



The Hi-Lites



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**The People's
Post Office**

Keep It. It's Yours.



Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

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Union Benefits Go Far Beyond the Workplace

by: Michelle Chen, The Nation

(Unions also fortify the social safety net and aid communities on the path to self-sufficiency)

Organized labor has been through a tough half-century, as deindustrialization, economic deregulation, and an all-out right-wing attack have decimated union membership across the country. But new research shows how the benefits of organized labor extend far beyond union members' paychecks: Unions also help fortify the social safety net and push workers' families and communities toward long-term self-sufficiency.

According to a study by University of Minnesota researchers on the effects of union membership on Uncle Sam's balance sheets, unionized workers overall contribute more in tax revenue, rely less on welfare, and secure more sustainable jobs. The analysis, which tracks tax and income data from 1994 to 2015, shows a clear immediate payoff: union members' average yearly income (about \$48,000) is roughly \$7,400, or 16 percent, more than what nonunion workers earn. In turn, these higher-earning workers also depend less on benefits like food stamps or cash assistance. Surveying wage trends from 1994 to 2015, for workers and the public purse, "union membership raises private income, lowers public-benefit use, and increases taxes paid, yielding a positive net fiscal impact." Adding up the net worth of federal benefits programs, including unemployment insurance, cash assistance for poor families, food stamps, disability, and Social Security—which average around \$1,400 each year per worker—are basically replaced with added private income negotiated through union contracts. Unionized workers had greater economic security, using about 23 percent less than nonunion peers in public benefits (about \$336 annually).

Conversely, the trend of declining wages in recent years has driven increased welfare use among many formerly middle-class workers. In foundering blue-collar mainstays like manufacturing, the researchers observe, "as unionization erodes, working families' ability to stay clear of the public safety net erodes." Rising economic frustration has sparked movements such as the Fight for 15 campaign, which blame "nonunion employers' low pay and meager benefits for making working families reliant on public insurance programs." But in addition to boosting economic independence, the "union advantage" also strengthens workers' aggregate economic power, as it enables members to reach a level of income that boosts the tax revenues they "pay back" to the government. They earn higher private incomes that create a two-fold virtuous circle, boosting household economic security while yielding larger payoffs for public coffers.

Unionization shifts the broader distribution of wealth as well. The government takes in higher tax gains from workers' increased earnings, which helps offset the legal loopholes and tax breaks that have allowed corporations and investors to siphon off wealth into tax-avoidance schemes over the years. Union members reverse this fiscal drain by winning higher wages and eventually feeding money back into the public treasury.

Aaron Sojourner, a co-author of the study, concludes that the economy as a whole is better off when workers can exercise power through unions: "Promoting collective bargaining is a way to encourage labor and management to negotiate their way to employment relationships that work well in the context of their company, market, industry, community and lives." "Union-related pay hikes represent both "a change in the overall size of the pie and a change in the way the pie is split" between the shareholder board and the shop floor. The link between wages and the tax base is a win-win: Members earn more at work and pay more as taxpayers into the public trust. Wealth is redistributed progressively toward the lower tiers of the wage scale. Overall, Sojourner argues, labor contracts equalize leverage in the workplace hierarchy, so that "workers have an option to bargain together, the way investors do, to promote balanced bargaining."

"Union-based wage gains also differ from state-led wealth transfers, like minimum wages, because higher income is negotiated within the workplace, yielding greater total economic gains through workers' own earnings, rather than public

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policy. Sojourner points out that “private income gains average about three times larger than the costs in terms of extra taxes and lost benefits’ value.” Through collective bargaining,

“unionization promotes the transfer of resources from shareholders and managers to workers without the government getting directly involved; it increases workers’ bargaining power in labor relations but leaves the details up to the private negotiations.... It’s a less-blunt instrument than a minimum wage or really any other policy that mandates a uniform outcome or a minimum standard across the economy. It promotes workers’ voices, preferences, and power in finding tailored ways to share the economic value created by employment relationships.”

Public benefits will always be necessary for some workers, of course, and our social-welfare system needs to be strengthened. But union power lifts up workers’ wages while also strengthening public finances, which helps maintain social-welfare budgets and public services that support the entire working class. In addition, workers’ growing economic leverage at work may also lead to greater political power and civic influence for workers. More political clout for labor can result in more progressive policy, the study argues, since “organized labor often advocates for larger public budgets” and progressive corporate taxation, and might even get more union members elected to office. It’s worker-led economic democracy, linking labor relations to class politics.

Although organized labor represents just a small slice of the workforce today, unions can help democratize the workplace, and indirectly democratize the economy as a whole. When workers seize power on the shop floor, they collectively turn the levers of workplace power to drive economic justice from the top down, and across the community.

* * *

Contract Update

APWU News 5/3/19

The APWU is continuing to move forward towards interest arbitration. Preparation of hearing presentations, evidence, and witnesses is occurring every day.

The craft directors and their assistant directors are working together with the lead negotiator, President Mark Dimondstein, and the negotiation’s chief spokesperson, Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman, on the issues that their craft will be facing in the interest arbitration hearings. For example, the crafts are all currently working on presentations that show how important each of their respective craft’s work is, the complexity of the jobs postal workers do, and how critical each job is to the mission of the postal service. Your executive officers are all preparing for arbitration, as well working on specific assignments for use in the interest arbitration process. Meetings are held on a regular basis to strategize and report preparation progress by the crafts, as well as joint meetings with the core National Negotiation Committee and the resident craft officers.

While preparation and arbitrator selection are ongoing, the parties have entered mediation in an attempt to reach a voluntary agreement. A neutral mediator was appointed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) and has already begun to meet with the principals from the parties. Mediation meetings are also scheduled between the APWU and USPS for each craft. Your craft officers will be meeting with the Postal Service in these sessions. If a voluntary agreement can be reached through mediation, it will be presented to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee for their vote to send to the membership for ratification. “Even though we are in mediation in hopes of getting an agreement, we are diligently preparing for interest arbitration.

Your elected officers, our attorneys, subject matter experts, and staff are working tirelessly to prepare to present a case that will get you the contract you deserve,” said Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman.



Chris Czubakowski
Vice President

St. Ben's Community Meal Program

"Sunday June 30th"

Save The Date

2019 St. Ben's Community Meal Program



The Milwaukee Area Labor Council is proud to announce its 2019 partnership with St. Ben's Community Meal Program which feeds the homeless and working poor.

We will serve 500 to 600 guests and will need a large supply of food AND volunteers.

Sunday, June 30th
Time to be determined
St. Ben's Church
1015 North 9th Street

Contact Emily to confirm your
volunteer time
414-771-7070 ext. 15
Emily@milwaukeeelabor.org



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COMMUNITY SERVICES



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U.S. Mail Is Not For Sale !

A GRAND ALLIANCE TO SAVE OUR PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE



On April 15th, Tax Day, the Milwaukee Area Local Officers and Stewards took to the street to spread the news that the U.S. Mail operates on Zero Tax Dollars! Recently, privatizers - those who want to sell the public Postal Service to private corporations - have been empowered by the White House. The June report from the Office of Management called for the total privatization of the USPS.

The APWU has news for them: The U.S. Mail is NOT for Sale!
Together, we are Standing Up and Fighting Back. To get involved visit: usmailnotforsale.com.



The U.S. Postal Service Is Owned By the People... Let's Keep It That Way

by: Mark Dimondstein, APWU National President

As the tax deadline looms and millions scurry to get their forms sent on time, Tax Day is a good time to dispel the myth that the U.S. Postal Service is funded by tax dollars. In fact, the Postal Service receives zero tax dollars for its operations. Without taking a dime in taxes, the Postal Service maintains the lowest prices for mail services in the industrialized world and delivers to 159 million addresses, six — and now often seven — days a week — all funded by revenue from the sale of stamps and other postal products. While private courier companies only deliver where a profit can be made, the public post office provides universal service to everyone, no matter age, wealth, race, who we are or where we live.

It is little wonder that the Postal Service, a public institution enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and the crucial anchor of the growing e-commerce revolution, remains the most trusted federal agency. A recent Pew Research Center survey revealed that 88 percent of the population has a favorable view of the Postal Service, with the highest favorability ratings coming from young adults. Whether sending or receiving medicine, packages, greeting cards, letters, periodicals, catalogs or ballots, every person, household and business in this country is a postal customer.

Still, that persistent myth — that the Postal Service is a burden to taxpayers — is precisely the false narrative that led Congress to pass the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. That act manufactured a financial crisis by compelling the Postal Service to pre-fund all retiree health care costs, 75 years into the future — for workers not even born yet. This mandate transferred postal revenues to the U.S. Treasury and robbed the Postal Service of \$5.6 billion a year over a 10-year period. No other company or agency faces, or could be expected to survive, such an onerous financial burden. Adding to the absurdity is the fact that, prior to the 2006 law, the Postal Service had been reliably paying its annual retirement health benefit premiums on time.

Fast forward from 2006 to last year. Exactly one year ago, in April 2018 — again using the guise of taxpayer protection — President Donald Trump established a postal task force to study Postal Service finances. However, before the task force even published its findings, the White House Office of Management and Budget in a June 2018 report on reforming government laid bare their goal of selling the Postal Service to the highest corporate bidder.

Postal privatization, if allowed to move forward, would surely enrich some Wall Street investors and a few powerful corporations. For the rest of us, it would result in diminished postal services and higher prices. This is exactly what happened when other nations, such as the United Kingdom, went down this path. Evidence of this can be seen in both the OMB report and the task force report that followed in December, which called for higher rates, cuts to service and lower wages and benefits for postal workers, all as a first step toward total privatization. Other task force “solutions” include eliminating delivery days, slowing service speed, allowing anyone who pays a fee access to your secure and private mailbox, reducing door delivery, undermining the universal service obligation and piecemeal privatization that will all undermine the future of a vibrant public postal service.

It doesn't have to be this way. Congress should simply fix the pre-funding fiasco they created in 2006. In addition, the Postal Service should provide an array of expanded services such as increased financial services and paycheck cashing, notary and various licensing services, internet access and electric automobile charging stations. Everyone who sends and receives mail and packages has a stake in making sure that the U.S. Postal Service remains owned by, and in the service of, the people. Ask your member of Congress to co-sponsor House Resolution 33 and Senate Resolution 99. Both resolutions oppose privatizing the Postal Service. Let's ensure that the postal eagle, symbolizing its public ownership, is never sacrificed on the altar of private profit and replaced by the vulture of corporate greed. The U.S. Postal Service operates without tax dollars and provides a necessary and popular public service.

Keep it — it's yours.



Larry Brown Jr
Automation Director

"With issues resurfacing concerning Supervisor/Employee relationships once again going on in the plant, I feel that a reprint of my 2016 article is appropriate. Something needs to change...for the better!"

Favoritism

Is favoritism a bad management practice? Absolutely! Sadly, there is no law that currently prevents a company from having "horrible bosses" that use it as a management tool on an all too often basis. Everyone who has observed favoritism at its worst would stand in agreement with me.

Favoritism kills employee morale, which in turn destroys employee work performance. Which then, causes management to attempt to, "hold the employees accountable for the way the mail is being processed." (...hmm, heard that before haven't we...)

It is the Union's job to make sure that all employees are treated fairly and equitably. What applies to one should

apply to all. Article 34 of the National Agreement is clear when it states the Employer agrees that any work measurement systems or time or work standards shall be fair, reasonable and equitable.

Notice that it doesn't say that management may pick and choose who they deem to be their "best" employees and shower them with preferential treatment.

Its important to remember that while many issues regarding favoritism may not be grievances they may still constitute legitimate gripes. As such, the Union will do its best to address each issue on an individual basis and try to come up with a favorable resolution.

Discrimination

If favoritism is based on a certain religion, sex , age or other characteristic protected by law it is considered discrimination!

One of the best ways to prevent discrimination in the workplace would be for management to abide by its own handbooks and manuals and treat **everyone** with "dignity and respect." Sadly, some supervi-

sors can't get with the program, so this is easier said than done.

As your steward, I will stand up for you whenever you feel you are being mistreated by management. I can file harassment grievances for you and send them up to Step 2 immediately.

I'll let you know in advance that all you may get is an apology or a settlement stating that you and the supervisor agree to treat each other with dignity and respect. While this might not seem like much, this is your first step in officially starting your paper trail on the supervisor that you believe is harassing you. However, it doesn't need to stop there.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is the federal agency that interprets and enforces the laws prohibiting discrimination.

The number to call: 1-888-336-8777. If you truly feel that you are being discriminated against then you must take matters into your own hands.

No union official will file an EEO complaint for you. Management cannot retaliate against you for reporting discrimination, or favoritism in the form of discrimination.

Favoritism & Discrimination

"As your steward, I will stand up for you whenever you feel you are being mistreated by management."

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. " - Nelson Mandela



Nikki Anthonasin
Manual/Mechanization
Director

Well.....Before I answer this I am going to send everyone a document to sign, but don't bother to read it! It will be perfectly legal, I swear! I just need your signature.

After I receive your signed document I will explain to you that you have just agreed as a payment for my time and effort in answering this question, you will pay me 50% of all of your earnings for the rest of your life! It is your lucky day!

When you affix your signature to a document you are in essence saying that you are legally bound by the document. You are taking ownership of it and you are agreeing to the terms of that document. You got it? If not, you may feel free to send me your address and I will send you the document to sign and then we can discuss it further ;-)

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE SIGNING

Definition of Signature:

A signature (/ˈsɪɡnəʃər/; from Latin: signare, to sign) is a handwritten (and often stylized) depiction of someone's name, nickname, or even a simple X"or other mark that a person writes on documents as a proof of

Why You Need To Read... Before You Sign Any Document

"...read it and make sure it is accurate"

identity and intent. Synonyms: Autograph, Name, Stamp, Trademark, Designation, Impression, Indication, Mark, John Hancock

Function of a Signature:

The traditional function of a signature is to give evidence of the provenance of a document (identity) and the intention (will) of an individual with regard to that document. For example, the role of a signature in many consumer contracts is not solely to provide evidence of the identity of the contracting party, but also to provide evidence of deliberation and informed consent.

In many countries, signatures may be witnessed and recorded in the presence of a notary public to carry additional legal force. On legal documents, an illiterate signatory can make a mark"(often an X"but occasionally a personalized symbol), so long as the document is countersigned by a literate witness. In some countries, illiterate people place a thumbprint on legal documents in lieu of a written signature.

In the United States, signatures encompass marks and actions of all sorts that are indicative of identity and intent.

The legal rule is that unless a statute specifically prescribes a particular method of making a signature it may be made in any number of

ways. These include by a mechanical or rubber stamp facsimile. A signature maybe made by the purported signatory; alternatively someone else duly authorized by the signatory, acting in the signer's presence and at the signatory's direction, may make the signature.

Attendance discipline seems to be a hot topic currently. While dealing with a lot of these cases I am coming across several instances where individuals have signed their 3189's that are supposed to be FMLA protected, however the 3189 it marked not FMLA protected. When you look at the 3189, that individual signed and dated it upon their return to work 3 months ago. It is hard to argue something that you signed yourself upon your return, therefore you agreed to it.

So, when your supervisor hands you your 3189, read it and make sure it is accurate. If it is not the type of leave that you requested or you see anything that does not look accurate, DO NOT SIGN the form.

I know this is far fetched, currently with the volume of mail, but it has happened.....Let's say that it is a slow night and management says you can go home early. Or you do not feel well and management tells you as soon as soon as you complete whatever task that they will allow

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you to go home early with their approval. You fill out a 3189, or the supervisor generates one for you. BEFORE you sign this 3189, make sure it is accurate for the type of leave you are taking and most importantly of all that the box "approved in advance" is marked. If management approves that you can go home early, you have to make sure the "approved in advance" box is marked, otherwise it may be charged as an occurrence AKA an unscheduled absence and then it would be subject to discipline.

No matter what you signing, know what it is, read it thoroughly. If you do not understand it, ask for an explanation and do not sign unless you agree to it and you understand it completely.

When your supervisor hands you your 3189, read it and make sure it is accurate, & understand it. If it is not the type of leave that you requested DO NOT SIGN the form. Fill out a new 3189 with the leave that you requested and sign that one. If you have not read it, or you do not understand it, or you do not agree with it, DO NOT SIGN IT.....SIMPLE as that! Management cannot make you sign anything. Ask to see your union steward before you sign something if you have ANY questions about it.

This does not ONLY apply to 3189's, it is any document that is given to you to sign at work or in your personal life. If you are willing to sign anything without full knowledge or reading it, I will be happy to accept a blank check from you, with your signature on it at anytime. :-)

* * *

Legislation Calls to Repeal Prefunding Mandate

APWU News 5/2/19

On Monday, Apr. 29, members of Congress introduced H.R. 2382, the *USPS Fairness Act*. This legislation would repeal, in full, the onerous prefunding of retiree health care benefits mandate Congress put in place in 2006. The mandate requires the Postal Service to prefund its retiree health care benefits 75 years in advance, paying for retirement health care for individuals who haven't been born yet, let alone enter the workforce. The mandate is accountable for 92 percent of the Postal Service's net losses since 2007 and is a constant threat to the financial sustainability of the Postal Service.

Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04), Tom Reed (R-NY-23), Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM-03), and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) sponsored the bill.

APWU fully supports this legislation. The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), which created the congressionally manufactured prefunding burden, has not only drained the Postal Service's funds, but also limits its ability to make vital innovations and expand services. "This legislation is a necessary step to solving the disastrous prefunding mandate that is dragging down the Postal Service," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein.

H.R. 2382 would return the Postal Service to the procedures in place prior to the PAEA, utilizing a pay-as-you-go method for retiree benefits, the standard practice across federal agencies and private businesses. "Ending the prefunding mandate is essential to postal jobs and benefits," said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. "We are asking our members to contact their Representatives to cosponsor this important bill."

Call **844-402-1001** to contact your member of Congress and ask them to cosponsor H.R. 2382, the *USPS Fairness Act*. Be sure to also promote H.R. 2382 on social media using **#repealprefunding**, **#HR2382**, **#peoplebeforeprofit** and/or **#unfairburden**.

Reach out to your family, friends, and neighbors and ask them to call their representatives as well. This legislation affects every American household.



Greg Becker
South Sectional Director

Because we have a Union contract protecting our wages, hours, and working conditions, many Full-time employees realize the benefit of having workhour guarantees built into their duty assignment.

For example, a Full-time flex knows that they will have 5 (five) 8 hour work days in a week, whereas a Full-time Regular (FTR) will have 5 (five) - 8 hour work days within a bid schedule. A similar guarantee applies to a non-traditional full-time (NTFT) duty assignment, although the NTFT bid duty assignment may have a weekly guarantee of somewhere between 30 and 48 hours (each duty assignment will have a fixed number of hours between that range). NTFT duty assignments are currently eliminated in Function 1 (Mail Processing) and Function 3 (Maintenance). Similarly, Part-time regulars in the Maintenance craft will be guaranteed a schedule of less than 40 hours in a week per their bid assignment.

Management must compensate out of schedule premium when they utilize Regular employees outside of or instead of their regular schedule (if not in an overtime status) outside of the exemptions in the Employee and Labor Relations (ELM) Manual chapter

Workhour Guarantees / Limits

"Our contract also has workhour caps/limits that management cannot exceed.."

4...such as when an employee submits a PS Form 3189 and it is signed by a steward and approved by management.

Our contract also has workhour caps/limits that management cannot exceed without violating the contract, such as the 12/60 hour limits for full time overtime desired list volunteers. Additionally, the work-hour limit is also 12 hours, including a lunch period, for Part time Flexibles (PTF) and Postal Service Employees (PSE) for the amount of hours and the total span of hours in a service day. The limits protect full-time assignments and career conversions of PSE's in the clerk craft as well as the employee's health and personal time. Furthermore, management must guarantee a minimum of 8 hours of work or pay to a regular clerk scheduled to work on their service day off. This guarantee can be waived by the employee only in cases of illness or personal emergency.

In small level 20 offices, the only level of office where PTF and PSE clerks can work simultaneously, management must make every effort to ensure that qualified and available PTF clerks are utilized at the straight time rate prior to assigning such work to PSE's during the course of a service week, i. e., PTF's get priority over PSE's at straight time during each week time frame. In addition, work hour requirements in the contract mandate a 2 hour guarantee for PTF's and

PSE's who are scheduled and report to work at small offices (the Workforce Benefits Fund settlement effective October, 2018, grants PSE's a 4 hour guarantee at 200 man-year plants). In the Motor vehicle craft, PTF's are guaranteed a minimum work schedule of 24 hours per pay period.

The contract also has many more PTF guarantees at small offices level 20 and below. The ELM Section 432.62 provides that a PTF who is called back to work on a day the PTF completed his/her assignment and clocked out is guaranteed 4 hours of work or pay regardless of the size of office. The 2 or 4 hour guarantee provided for in Article 8.8C does not apply to PTF employees who are initially scheduled to work, but called at home and directed not to report to work prior to leaving for work. When a PTF clerk is notified prior to clocking out that he/she should return within 2 hours, this will be a split shift and no new guarantee applies. When a PTF clerk, prior to clocking out, is told to return after 2 hours, that PTF clerk must be given another guarantee of 2 hours work or pay. Furthermore, all PTF clerks who complete their assignment, clock out and leave the premises regardless of the interval between shifts, are guaranteed 4 hours of work or pay if called back to work. This applies to any size office.

If management is in violation of the workhour guarantees/limits, please contact me or your union steward.

House Committee Looks For Solutions For The Postal Service's Finances

APWU News 5/2/19

In an Apr. 30 hearing, The House Committee on Oversight & Reform (COR) examined the financial conditions of the United States Postal Service. Ahead of the hearing, APWU President Mark Dimondstein submitted a statement for the record, calling for four common sense solutions. These include: repealing the prefunding mandate in full; allowing investment options for the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund to boost investment returns; expanding on new products and services; and restoring the 2013 exigency rate surcharge permanently. "Congress should not let another legislative session pass while the Postal Service is held back from regaining financial sustainability and fulfilling the best promises of Universal Service," President Dimondstein commented.

In his opening statement, COR Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD-07) commented that while "the Postal Service is one of our most essential and recognizable institutions in the country", its financial condition is deteriorating due to "a decline in first class mail, which has been the Postal Service's most profitable product...the Postal Service's expenses have been increasing more quickly than its revenues... Congress put in place requirements in 2006 the Postal Service to make billions of dollars of payments each year to pre fund retiree health benefits."

He concluded his opening statement by saying, "If major changes are not made soon there will come a time when the Postal Service will run out of cash and its ability to provide the services Americans rely on will be in jeopardy. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that day never comes." Chairman Cummings also noted later in the hearing that in moving forward on postal reform, the committee will have to address the prefunding mandate, and, creating a sustainable future for the Postal Service cannot be done on the backs of the dedicated employees. In her opening statement to the committee, PMG Brennan commented that "absent legislative and regulatory reforms we are likely to run out of cash in 2024."

APWU Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard, who attended the hearing, stated after, "Throughout the hearing, I was very disappointed in answers given by Postmaster General Brennan. She seemed to lack a positive direction for moving forward. She also made disturbing statements about reducing delivery days that will hurt postal workers and the people we serve. We want legislation that will improve service to the American people and protect the hard earned and deserved salaries and benefits of our workers."

Several members of the committee brought up the President's Postal Task Force report, which called for privatization of some elements of the Postal Service. Chris Edwards of the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, agreed with the report, and not only called for privatization, but also for closures of postal facilities, lowering postal salaries and benefits, and reducing postal service obligations.

The majority of the committee members, however, addressed their opposition to postal privatization and its negative effects on the Universal Service obligation. Representative Steve Lynch (D-MA-08) commented that in European countries that privatized their postal services, rates increased by 30-40 percent. Representatives Carol Miller (R-WV-03) and James Comer (R-KY-01) both addressed the need for service in the rural districts they represent and expressed concern that the Postal Service needs to ensure delivery standards for every American, regardless of where they live. The most positive aspect was Chairman Cummings's promise of a hearing in the near future on Postal Safety issues.

During the hearing, it was announced that new legislation was introduced on Apr. 29. H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, sponsored by Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04) and Tom Reed (R-NY-23), calls for a full repeal of the prefunding mandate. APWU fully supports this legislation, and asks our members to contact their representatives and ask them to cosponsor this vital bill.



John Miceli
Treasurer

Ticks are popping up across Wisconsin, and doctors are urging people to pay attention as peak season approaches.

Know Where To Expect Ticks

One misconception is ticks are out in the middle of the woods, but actually you can get ticks just walking near trees on the sidewalk or the golf course if you hit your ball in the woods. Doctors want Wisconsinites to pay attention now to the warning signs for Lyme disease, like the bull's-eye-type rash. Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.

Check Your Body For Ticks

Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. Check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside belly button
- Back of the knees
- In and around the hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist

Warning: Beware Of Ticks

"May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month"

In general, ticks need to be attached for 36 to 48 hours before they can transmit Lyme disease bacteria. Most people are infected through the bites of immature ticks called nymphs. Nymphs are tiny (less than 2 mm) and difficult to see. They most commonly bite during spring and summer.

Adult ticks can also transmit Lyme disease bacteria. They are much larger and are more likely to be discovered and removed. Adult ticks most commonly bite during the fall.

Tick Bite Prevention

- * Use (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus
- * Wear clothing treated with 0.5% permethrin. Re-treat clothing annually according to label instructions.
- * Shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors.
- * Check for ticks daily. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- * Tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors.

Signs and Symptoms

Early diagnosis and proper antibiotic treatment of Lyme disease can help to prevent late Lyme disease. Although Lyme disease is rarely life-threatening, delayed treatment can result in more severe disease. People who notice a characteristic rash or other possible symptoms, should consult their healthcare provider.

Signs and symptoms of early Lyme disease include:

- fatigue
- chills and fever
- headache
- muscle and joint pain
- swollen lymph nodes
- skin rash (erythema migrans)

Erythema migrans is a reddish or purple colored rash that usually appears 3–14 days after the bite of an infected tick. It typically appears at the site of the tick bite, is round or oval, and expands gradually over the course of several days. Common sites are the thighs, groin, trunk, and armpits. The center of the rash may clear as it enlarges, eventually resulting in a "bull's-eye" appearance; however, this is not always the case. The rash may be warm, but it usually is not painful. Some patients with early Lyme disease do not have or notice any rash and instead just have "flu-like" symptoms of fever, fatigue, and muscle aches.

Knowing what the ticks look like, knowing how to protect themselves is very important.

Last year, state health officials estimated 3,100 cases of Lyme disease, which is transmitted by ticks, statewide but said the real number is likely much higher than what's reported. The average number has more than doubled in the past decade statewide. Wisconsin has one of the highest rates of Lyme disease in the country. In Southeast Wisconsin, Waukesha County had the highest number of cases in 2017. *(research:*

Come With Us – We'd Like To Speak With You

by: Marty Mater, NBA Clerk Division

Imagine you are approached by a pair of individuals who identify themselves as agents from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) who wish to speak with you. Who are they, what do they want, and how should you respond?

Special Agents of the OIG investigate allegations of employee embezzlement, record falsification by employees, workers' compensation (OWCP) fraud by employees, employee misconduct, including mail theft (internal), employment application falsification and theft of properties or services. It is safe to say that when approached by agents from the OIG you are not only part of an investigation, you may very well be (probably are) the subject of the investigation. If approached by agents from the OIG, stay calm. Note that the reference to OIG agents is plural. They work as a team, in pairs, which means there are two of them but only one of you. Good cop, bad cop.

As a postal employee you have the right to have a steward or Union representative present during the course of an interrogation by the OIG agents so, request a steward and until one is provided, say no more. Normally, investigations do not start with the individual employee (you), so more likely than not the agents already believe you are guilty of some wrongdoing and now need you give them the rest of the rope necessary to hang you. If you work in a small office, chances are a steward is not going to be immediately available and the OIG agents may pressure you to continue the interview (interrogation) without one. Do not. It cannot be stressed enough-ask for a steward and then shut-up until you are provided a steward or Union representative.

The OIG agents know you have this right and they also know you must affirmatively invoke this right. Do not ask if you need a steward (they will tell you no), demand one be provided before you continue. If that means the interview (interrogation) must be delayed, so be it. When a steward is provided, you have the right to speak privately with the steward before meeting with the OIG agents.

If you are advised of your Miranda rights, i.e., you have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in court, you don't need a steward, you need an attorney before you continue. Don't be fooled if the OIG agents tell you not to worry, they won't prosecute you and its okay to talk to them.

- The OIG never prosecutes. They put together the Report of Investigation (ROI) and turn the information over to the US Attorney for possible prosecution. OIG agents earn points for the outcome of their investigations so keep that in mind.
- The OIG agents may ask permission to record the interview and may only do so if you agree. Nothing good will come from that so the answer is 'NO.'
- The OIG agents may ask if you are willing to take a polygraph (lie-detector) test. Polygraph tests are voluntary so the response to this request is also 'NO.'
- The OIG agents will ask you to write a statement for them; again, the answer is 'NO.' What does not exist cannot be used against you down the road.
- The OIG does is not supposed to propose discipline be issued: Management then must conduct their own independent investigation to determine whether or not to issue discipline.

Being the subject of an investigation conducted by the OIG is never a good thing. Be prepared for the long haul. Regardless of the eventual outcome, do yourself a favor from the beginning by not speaking to the OIG agents without a steward.



Jeff Worden
North Sectional Director

That's right, it's Summer Time! That means it's time to help support a great cause.

The Milwaukee & Waukesha Area Labor Council is now conducting their 27th Annual HEALTH & HYGIENE DRIVE.

There are nearly two dozen Milwaukee & Waukesha homeless shelters that are in need of Health & Hygiene products.

YOU can help!

The Drive started on April 1st and goes until May 31st! Some of the items needed are;

Toothbrushes & toothpaste
Non-alcohol mouthwash

Razors & Shaving cream
Hair care products

Spray Deodorant
Baby products

Feminine products
Laundry supplies

First aid supplies
Combs, brushes & hair picks

Lip Balm
Paper products

Health & Hygiene Drive

“There are nearly two dozen Milwaukee & Waukesha homeless shelters...”

You can drop off these items at any of the following locations;

Milwaukee Area Labor Council
633 South Hawley Rd, Suite 110

United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County
200 West Pleasant Street Milwaukee

Operating Engineers Local 420
1140 West Anderson Court, Oak Creek

Milwaukee Fire Department Stations

You may also drop off the aforementioned items at the APWU Union Hall Monday thru Friday, between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm.

Of course, Monetary donation are also accepted.
Please make checks payable to: Labor Community @ work

If you have any questions regarding this drive you can call:
JAY REINKE (AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison) (414) 771-7070 ext.
e-mail him at jay@milwaukeeelabor.org.

The Health & Hygiene Drive of 2018 was a success as the Milwaukee Area Local collected 2 boxes of hygiene products. Let's do this again!

Remember, it is because of the generosity of union members and their families (such as you and your family) that make campaigns/drives like these so successful.

If you work at a City Station or Associate Office, just contact you're APWU Director/Steward and we will arrange to pick-up those items.

If you have any questions please contact me at (414) 530-7186.

Since this is the last *Hi-Lites* until September I hope everyone has a fun and safe summer.

Oh, and by the way... go and take a vacation!
Because you definitely deserve it!

Graduation Day Is Right Around The Corner!



The Hi-Lites will feature graduates in our up-coming September issue. Provide us with the information listed below in showcasing your pride.

- ◆ Name of Graduate
- ◆ Your relation to the Graduate
- ◆ Photograph...
 - Please **DO NOT** submit a photo from a digital printer (it cannot be used)
 - Please indicate if you would like your photo to be returned
- ◆ Contact # for any questions
- ◆ Your name, pay location and/or work area
- ◆ Brief "well wishes" or any other interesting info you would like to share!

*Note: If the above information is not typed,
we would ask that you print legibly.*

Deadline: August 30, 2019

Send to: The Hi-Lites
417 N. 3rd Street
Milwaukee, WI 53203



*A picture is the expression of an impression. If the beautiful were not in us,
how would we ever recognize it?*

~Ernst Haas~