

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

MARCH 2017

Volume 39 Issue 3

ALL SYSTEMS GO !

Milwaukee Area Local 3

APWU
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO



Proudly representing postal workers for over 100 years

Your Local Union Unveils Our New Website

Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

Big Bend Brookfield Burlington Butler Cedarburg Cudahy Darien
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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**

In the past month, management had service talks with employees in the Milwaukee Plant and handed out "New Work Room Rules". Some of the rules listed reinforced old rules and were entirely within management's rights to do so. However, some of the rules they put in place were at the whims of management and very subjective.

One of the new rules took away a long standing practice of clerks getting wash up time before lunch. Mail handlers, however, were not included under this new rule. This was challenged and it was agreed to go back to the past practice of giving the clerks a 5 minute wash-up time prior to lunch, as well as at the end of their tour.

Another rule stated that we were no longer permitted to leave the building while on the clock. This was challenged on the basis that smoking areas are outside the building and the fact that employees were always allowed to go to their vehicles in the employee parking lot while on break or lunch. After discussing these factors, the old practice is back. Employees can once again go out of the building on breaks or lunches, but must stay on Postal Property.

Another new rule regarded proper

attire at work. Management gave us a lot of definitions regarding "proper attire". Their definitions, however, were all subjective to each supervisor's interpretation.

The Postal Service has rules and regulations in their handbooks and manuals on proper attire, but local management wanted to put their own spin and rules on it. We challenged this and management agreed to go by what the handbooks and manuals say.

Another issue that the Plant Manager and I recently discussed was the T1 Box Section and how it seems that management is delaying the mail by not running the Box Mail on the machines on T1 anymore.

Customers of large and small companies pay a lot of money to have caller service so they can have their mail picked up as soon as possible. But management started delaying the mail by not processing it on the day it arrived. Instead they would wait until the next day to run the mail on T2 or T3, thus delaying the mail for the box customers.

After discussing this with the Plant Manager, he agreed with the union and stated that the company will go back to running the Box Mail on T1. I will schedule further discussions about management withholding mail and staging it (not allowing certain tours to process it if the mail is available).

Challenging New Directives

"We challenged this and management agreed to go by what the handbooks and manuals say."

Significant COLA Increase

APWU Web News 2/15/17

Career employees represented by the APWU will receive a 16 cent per hour cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) effective March 4, in accordance with the 2015-2018 Collective Bargaining Agreement (Postal Support Employees are not eligible for cost-of-living increases, but they receive five general wage increases under the 2015-2018 contract). The increase is the result of an increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W). The increase will appear in paychecks dated March 24 (Pay Period 06-2017), and will total \$333.00 per year.

This is the second cost-of-living increase under the 2015-2018 contract. APWU COLA benefits "underscore the importance of collective bargaining rights," said President Mark Dimondstein. "It is because APWU members have joined together in a union, and negotiate together, that the contract includes COLA raises based on the CPI." The next COLA increase will be based on the July 2017 CPI-W and will be effective in September 2017. Additional COLAs will be based on the January 2018 and July 2018 CPI-W. The cost-of-living adjustments are in addition to general wage increases.

(Updated pay scales are available at www.apwu.org)

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS ACCIDENT BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

(www.apw-aba.org)

APW-ABA Memorial Scholarship Honoring: Michael A Tosches, Thomas Hartos and Eugene Johnson

2017 SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

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

Documents: A PDF for the APW-ABA Scholarship Application is online on the APW-ABA website



APWU BASIC STEWARD TRAINING

Tuesday, May 9th, 10am-1pm

Milwaukee Area Local Union Hall
417 N. 3rd St. Milwaukee

Come learn the basics of being an APWU Steward.
Career & PSE APWU members
are encouraged to attend.

If interested in attending,
please call the Union Hall at 414 273-7838
no later than May 8th.

Lunch and beverages provided.



**Mark Ferrari
Local Business Agent
& Health Plan Rep.**

Our new local APWU website is now available for viewing.

apwumilwaukee.org

The site took several months to develop and hopefully you will find it informative in assisting you with

Local Unveils New Website

"No registration is required to access the website at this time."

your issues as postal workers and union members. Contract info (local and national), pay info, local and national postal/union info, leave and schedule change forms, FMLA forms, important links, etc. are now easily available on your computers and smart phones.

No registration is required to access the website at this time.

If anyone has any questions or suggestions about the website please contact me at 414 273-7838.

APWU National Officer to Swear in Local's Executive Board for the 2017-2019 Term.

National APWU Maintenance Craft Director, Steve Raymer will address the membership at the March 29th General Membership Meeting at 8pm at the Union Hall at 417 N. 3rd St. in Milwaukee.

Director Raymer will field questions from the members. Please make plans to attend!

APWU Secretary-Treasurer Awarded Peace Prize

APWU Web News 2/17/17

On February 14, Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Powell was awarded the 2016 World Peace Prize, "Roving Ambassador for Peace," presented by the World Peace Prize Awarding Council (WPPAC), headquartered in Seoul, South Korea. Secretary-Treasurer Powell was honored alongside former AFL-CIO President John Sweeney at the award ceremony at the AFL-CIO Headquarter building in Washington, D.C.

Secretary-Treasurer Powell received the award because she "personifies the Dream of Martin Luther King, Jr.," said Fr. Sean Mc Manus, president of the Capitol Hill-based Irish National Caucus and chief judge of the WPPAC. "She blazes the trail for justice, equality and peace, thereby building up the 'Beloved Community' – the term Dr. King made famous."

"I once read that social justice is the belief that every individual and group is entitled to fair and equal rights and participation in social, education and economic advantages," said Secretary-Treasurer Powell in her acceptance speech. "I am a huge believer in giving back and helping out in the community and the world because I believe that the measure of a person's life is the affect they have on others."

"As Dr. King would say, the time is always right to do what is right," she continued. "Therefore I would ask that each of you reach out and take somebody's hand, keeping in mind that it is not necessary to put out anyone else's light in order for yours to shine. The more light we have, the brighter and clearer the path for us all." Reverend Dr. Han Min Su, a Presbyterian Minister, started The World Peace Prize in 1989. Su has given his life to promoting world peace through uniting the East and West.



Larry Brown jr
Automation Director

With everything that has been going on with this job being canceled and that job being canceled, I guess I have no choice but to label this the Principle Assignment Area article.

There has been so much talk about principle assignment areas these last couple of months. It seems as if this is the only thing happening in Automation. How did this happen? Principle assignment areas have been in our contract for years, right? Why such a big deal now? That's what I'm trying to figure out.

In a couple of months, we have managed to change the way that automation has been operating for years. All for the sake of following the contract.

There are two sides to this argument, when it comes to principle assignment areas in Automation...

- ♦ The side that believes Automation is and should be the whole fourth floor.
- ♦ The side that believes that the 4th floor should be split into different areas.

Please consider that I am not including the cancelers in this argument, as we all know that they are already considered separate from the fourth floor.

Principle Assignment Area

"Since we are giving it so much attention now, it threatens to change the way that automation has operated for over a decade."

The people that believe that the 4th floor should be split into different areas (**SIDE 1**) have two main arguments.

Their main argument is that we have had principle assignment areas for years now. The people that believe Automation is the whole 4th floor (**SIDE 2**) counter that argument by saying, although we have had principle assignment areas on the 4th floor, the members have always been allowed to move freely between the areas.

I would have to say that, in this instance, both sides are correct. If the principle assignment areas were implemented and the rules were not followed that would be a problem, but if the rules were never followed and there was never a problem then what is the problem?

The problem is with the recent uproar that principle assignment areas has had. Since we are now giving it so much attention it threatens to change the way that automation has operated for over a decade.

There are rules that go along with having principle assignment areas. Rules that have not been followed for a long time (past practice). The issue is, do we want to see automation run like this from this day forward?

SIDE 1's second main argument was, there are members that bid into

a principle assignment area and are not allowed to work the area they bid into. This is a major point by **SIDE 1** which really has no opposition, as it considered the best argument. This is what principle assignment areas was put into the contract for. To allow employees to bid on the area that they would like to work. If this is not happening, then it needs to be addressed.

SIDE 2 argued that no one should be locked into one area strictly because their bid. We cannot tell what is going to happen in the future, so try to predict it based on the past because history repeats itself.

What members must understand is that anytime management can tell them that the Union is prohibiting them from doing something that they want to do, management will take that opportunity. One of the rules that goes along with principle assignment areas is the day to day seniority of the members in that area. If someone is moved out of that area it must be done by seniority, junior people first.

Restricting movement based on a bid means that, you bid in and you bid out. **SIDE 2** believes nobody should have this as the only options available to them.

Since history repeats itself, let history explain why you wouldn't want principle assignment areas on the 4th floor.

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PARTNERS.

One of the things that makes working enjoyable is the person you work with. For you to work with whom you want, you'd both better be in the same principle assignment area or it's a no go. You could even be in the same principle assignment area, but not working on the same machine with the person you would want because there are no machines that you both could go to. A machine could become available in another principle assignment area, but you wouldn't be allowed to go there because you're not in that principle assignment area. *(To the people this really happened to, how'd you feel?)*

SUPERVISORS.

Ever been harassed by a supervisor? Ever have a supervisor that just tried to make your life miserable? One option always afforded to us was to work on the opposite end of that supervisor. With principle assignment areas, your only option will be to bid away from that supervisor, which you are not encouraged to do because management can always move supervisors. So, you can choose to stay where the threatening supervisor is and file grievances and EEOs as much as you want, or bid out. *(To the people that could "get away" from that supervisor, how would you have felt if you were forced to stay under him/her?)*

OFF DAYS.

Notice how the off days that you want never seem to come up. You finally get enough seniority to be able to get better days and the days you want are in the upcoming postings. Only one problem. The job is on the other end. Maybe even in that area with that supervisor that you have had issues with. Currently, we have allowed people to bid and when they get the job, stay where they are. Stay in the area they enjoy working in. Stay with the partner that they have had forever. Stay with the supervisor that they may like, but with principle assignment areas, you must go to wherever the bid assignment is. So eventually, you'll decide that dealing with that supervisor again just isn't worth it, to you. Then a junior employee gets the off days that you really wanted. *(To the people that wanted Thursday/Friday off days on tour 3 but chose not to bid because you were going to be forced to leave the area you currently worked, how did you feel when those junior people were awarded those jobs, even though you didn't bid?)*

MAIL PROCESSING.

When management decides to make changes in how they process the mail, you don't want to be locked into one area. In my case, I ran Waukesha when it was heavy. Nobody wanted to run it because it was a heavy program and it had to go out early. I liked running it, so when management moved it, they let me and my partner go with it. On tour one, when they started moving a bunch of DPS down to the West end, employees followed. They didn't want to be stuck running 3rd class and outgoing mail all night. With principle assignment areas in full effect, if management did a massive mail move, people would be stuck running whatever with no choice to move if they wanted. *(To the people that moved to the West end when the mail processing started to change, how would you feel if you were forced to stay. How would you feel if management moved all the DPS back to the east end and forced you to stay on the west running the outgoing and standard mail?)*

ABOLISHMENTS/REPOSTS.

One of the main reasons for **SIDE 2's** argument, that Automation is the whole 4th floor, is when jobs were being abolished and reposted nobody looked at where the jobs were. Everyone just wanted to secure a position and management let everybody go everywhere. That's how we ended up with a West end with not one job listed as a West end principle duty assignment. That went, well. There was no fuss about working with people because principle assignment areas never came into effect. Who is to say there won't be another reposting in the future. Now, we would have to go through that whole ordeal while abiding by these rules. I don't think the next reposting would go so smooth because you would have people trying to stay on their current ends that might not secure a job on that end. People wanting to stay with their partners, but they're in different principle assignment areas.

My main proposal, since this is all about abiding by the contract, is to remove the wording in the posting that state East end, West end, Midwest, etc. We could make the section Automation, and the principle assignment area, the DBCS/

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Brown jr...

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DIOSS. Just as the cancelers principle assignment area is the AFCS. Since everyone was used to bidding based on pay locations and not east end, west end, etc., we still have the pay locations listed in the job comments section of the bids. This way employees still know where to report and who their supervisor is, but in certain instances like the few listed above, employees could still move without it being considered a contract violation. They could still move because pay location does not stipulate a principle assignment area.

This debate has been going on for months now. I just wanted to let people know of the discussions that have been had internally and externally. I know who I have talked to. I know why I feel the way I feel about the situation. Others have claimed to talk to people that agree with them on the issues.

Which way do you feel? This would be one of those times where I would urge the members to come to the Union meetings and help aid in the discussion. I make my decisions based on my experiences and my conversations with others. To the people I have talked to, I have been your voice at meetings and when talking to management.

We discussed the issue of principle assignment areas at the last two Executive Board meetings and said ultimately it will be the members that decide which way we go with this. It's time to speak up for yourselves.

* * *

The "Insurance for Everybody" TrumpCare Catastrophe

- ◆ *21 million lose insurance by 2020*
- ◆ *24 million lose insurance by 2026*
- ◆ *52 million total uninsured by 2026*
(there were 46 million uninsured before
Obamacare became law)
- ◆ *\$880 billion cut from Medicaid by 2026*
- ◆ *15 percent of Planned Parenthood patients*
would lose access to care
- ◆ *64-year-old making \$26,500 would pay*
\$14,600 for insurance in 2026
(\$1,700 under Obamacare)

***24 Million Americans will lose health care
under Donald Trump and Paul Ryan's
proposed health care plan.***

***Look at the seats at Lambeau Field,
Fill them up 569 times.
That's 24 million!!!***





Jeff Worden West Sectional Director

On April 1st, I will end my term as West Sectional Director and start my term as the Vice President of the APWU Milwaukee Area Local.

One of the duties of the VP is to keep active with legislative issues that affect the American Postal Union.

I was the Director of Legislation for the APWU State of Wisconsin for 14 years. Chris Czubakowski (North Sectional Director) is the current Director of legislation for the APWU State of Wisconsin. So, your APWU Milwaukee Area local and your APWU of Wisconsin have a good idea on what needs to be done on the legislative front.

With the current president and the fact that the Senate and House of Representatives are both majority Republican, this Union and middle class workers are definitely going to have their hands full.

One of the things I plan to do as VP is keep the membership updated with the political issues that can/may affect them. I do believe donating to COPA (Committee on Political Action). This is definitely something we ALL should do. I also intend to reinstitute some COPA raffles within the local.

Beginning Of A New Era

"I would also like to work with our union brothers and sisters from the other postal unions..."

I would like to work with our union brothers and sisters from the other postal unions; NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers), Rural Letter Carriers Union and of course the Mail handlers Union.

In the past we have done informational picketing and phone banking with them and many of those efforts ended in great success. I would also like to get our retirees more involved and coordinate future legislative efforts with the federal government union.

At the April 1st Executive Board Meeting the President will appoint members who are interested to the following Standing Committees of the Milwaukee Area Local;

BUDGET, ENTERTAINMENT, SAFETY AND HEALTH, PARKING, BUILDING, LEGISLATIVE, CONSTITUTION, HUMAN RELATIONS, MILWAUKEE POSTAL EMPLOYEES ACTIVITIES, ERGONOMICS, ORGANIZATION AND SCHOLARSHIP.

If you are interested in being on one or more of these committees please submit a letter of interest. As Chairman of the Legislative Committee, I would personally like to extend you an invitation to join us!

You can give your letter to any Executive Board member or mail it to;

APWU
P.O. Box 1995
Milwaukee, WI, 53201-1995

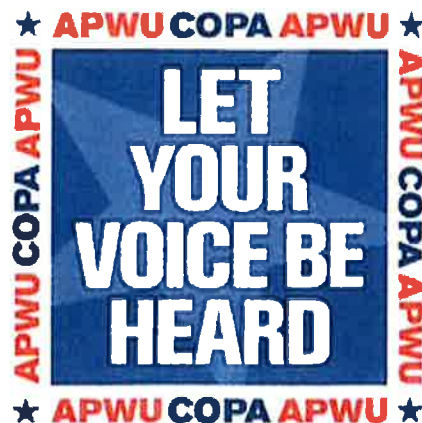
Make sure your letter is at the union hall prior to the April 1st Executive Board Meeting so it can be read at that meeting.

In closing, I just want to say that it has been an honor to serve the members of the West Sectional Offices during the past 12 years.

Starting on April 1st, I will be (mostly) handling grievances at the Downtown Milwaukee Main Office. However, my duties may still require me to attend meetings, perform investigations and file grievances at West Sectional Offices.

If you have any questions you can call me at (414) 530-7186.

Take Care.





Chris Czubakowski
North Sectional Director

Truth be told. Nearly forty percent of union members made the bewildering decision to vote for Donald Trump – an oligarch who has made no attempt to hide his overt disdain for unionism and the bar it sets regarding wages and benefits.

This troubling statistic has left many of us within the labor movement searching for answers in the aftermath of the election. Nonetheless, I would like to thank all politically active APWU members for their continued perseverance and activism in light of defeat. Your efforts are keeping economic/social justice at the forefront of public discourse and continue to educate the public regarding the importance of a vibrant postal service that provides affordable universal service.

While we have overcome many difficult challenges in the past, postal workers are on the verge of facing one of our greatest threats to date; all three branches of the Federal Government controlled by the GOP. In fact, popular vote loser Donald Trump has not only appointed a Goldman Sachs billionaire swamp cabinet determined to work against the public good in all they do but also assembled an administration chock full of Wall Street multinational cor-

poratists. This Administration and a giddy GOP Congress will most assuredly pursue the weakening of the APWU and the privatization of the Postal Service at the behest of their oligarchical benefactors.

Legislatively speaking, postal workers also can no longer rely on the safety blanket of the Presidential veto. Therefore, it is crucial to mobilize and act before any anti-postal bill reaches the President's desk. As such, it is time for us to lick our remaining wounds and resume fighting for what is right. With organizing rights and postal careers hanging in the balance we are going to have to muster every drop of activism and engagement within us to achieve our legislative goals. **Together, we have the power to resist. Together, we have the power to win.**

It is imperative that members of Congress, regardless of party, hear from postal workers regarding all legislation that affects Postal Workers. If we are unwilling to advocate for ourselves, how can we realistically expect other workers to do it for us? We need to educate our elected officials and let them know how their votes will impact our lives and our communities. In order to accommodate this request, the phone number for the Capitol Hill switchboard (202-224-3121) has been imprinted on the back of all 2017 membership cards. Don't drop the ball, make the call!

Educate. Mobilize. Resist.

"Together, we have the power to resist and we have the power to win."

Postal Reform Act of 2017

The APWU and the business community has been calling on Congress to pass a worker friendly version of Postal Reform for quite some time. On January 31st, 2017, House and Government Reform Committee leaders introduced *The Postal Service Reform Act of 2017, H.R. 756*.

After a thorough examination of the bill, the APWU has joined the other postal unions in calling it a positive step forward. While the APWU has encouraged the adoption of the bill we are committed to further improving it before any final vote takes place. In the meantime, the APWU is asking its members to contact their Congressperson and ask them to support H.R. 756.

The PAGE Act

Indiana Republican Todd Rokita has introduced H.R. 6278-The Promote Accountability and Government Efficiency Act (PAGE Act). If you think the title of the bill sounds fair and balanced, you might want to think again. The PAGE Act consists of a two pronged attack against federal unions; It turns all new federal employees, including postal workers, into "at will" employee and prohibits union officials from conducting any union business on the clock (or on government property).

"At will" employees may be removed or suspended - without notice or right to appeal- from service by the head

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of the agency at which such employee is employed for good cause, bad cause, or no cause at all. If the PAGE Act passes, management will be able to discipline new employees for any reason under the sun and those employees will have no right to dispute it via grievance.

The bottom line is that this is a draconian union busting bill will take away the rights of new employees and deprive union representation from the rest of us. This Act should serve as yet another big eye opener to those who continue to believe that the GOP is the party of working people. APWU members need to call their Congressperson and tell him/her to oppose H.R. 6278 (The PAGE Act).

Our Wisconsin Revolution

Our Wisconsin Revolution (OWR) is a brand-new, bottom-up, grassroots state political organization that is committed to building and advancing the populist revolution initiated by the Presidential Candidacy of Bernie Sanders. This is important, as his candidacy led to the most progressive and postal worker friendly Democratic Platform in modern history.

OWR is one of six state organizations that have been formed under the umbrella of its national organization. It seeks to confront and defeat a system that is currently rigged against working people by corporate and elite interests. Its mission is to fight against the current oligarchy for a just, equitable, sustainable, and democratic society by transforming government at all levels.

Once OWR organizational meetings are finished, there will be a founding convening that will include an adoption of structure, governing rules, platform and development of local chapters. Stay tuned for more information regarding the locations of local chapters and how to join. *For more information regarding OWR, please go to <https://ourwisconsinrev.com/>*



Tony Evers For State Superintendent of Schools

The April 4th election is right around the corner and the important race for State Superintendent is on the ballot. Tony Evers understands that each and every child in Wisconsin deserves a quality, public education at a fully funded school and can be counted on to work with parents and educators to create a 21st century public education system every child deserves. If you're concerned about billionaire Betsy DeVos (President Trump's Education Secretary) destroying our public schools, please help elect Tony Evers on April 4th. Remember, the best way to **#Resist** is to Vote!!!

The End of Milwaukee's Right Wing Radio Monopoly

For far too long, Milwaukee's airwaves have been dominated by five ultra-conservative talk radio hosts, none of which reflect the diversity of our community's views and opinions. Without diverse voices on the air, Milwaukee's right-wing radio monopoly of alternative facts have played a key role in dividing our cities and suburbs, shifting public opinion to the far right, demonizing teachers and workers, and swinging our elections.

That all changed when NEWS/TALK-1510 AM went live on February 1st, 2017. Their daily programming schedule includes an assortment of top notch shows; Milwaukee's own Earl Ingram Show airs 6:00-8:00AM, The Stephanie Miller Show airs 8:00-11:00AM, The Thom Hartmann Show airs 11:00-2:00PM, Wisconsin's own Devils Advocates Show airs 2:00-5:00PM, and Free Talk Live airs 6:00-9:00PM.

The mission of 1510 AM is to offer fact based political conversations that reflect the true diversity of opinion in those, rather than serving as another radical right-wing echo chamber or get-out-the-vote machine. With a signal that reaches the whole metro Milwaukee and Madison area, 1510 AM provides unionists with a tremendous opportunity to change the political conversation and landscape in Southern Wisconsin. Tune in on that drive to and from work. You won't be disappointed!



Greg Becker
South Sectional Director

I would like to thank all the members for the help I have received at each Associate Office in my area. Together, we have created a climate where management must comply with the contract or risk a grievance. My goal is to give each member the information that allows each of you to know when your contractual rights are being violated. I have touched on some of these common violations of the contract in past articles or reports, but many bare repeating.

ARTICLE 7.2

This is one of the most common violations I grieve at the Associate Offices, commonly known as a Cross-Craft violation. Management has cut jobs at many A.O.'s over the years, and because of this, frequently finds themselves understaffed and unable to get the mail to the carriers on time. Instead of posting a Duty assignment or hiring a PSE, management will instead direct Carrier Craft employees to perform distribution. "Distribution" is almost always Clerk Craft work and cannot be performed by other crafts outside the language in Article 7.2.

Furthermore, Carrier craft personnel cannot perform distribution of mis-sorts when there are route adjustments in lieu of giving the Clerks the

required scheme training on the changes in carrier routes so that mis-sorts can avoided. Just as other crafts cannot work the "window", other crafts cannot perform distribution at the A. O.'s. This includes Rural Carriers, also. If this violation occurs at your Associate office, take good notes on who is performing clerk work, what was done for how long and contact me or your steward as soon as possible.

ARTICLE 1.6

This violation is similar to a Cross-Craft violation. However, this violation occurs when someone in management or a 204-b supervisor performs Clerk craft work outside the exclusions in Article 1.6. This language applies at offices level 20 and above and Level 6 & 4 RMPO's staffed by Clerks.

Per the Goldberg award of 2014 and the "Global Settlement" (Arbitration Q06C-4Q-C 10005587), management can perform up to 15 hours per week of Clerk work at a Level 18 office and staff a level 2 RMPO with non-bargaining unit personnel.

At all other offices in the South Sectional area of representation, if management works the "window" or performs other Clerk Craft work, this is very likely a violation of Article 1.6.

If you observe supervisors, Postmasters, or 204-b's performing

Common Contractual Violations

"...take good notes on who is performing clerk work, what was done for how long and contact me or your steward as soon as possible."

Clerk work, take good notes and contact me or your steward as soon as possible.

ARTICLE 8

This Article is titled "Hours of Work" and includes overtime. Many times the Union is not made aware unless the aggrieved Clerk notifies the Union. In order to enforce the overtime rules, we must first make sure that management allows full-time regular Clerks to place their name on a quarterly overtime desired list (O.T.D.L) two weeks prior to each quarter. Management must then normally utilize quarterly O.T.D.L Clerks up to the 12/60 hour caps prior to utilizing Non-O.T.D.L Clerks.

Furthermore, prior to utilizing a PSE in excess of 8 hours in a service day, such qualified and available full-time clerks on the O.T.D.L. will be selected to perform such work in order of their seniority on a rotating basis.

Another contractual rule recently amended by Arbitrator Goldberg is that management cannot utilize non-O.T.D.L for overtime if there are Non-traditional Duty Assignments (NTFT) of less than 40 hours in the facility...except in an emergency. And Clerks who occupy NTFT duty assignments on days in which your regular schedule is less than 8 hours, you are considered unavailable for overtime (even if you are an O.T.D.L Clerk). Clerks who are non-O.T.D.L.

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and work at a facility with NTFT Duty Assignments are unavailable to work overtime, except in an emergency. An emergency is defined in the contract to mean just as one would believe, i.e., "an unforeseen circumstance or a combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action in a situation which is not expected to be of a recurring nature." Delayed or late mail and the month of December are all foreseen circumstances that do not need immediate action. Keep in mind that the overtime caps are lifted and penalty pay is waived in the month of December, but the other overtime rules are in effect all year.

In closing, these are some of the contractual Articles that have been frequently violated in the last 2 years. Many Clerks have contacted me when they feel that management has violated the contract, and these Clerks have been compensated when the contract is violated. I hope that I have clarified some of the most common violations that occur at the South Sectional A.O.'s. Contact me if you have any questions.

Non-Revenue Transactions and Proper Clock Rings

by: James Stevenson (Michigan Messenger)

It is imperative for the SSA's to hit the NON-REVENUE transaction key when you are retrieving accountables, parcels, vacation holds, looking up certifieds, or performing any service for a window customer which may not be reflected in your transactions. If a customer is simply standing at your window and asking you questions hit the NON-REVENUE transaction key. Failure to utilize the NON-REVENUE transaction key will give a false WOS reading at the end of the day showing that the clerk was doing absolutely nothing for 15 minutes when in fact you were looking up a certified. Clerks who run from the window, to the cage, to the box section, to the hot case, and to the flat case without identifying properly on the clock are only asking for your job to be eliminated.

A lot of clerks are working their tails off but the records will never show it because the reports show that the mail came in and was distributed by a ghost. I hear so many clerks say "I do not have time to move on the clock." Clerks, you are at work. All you have is time until you go home. Proper clock rings are crucial in this era of downsizing and realigning. I know that right now we are somewhat in this kind of lull on excessing and closures and to many it may be giving a false sense of security. All of that can change with the stroke of a pen and a directive. It is imperative that we are always in job protection mode. Fraudulent inter-office scans are also important. This is extremely important as it relates to scanning the completion of distribution and the scanning of completion of the Box section. The reason why management is instructing you to improperly scan the Box section as complete at 9:30am when in fact you did not complete the work until 10:30am is because they want the official reports to indicate that the work was done utilizing less hours and that they met their goals.

Every time you as a clerk make a fraudulent scan you are helping to eliminate your job. If management themselves are making the fraudulent scans grievances should be filed. There are supervisors who spend almost their entire day working at the window obtaining mail with customer 3849s (parcels, CODs, express mail, certifieds, registered, vacation holds, etc.). All of this is clerk work. When a customer comes to the window with a 3849 to pick up mail we should not be turning around and giving the 3849 to the supervisor to go pick-up. What you as a clerk should be doing is hitting the "Non-Revenue transaction" key and then obtain the mail. Failure to do so over a period of time costs us valuable work hours and will eventually effect staffing if it has not already done so.

I get it, many of you just want to come to work and do a good job, but if your default ring is the window operation and you have performed all of these other functions throughout the entire day than you have just "flatlined" on all the other labor distribution codes and a "Ghost" has performed the work resulting in a reports showing that mail was processed with zero work hours. The Union cannot be everywhere at all times so it is imperative that our valued members assist in protecting our much needed jobs.

John Nichols: Scott Walker's wage-cut budget

Scott Walker is a master of political spin, and he was working overtime when he put the talking points together for his 2017-'19 budget plan. And, of course, the political and media elites that have always cheered on Wisconsin's governor were more than happy to play along. The Chicago Tribune even headlined a piece on Walker's proposal: "Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker proposes surprisingly liberal budget."

Don't fall for that fantasy. This is a cruel and destructive budget proposal that threatens some of Wisconsin's most vulnerable people while extending the governor's assault on working families. It actually seeks to undermine wage protections and benefits. How so?

- ♦ Walker's budget seeks the elimination of prevailing-wage protections for workers on public building projects. This move guts guarantees of fair wages and benefits for workers on state projects, paralleling a previous assault on protections for workers on local projects
- ♦ Walker's budget bars local governments from negotiating project labor agreements on public projects. These agreements, which establish basic standards for wages, benefits and safety on the job, ensure that Wisconsin workers get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They strengthen the hand of responsible local companies in seeking public contracts. Prohibiting project labor agreements threatens to foster a race-to-the-bottom competition that favors low-wage contractors from out of state.

Walker's budget conditions new school funding on a requirement that school districts fully comply with Act 10, the anti-labor law that the governor forced through over widespread opposition in 2011. In order to receive more state aid, school districts that provide generous benefit packages to attract the best teachers would be forced to make those teachers pay more (up to 12 percent) to cover the cost of health care plans. In other words, to get more state aid, teachers have to accept benefit cuts.

Those are not the only threats to protections for working families in the Walker budget. As part of a broader initiative to eliminate or undermine various state boards, Walker proposes to do away with the state Labor and Industry Review Commission, a three-member tribunal that the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel notes is charged with "(resolving) disputes over jobless insurance, worker's compensation and other employment issues."

The LIRC is a historically nonpartisan agency on which the appointees of Republican and Democratic governors have worked together to provide for the independent review of decisions made by administrative law judges. That has allowed the commission, which has roots in the Wisconsin progressive era, to maintain its mission as stated in 1925: "Every person, claimant, employer, and insurance carrier, stands equal before the commission, and it is the duty of the commission to make investigations, find the facts according to the weight of the evidence, and apply the law fairly and justly without regard to the consequences to particular parties."

Eliminating the state Labor and Industry Review Commission, prevailing wage protections and project labor agreements won't do anything to increase the pay, benefits or safety of Wisconsin workers. These moves won't make Wisconsin thrive. These budget gimmicks will merely erase a few most vestiges of a historically worker-friendly state.



**WALKER'S 250,000 job
promise....
still unfilled to this day !!!**

Tax Break for Wealthy Keeps Growing

by: Tamarine Cornelius

11 claimants will get \$22 million tax break under Manufacturing and Agriculture Credit.

A tax break that has cost far more than originally anticipated has resulted in enormous tax breaks for a wealthy few, according to a new analysis from the Wisconsin Budget Project. The Manufacturing and Agriculture Credit nearly wipes out state income tax liability for manufacturers and agricultural producers in Wisconsin. Only about three out of every thousand individual income tax filers receive this tax break, but in 2017 alone the credit will cost the state \$299 million in reduced revenue. Looking ahead, the cost of the credit swells even more, ballooning to more than \$650 million for the upcoming two-year budget period that starts in July 2017.

The cost of this tax cut has taken lawmakers by surprise. In fact, the credit is now estimated to cost *more than double* what lawmakers originally thought when the amendment creating the credit was quietly slipped into the 2011-13 budget bill. Nearly all the value of the tax break goes to the very wealthy.

In fact, just 11 claimants, all of which had incomes of \$30 million or more, receive an estimated combined tax break of \$22 million in 2017. That works out to an average tax break of more than \$2 million each.

What are Wisconsin residents getting in exchange for a runaway tax cut that benefits only a few? Very little. In fact, there is no requirement that manufacturers create even a single new job in order to be eligible to receive this credit. Manufacturers that lay off workers, move jobs overseas, and close facilities can still receive the tax break.

The Manufacturing and Agriculture credit is the latest example of a counter-productive tax-cutting agenda in Wisconsin. The focus on cutting taxes has done little to boost job creation, but has reduced the resources needed to make the kind of public investments that make Wisconsin a great place to live, work, and do business.

Wisconsin's cuts in state support to public schools are among the largest in the country, endangering the strong public education system that gives Wisconsin students one of the best educations in the country.

Wisconsin has also made deep cuts to the University of Wisconsin System, making it harder for universities to add classes in high-demand fields, and for students to graduate on time. Instead of investing in our schools and higher education system, Wisconsin has prioritized tax cuts like this one, which wind up mostly in the pockets of the wealthy and do little to boost employment.

The Big Giveaway

Wisconsin's Manufacturing and Agriculture tax credit nearly wipes out the responsibility for manufacturers to pay income taxes and winds up mostly in the pockets of a wealthy few.

Cost of a Wisconsin tax break that nearly eliminates income taxes for manufacturers and others, 2013 to 2019 **\$1.4 billion**

Average 2017 tax break for claimants with incomes of at least \$30 million **\$2.0 million**

Number of new jobs required to be created to qualify for the tax break **None**

Source: Analysis of figures from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau
WISCONSIN BUDGET PROJECT

The Very Legitimacy of Our Democracy Is Under Threat

Donald Trump's presidency is just one element of our disintegrating democracy

by: Russ Feingold

Normally, our democracy is considered the most legitimate form of government because the power rests with the people. But when this power dynamic is altered and citizens lose their influence, the legitimacy of the system is threatened. And that's what we now face: a system in which money speaks louder than voters, voting is increasingly difficult, and the votes that are cast may not matter because of an archaic system known as the Electoral College. As a result, we, as citizens, are governed by representatives who do not reflect or respect the values and priorities of the majority, and our democratic legitimacy is in grave danger as a consequence.

To understand the roots of our current crisis, we must first look to the orchestrated attack on the pillars of our democracy that began seven years ago, starting with the lawless *Citizens United* decision. In the years that followed, the attack continued with the recent wave of racially targeted voter-suppression laws and last year's hijacking of the Supreme Court by the GOP, capped off by a president who lost the popular-vote margin by nearly 3 million votes. Yet we cannot treat these issues as one-off concerns. Instead, we must respond as a citizenry, as a movement, to the broader threat, taking action from the local level on up, and refusing anything less than the restoration of the power of the people—and our democratic legitimacy.

First, our democracy is built on the pillar that elections are determined by the voters—not by money. The Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in *Citizens United* has turned political campaigns into proxy wars between billionaires and giant, multinational corporations who don't seek to buy just election results but the legislative and policy decisions of the government itself. The result has been a Gilded Age on steroids, with about \$6.8 billion spent on the 2016 election alone. In my recent race for the US Senate, I saw personally how much influence these dark-money groups now enjoy, and how normalized their influence over down-ballot elections has become. In fact, the press now treats the strategy and plans of these groups as near-definitive indicators of whether a candidate can win. In the eyes of pundits, support from a billionaire now means a candidate on the rise. Only seven years after *Citizens United*, activity from the groups it created is assigned as much predictive power as any credible poll. This era of massive institutional corruption must end, and the only way to end it is by returning elections to the voters with a system that puts power back into their hands.

Second, the fundamental right to vote must not, once again, be restricted for cynical, political purposes. Voter-ID requirements may be the latest tactic, but we've seen this evil before, in the form of the literacy tests and poll taxes of Jim Crow, which unconstitutionally suppressed the voting rights of African Americans. In today's version, Republicans, despite no evidence, have invented charges of voter fraud in a deliberate attempt to justify voter-suppression laws that disproportionately—and intentionally—suppress minority and low-income voting. We must fight back, both by using litigation to overturn these laws and by working directly with the communities these laws disenfranchise. We cannot allow a new generation of black voters to face exclusion from our most sacred right.

Third, protecting the vote means protecting the power of the popular vote. Two of the last three presidents have been elected by the Electoral College in defiance of the national popular vote. The Electoral College is a historical relic designed to balance power between slave-owning and non-slave-owning states. Our democracy has come a long way since then, yet we have stuck with this electoral relic. It is time to leave it to the history books and ensure that the popular vote decides national elections. The best solution is a constitutional amendment that removes the Electoral College. But states also have the power to at least nullify the College by joining the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact; 11 states have already done so and more should join.

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Finally, the legitimacy crisis facing our system of government has also extended to the judicial branch, when, last year, GOP senators decided to abandon their constitutional responsibilities by blocking Barack Obama's nomination of Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. They offered no legal justification for their actions, fully admitting that their sole intention was to sacrifice the legitimacy of the Court on a bet that a Republican would win the White House and they could secure their own nominee. I have never seen a politics more cynical than this strategy, crafted by majority leader Mitch McConnell. The severity of this action and what it means for the country cannot be overstated, because the legitimacy of the Court will be questioned for a generation. The difference between Garland and Donald Trump's nominee, Neil Gorsuch, could be the difference between overturning or cementing voter-suppression laws, with future elections in the balance.

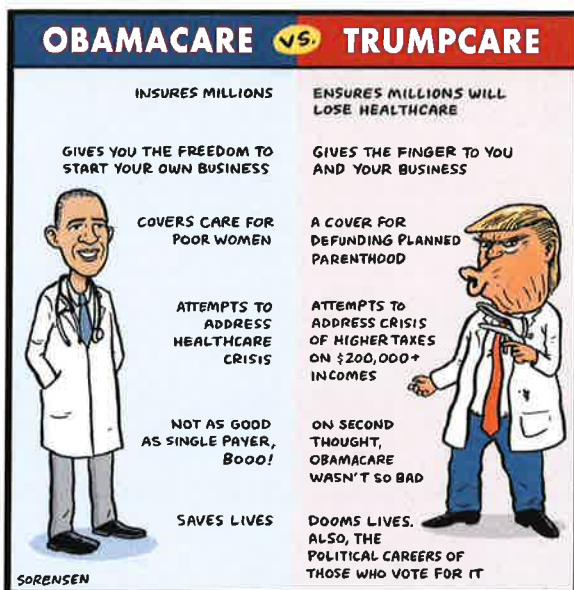
Dark money and voter suppression would be severe problems even in isolation, but combined they are devastating threat to the standing of voters in our democracy. This is the crisis of our lifetime, and must be met with a call to action—to restore our democratic legitimacy. As citizens, as voters, we have work to do. And it starts at the local level: ensuring that we have a democratic governor in Virginia to prevent hyper-partisan gerrymandering; increasing the number of states that enact the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact; overturning *Citizens United*. We may not have another national election for four years, but there are nationally relevant laws being debated and issues being addressed right now. What happens in four years depends on what we do today. And nothing less than the legitimacy of our democracy is at stake.

Trump voters would be among the biggest losers In Republican's Obamacare replacement plan

by: Noam Levey

Americans who swept President Trump to victory — lower-income, older voters in conservative, rural parts of the country — stand to lose the most in federal healthcare aid under a Republican plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, according to an L.A. Times analysis of county voting and tax credit data.

Among those hit the hardest under the current House bill are 60-year-olds with annual incomes of \$30,000, particularly in rural areas where healthcare costs are higher and Obamacare subsidies are greater. In nearly 1,500 counties nationwide, such a person stands to lose more than \$6,000 a year in federal insurance subsidies. Ninety percent of those counties backed Trump, the analysis shows.



And 68 of the 70 counties where these consumers would suffer the largest losses supported Trump in November. Most affected by the Republican health plan would be parts of Alaska, Arizona, Nebraska, Tennessee and Oklahoma, where Obamacare insurance subsidies have been crucial in making high-priced insurance affordable. All five states went for Trump.

Also hit hard would be parts of key swing states that backed Trump, including Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Michigan.

Faring best would be the nation's wealthiest residents, who would see a substantial tax cut with the elimination under the House GOP bill of two levies on high-income taxpayers. These taxes — on individuals making more than \$200,000 and couples making more than \$250,000 — were included in Obamacare to help offset the cost of assisting lower-income Americans.

International Working Women's Day

by: Research & Education Director Joyce Robinson

International Women's Day is celebrated around the world on March 8, in honor of women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements. International Women's Day was first celebrated in North America and Europe in the early 1900s. Since those years, the movement has been strengthened by United Nations' (UN) women's conferences designed to build support for women's rights and equality. The History of International Women's Day...

1908 - In New York City, 15,000 female garment workers protested for better hours, higher pay, the right to vote and safe working conditions.

1909 - The first National Woman's Day was observed in the U.S. on Feb. 28. The Socialist Party of America designated this day in honor of the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York.

1910 - The Socialist International meeting in Copenhagen established an International Women's Day to honor the women's rights movement and to build support for achieving universal suffrage for women. The proposal was approved unanimously by over 100 women from 17 countries.

1911 - International Women's Day was first held on March 19, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. More than one million women and men rallied that day, demanding women be given rights to work, vote, hold public office and receive vocational training.

On March 25, the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in New York kills nearly 150 working women. This disastrous event led to significant legislation to improve safety standards across the United States.

1912 - Provoked by a wage cut, the Bread and Roses strike in Lawrence, MA, shocked the country as more than 23,000 women, men and children demonstrated.

1917 - In protest of World War I, Russian women marched for "Bread and Peace" on March 8. Four days later, the Czar granted women the right to vote.

1920 - On August 18, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave women the right to vote.

1975 - The United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day on March 8.

1977 - The General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed on any day of the year by the Member States, in accordance with their historical and national traditions.

1995 - The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was signed by 189 governments. It focused on supporting women's rights to participate in politics, get an education, have an income and live in societies free from violence and discrimination.

1996 - The UN started adopting an annual theme for the holiday. The first theme was "Celebrating the Past, Planning for the Future."

2014 - The 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women addressed critical issues related to gender equality and women's rights.

The Charter of the United Nations, signed in 1945, was the first international agreement to affirm the principle of equality between women and men. Since then, the UN has helped create internationally strategies, standards, programs and goals to advance the status of women worldwide. Women of every race, class and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the world and continue to play a critical role in the workforce. As we honor these accomplishments, let us never forget that while progress has been made, there is still work to be done before women achieve true equality!

(Sources: www.InternationalWomensDay.com; Women-Watch.UNWomen.org)



LABOR'S LADEL



Cat In The Hat Tub Cake

CELEBRATING NATIONAL READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY (DR. SEUSS DAY)

National Read Across America Day is an annual event that is part of Read Across America, an initiative on reading that was created by the National Education Association.

Each year, National Read Across America Day is celebrated on March 2nd, the birthday of Dr. Seuss.

However, if it falls on a weekend, it is observed in the school systems on the school day closest to March 2nd. This day is a motivational and awareness day, calling all children and youth in every community across the United States to celebrate reading.

HOW TO OBSERVE

Pick up an interesting book and read it. More importantly, read with a child. Use #ReadAcrossAmericaDay or #DrSeussDay to post on social media.

HISTORY

The first National Read Across America Day was held on March 2, 1998.

*Do you know where I found him? You know where he was?
He was eating a cake in the tub! Yes he was!*

From The Cat in the Hat Comes Back

Cat in the Hat Tub Cake

The Cat's cake is easy to make, but eating in the tub is difficult, indeed (and very messy).

Ingredients

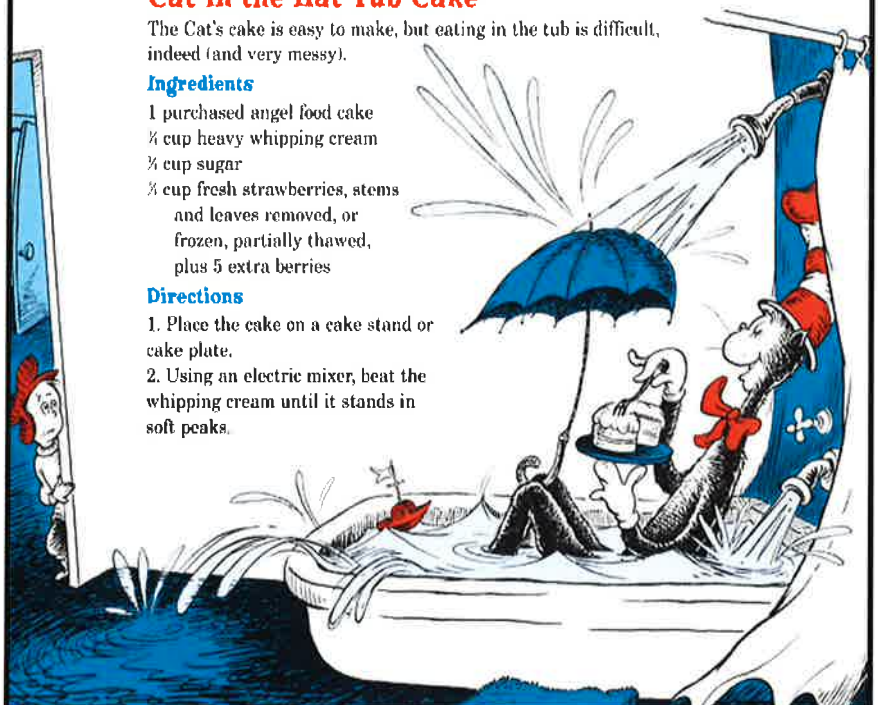
- 1 purchased angel food cake
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh strawberries, stems and leaves removed, or frozen, partially thawed, plus 5 extra berries

Directions

1. Place the cake on a cake stand or cake plate.
2. Using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until it stands in soft peaks.

3. Add the sugar and beat until the cream stands in firm peaks.
4. In a blender, puree the strawberries. Using a spatula, gently fold them into the whipped cream, which will lose some of its stiffness.
5. With the spatula, generously spread the outside of the cake with the whipped cream. Spoon the remainder into the center, filling it to the brim. Decorate the top with the extra strawberries.
6. Serve immediately, or refrigerate for up to one hour. (Any longer and you run the risk of the whipped cream getting oozy.) Cut the cake into wedges. Add another scoop of whipped cream to each wedge.

MAKES 10 TO 12 SERVINGS



BAD TRUMP: President Breaks Vow to Use U.S. Steel in Keystone Pipeline

by: Joseph Curl

President Trump pledged that the Keystone and the Dakota Access pipeline would use U.S. steel "or we're not building one." Apparently, he meant that he's just fine with the pipeline being built without America steel.

Trump issued an executive order Jan. 24 to move forward with the controversial pipeline, which was held up by Barack Obama for all of his eight years in office. The 1,200-mile Keystone pipeline would channel oil from Canada to refineries on the Gulf Coast, while the Dakota Access line would move North Dakota oil to Illinois for refining.

But now the Trump administration is saying that the president's vow to use America steel applies only to "new" pipelines, according to White House spokesman Sarah Sanders. "Since this one is already currently under construction, the steel is already literally sitting there; it would be hard to go back," Sanders told reporters on Air Force One on Friday.

But of course there's more. "That sharp reversal now paves the way for the use of a stockpile of steel manufactured in Canada by a subsidiary of Evraz, a company in which Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich owns nearly a one-third stake. Abramovich, estimated to be worth \$8.9 billion, who ranks No. 151 on Forbes list of the 500 wealthiest people in the world, has longstanding personal and political ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom President Trump has repeatedly praised.

Trump said he took his time prepping the executive order and said he had a discussion just as he "was getting ready to sign. "I said, 'Who makes the pipes for the pipeline?' 'Well, sir, it comes from all over the world, isn't that wonderful?' I said, 'Nope, it comes from the United States, or we're not building one.' American steel. If they want a pipeline in the United States, they're going to use pipe that's made in the United States."

Well, never mind on that. We'll use Russian steel. So much for promises.

Donald Trump boasted repeatedly about his order that pipelines must use "materials produced in the United States." Like everything with Trump, he lied...

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
SUBJECT: Construction of American Pipelines

The Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with all relevant executive departments and agencies, shall develop a plan under which all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipelines, inside the borders of the United States, including portions of pipelines, use materials and equipment produced in the United States, to the maximum extent possible and to the extent permitted by law. The Secretary shall submit the plan to the President within 180 days of the date of this memorandum.

Produced in the United States shall mean:

(i) With regard to iron or steel products, that all manufacturing processes for such iron or steel products, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States.

(ii) Steel or iron material or products manufactured abroad from semi-finished steel or iron from the United States are not "produced in the United States" for purposes of this memorandum.

(iii) Steel or iron material or products manufactured in the United States from semi-finished steel or iron of foreign origin are not "produced in the United States" for purposes of this memorandum.

The Secretary of Commerce is hereby authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

**Evraz Steel,
a Russian
subsidiary,
will provide
24 percent of
the steel for
the Keystone
XL pipeline.**