topped 250 choices and if you're putting a meal together, we've got some delicious savory accompaniments. Add a little green food coloring to your pint and you're good to go.

Happy St. Patrick's Day from Labor 411!

Corned Beef

Saag's
Thumann's
Winter's Premium Deli

Potatoes and Cabbage

Dole Fresh Potatoes

Purchase cabbage at a union grocery store (see Labor411.org)

Green Food Coloring

Betty Crocker

Beer

Bass
Beck's
Blue Moon
Budweiser
Busch
Butte Creek
Coors
Dundee
Duquesne
Genesee
Goose Island
Hamm's
Henry
Weinhard's

Iron City

Jamaica Red Ale
Keystone
Killian's
Land Shark Lager
Lionshead
Mad River
Mendocino Brewing
Michelob
Mickey's
Miller Genuine Draft
Milwaukee's Best
Natural Ice
O'Doul's (non alcoholic)
Pabst Blue Ribbon

Red Stripe

Red Tail Ale
Rolling Rock
Sam Adams
Schlitz
Shock Top
Steelhead
Third Shift

For a complete list, visit Labor411.org



FAST FACT:

Americans are expected to spend \$250 million on beer alone on St. Patrick's Day.

