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Volume 38 Issue 8

So Now What?

*APWU*

We Fight For  
What's Right!

*AFL-CIO*

**Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local**

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

## 2016 Election

APWU NEWS 11/10/16

### Mark Dimondstein National APWU President



To APWU Members,

The Presidential election is over and Donald Trump has been elected President of the United States. Throughout the primaries and general election there was a revolt against the “establishment” and politics as usual. People clearly wanted a change.

As a union whose members cover the entire political spectrum, we always believe that your vote is a personal decision. We commend all of those who got involved and engaged in the political process.

The recommendations of the Executive Board to support Senator Bernie Sanders in the primary and Secretary Hillary Clinton in the general election were based on which candidates were the most supportive of issues directly affecting postal workers.

We believe that the issues of defense and expansion of the public Postal Service is non-partisan.

We have many friends in Congress on both “sides of the aisle.” All elected officials, we hope, will support postal legislation to strengthen the Postal Service so it can continue to serve the people of the United States. I, and the other APWU officers, pledge to continue to work with all elected representatives, from all parties and political views, who will work with us to achieve our goals.

APWU members, regardless of our political views, will need to be fully united and mobilized to ensure the new White House and Congress will stand up for postal patrons, postal workers and the public Postal Service.



## Update Your Mailing Address

Please help us keep our Membership & Retiree mailing lists up to date. Over the last 6 months we have had a high number of incorrect or “no such number” address corrections returned back the Local. It is critical that you always notify the Local as well, when you update your personal information with the Postal Service. Since our term of office is ending shortly... we need to have a correct and updated membership list for the Election Ballots that will be mailed out early next year.

*Thank You*



**John Miceli  
Treasurer**

*The present economic conditions certainly determine your spending ability as well as your save-ability. This is why you should be proactive in your participation of your 401(k). TSP's ability to put enough money away along with the mindset that your employer contributions allow you to have that nest egg, if not for the simple reason to retire comfortably.*

This introduction of what the Thrift Savings Plan is, should peak the interest of all you newly converted regulars, all the way up to the most senior tenured union members.

You still need to be aware of how each fund performs and what amounts suit your goals and lifestyle. This requires staying on top of these funds based on what the market and current economic conditions are. The point is to participate !!!

The Postal Service automatically contributes 1% whether or not you are enrolled. But why wouldn't you elect for more ???

After the automatic 1%, they match an additional 3% dollar for dollar that you contribute each pay period and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2% of pay. The amounts you contribute above 5% are not matched.

## Thrift Savings Plan, Choose Your Options Wisely

*"You're turning down free money by not taking advantage of this opportunity."*

**You're turning down free money by not taking advantage of this opportunity.**

It is your responsibility to manage these funds based on how well the stock index you've selected is performing. You can research the five individual funds to choose from:

- G Fund** (Government Securities)
- F Fund** (Fixed Income Index)
- C Fund** (Common Stock Index)
- S Fund** (Small Cap Stock Index)
- I Fund** (International Stock Index)

TSP began offering "Life Cycle Funds" in 2006. This option relieves you of the headache of managing the performances of the funds you allocated your money to. "L Funds" are chosen by your need. Participants with longer investment horizons are able to tolerate more risk. Participants who are approaching or have reached the time when they will need to use their retirement savings have a lower tolerance for risk.

The mix of stocks, bonds and Treasury securities differ according to the date when someone needs to use the investment money. An employee with many years left will invest in a L Fund that includes more stocks, which are riskier but have potential for higher returns in the long run.

But as the date approaches in terms of needing the money, the L Fund will automatically change to include more bonds (less riskier than stocks) and Treasury securities (risk free). These are the (5) L Funds:

- L Income** (for those preparing or already withdrawing their money)
- L 2020** (for those who plan to withdraw between 2016 and 2024)
- L 2030** (for those who plan to withdraw between 2025 and 2034)
- L 2040** (for those who plan to withdraw between 2035 and 2044)
- L 2050** (for those who plan to withdraw between 2045 or later)

You can enter and leave any of the funds whenever you want. All postal employees can use Postal EASE to process your TSP elections. If you are changing an election, it must be processed by 12 noon (central) by the second Wednesday (day12) of each pay period for the election to be effective in that pay period otherwise it will take effect the following pay period.

Your USPS pin and TSP pin are needed. Employees in need of their TSP pin can go to the web site at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) or call the TSP thrifline toll free at 877-968-3778 (TDD: 877-847-4385).

**Be active and knowledgeable in what your investing... it's your money and future.**

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The following proposed Constitutional Amendments were read:  
All will be voted on at the next general membership meeting:

### **Proposed Amendment 1**

Article 7, Section 1C currently reads: Local Business Agent: The office of the local business agent shall be a full time paid position. He/She shall be salaried at the rate of Level 10, Step N. Said salary will not increase or decrease during the term of office. He/She shall be entitled to wage increases and bonuses as negotiated in the national agreement. The union shall pay the government obligations for retirement at the rate of Level 10, Step N, the employer's portion of social security, government life insurance and all other obligations as required by law.

Section 1C-1.: He /She shall have the responsibility of insuring the continuity of operation of all departments of this local, as directed by the president. He/She shall have the responsibility of representing areas of the local, under the direction of the president. He/She shall have the responsibility of policing the collective bargaining agreement, of investigating, settling, and reviewing grievances, unfair labor practices and labor disputes, and shall perform related activities as directed by the president. He/She shall be a member of the executive board, the negotiations committee and the labor management committee. He/She shall be charged the responsibility of keeping close communication with the national industrial relations department and shall develop records on president, arbitration and grievance awards in order to assist stewards in the processing of grievances. He/She shall act as liaison between the membership and the APWU Heal the plan. The local business agent shall keep a biweekly record of his/her work hours and all annual and sick leave used. This record shall be submitted to the treasurer by pay period and shall be available to any member upon request.

He/She shall be responsible for administering educational programs at the local level that assists members, stewards and officers in the performance of their duties and advances the objectives of the union.

Section 1C-2: The local business agent's normal work schedule shall be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. With Saturday/Sunday as off days. He/She may deviate from said schedule for just cause without prior executive board or general membership approval, under the direction of the president. Attending general membership meetings outside of normal work schedule shall not be an acceptable reason or deviating from normal work schedule.

Section 1C-3: the local business agent shall advise at each executive board meeting the amount of annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay he/she used and the dates involved since the previous executive board meeting. Such information shall not be recorded in the executive board meeting minutes. Upon leave office any earned unused annual leave shall be paid in full not to exceed 440 hours at the prevailing rate upon leaving office. Any earned unused sick leave shall be paid in full, at the prevailing rate upon leaving office.

Section 1C-4: the local business agent shall not hold any regional or national positions during their term of office.

Section 1C-5: the local business agent shall be required to submit no less than four articles each year April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> to the Hi-Lites

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:** DELETE ART 7, SECTION 1C, 1C-1. 1C-2. 1C-3. 1C-4 AND 1C-5.

### **Proposed Amendment 2**

ARTICLE 7, SECTION 1B currently reads: Vice President: The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in case of his/her absence or inability to attend to the duties of his/her office. He/She shall be charged with the responsibility of keeping close communication with the national industrial relations department and develop records on precedent arbitration and grievance awards to assist stewards in processing of grievances. The vice president will be responsible for the coordination and planning of all locally approved seminars/conferences/conventions that are to be attended by

*(next page please)*

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

representatives from the local. This includes any registration lodging, travel and indemnification of per diem amounts. He/She shall serve as director of legislation and in such capacity shall guide and direct all activities of this union relating to legislation. He/She shall submit no less than four articles each year April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> to the Hi-Lites.

**PROPOSED CONSITUTONAL CHANGE:** Change Article 7, Section 1B to read: Vice president: The office of the vice president shall be a full time paid position. He/She shall be salaried at the rate of Level 10, Step N. Said salary will not increase or decrease during the term of office. He/She shall be entitled to wage increases and bonuses as negotiated in the national agreement. The union shall pay the government obligations for retirement at the rate of Level 10, Step N, the employer's portion of social security, government life insurance and all other obligations as required by law.

### **Proposed Amendment 3**

Section 1B-1: the vice president shall perform the duties of the president in case of his/her absence or inability to attend to the duties of his/her office. He/She shall be a member of the executive board, labor management and negotiations committee. He/She shall be charged with the responsibility of keeping in close communication with the national industrial relations department and develop records on precedent arbitration and grievance awards to assist stewards in the processing of grievances. He/she shall have the responsibility of insuring the continuity of operation of all departments of this local, as directed by the president. He/She shall have the responsibility of representing all areas of the local, under the direction of the president. He/She shall have the responsibility of policing the collective bargaining agreement, of investigating settling, and reviewing grievances unfair labor practices and labor disputes and shall perform related activities as directed by the president. He/She shall act as liaison between the membership and the APW U Health plan. The vice president shall keep a biweekly record of their hours and all annual and sick leave used. This record shall be submitted to the treasurer by pay period and shall be available to any member upon request. He/She shall be responsible for administering educational programs at the local level that assists members, steward and officers in the performance of their duties and advances the objectives of the union.

Section 1B-2: The vice president's normal work schedule shall be from 8:00a.m. To 4:30 p.m. with Saturday/Sunday as off days. He/She may deviate from said schedule for just cause without prior executive board or general membership approval under the direction of the president. Attending general membership meetings outside of normal work schedule shall not be an acceptable reason or deviating from normal work schedule.

Section 1B-3 the vice president shall advise at each executive board meeting the amount of annual leave sick leave or leave without pay he/she used and the dates involved since the previous executive board meeting. Such information shall not be recorded in the executive board meeting minutes. Upon leaving office, any earned unused annual leave shall be paid in full not to exceed 440 hours at the prevailing rate upon leaving office. Any earned unused sick leave shall be paid in full, at the prevailing rate upon leaving office.

Section 1B-4 the vice president or designee appointed by the president will be responsible for the coordination and planning of all locally approved seminars/conferences conventions that are to be attended by representatives from the local. This includes any registration lodging travel and identification of per diem amounts.

Section 1B-5 the vice president shall not hold any regional or national positions during their term of office.

Section 1B-6 the vice president shall be required to submit no less than our articles each year April; 1st to march 31<sup>st</sup> to the Hi-Lites

**PROPOSED CONSITUTONAL CHANGE:** To add Amendment 3 to the constitution.

*(continued on page 6)*

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

### Proposed Amendment 4

Article 6, section 1 currently reads: By virtue of their positions, the president and vice president shall be delegates to all conventions of the APWU, the Milwaukee County Labor Council, and the Wisconsin AFL\_CIO convention. By virtue of their positions the local business agent, customer service director automation director mechanization director west sectional director, south sectional director north sectional director, MVS director and maintenance director shall be automatic delegates to all Wisconsin and national conventions of the APWU.

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:** delete “local business agent from Article 6 section 1.

### Proposed Amendment 5

Article 7, section 1A-4 currently reads; the president shall function as chief organizer officer of the local and shall coordinate these responsibilities with the vice-president and local business agent

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:** Delete “local business agent from Section 1a-4.

### Proposed Amendment 6

Article 7 Section 1H currently reads: in the event the president and vice president are absent or unavailable to perform the duties of president, the order of performing the duties of the president will be as follows: 1-local business agent 2-recording secretary 3-treasurer.

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:** Delete 1-local business agent and renumber as 1-recording secretary, 2-treasurer.

### Proposed Amendment 7

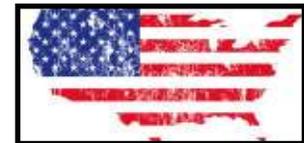
Article 8 Section 1 currently reads: Craft directors and obligations shall be to reside over craft meetings to make necessary appointments of stewards as vacancies occur, subject to the approval of the executive board to maintain a file on all postings with responsibility of reviewing such posting for irregularities, submit no fewer than four articles each year April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> to the editor of the union publication, to serve as a member of the labor management and negotiations committees and responsible for submitting agenda items affecting his/her craft for all such meetings and to make decisions that affect his/her craft. The craft director shall coordinate the education of their specific craft members with the president, vice president and local business agent;

**PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:** Delete “local business agent from article 8 section 1.



We fight for what's right.

Hi-Lites Quotables



“For too long, the political elites have embraced economic policies that hold down wages, increase inequality, diminish opportunity and ship American jobs overseas. Voters in both the primary and general election have delivered a clear message: enough.. The President-elect made promises in this campaign—on trade, on restoring manufacturing, on reviving our communities. We will work to make many of those promises a reality. If he is willing to work with us, consistent with our values, we are ready to work with him. But make no mistake, we can never back down from our values. The presence of racism, misogyny and anti-immigrant appeals caused damage in this campaign and we must all try to repair it with inclusion, decency and honesty. This election is a statement about our broken economic and political rules. Therefore, the work of the labor movement continues with fresh urgency. The change voters cried out for in this campaign can be found by standing together in unions.” — **Robert Trumka, President AFL-CIO, 11/9/2016**

## Nominations / Election Committee Announcement

There is NO *Hi-Lites* published in the month of December. As such, the *Hi-Lites* staff would like to remind the membership that nominations for elected office (2017-2019 term) will be held at the January General Membership Meeting. Please refer to the posted minutes from November's GMM for the date and time.

The Chairman of the Election Committee, Dominic Carini, is now accepting letters of interest for the 2015 Election Committee. They shall be the judges of all elections. No member of the committee shall be a candidate for election while serving on the committee. The election committee shall be responsible for the conduct on union elections and shall decide all controversies arising out of the election. Letters of interest may be given to Dominic Carini or dropped off at the Union Hall, 417 N. 3rd Street, Milwaukee, WI. 53203. The deadline to submit letters of interest will be at 4:30 P.M. on December 1st, 2014.

As of print, there has not been a decision made regarding the time and date of the 2017 Twenty Four Hour Holiday Social. A motion was brought up at the November GMM regarding this issue. Check the union bulletin boards and the minutes for the exact time and dates.



## 2017 Health Plan Open Season

Mark Ferrari, Local Business Agent/APWU Local Health Plan Director

The Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season time frame for signing up or making changes to your current health plan is November 14 – December 12. Changes take effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

(By law, Federal Employees Health Plan Open Season runs from the Monday in the second full week of November until the Monday of the second full week in December.)

To enroll or change your current enrollment you can visit [liteblue.usps.gov](http://liteblue.usps.gov) or call Human Resources Shared Services (HRSSC) at 1 877 477-3273.

For those wishing to sign up or change their enrollment in a FEDVIP Dental or Vision plan during Open Season, you can do that at [benefeds.com](http://benefeds.com)

If you have any questions or concerns you can also call me at 414 273-7838.



**Chris Czubakowski**  
**North Sectional Director**

**The Way From Here**

A anti-establishment uprising against Washington fueled voters to elect Donald Trump as our next President.

This should be of grave concern to postal workers as it is largely expected he will join with anti-postal politicians, like Ron Johnson, in their efforts to destroy the Postal Service as we know it. Senator Johnson’s pet project as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has been to force the Postal Service into bankruptcy, nullify our collective bargaining agreement and open the door for the massive privatization of services.

President Obama always stood as our last line of defense against those efforts. Without a buffer within the Executive Branch to insulate us from anti postal legislation, it is very probable that the privateers and their lackeys in GOP controlled Senate and House will declare open season on the Postal Service and our Union.

The APWU is a Union whose members cover the entire political spectrum and the act of voting is a personal decision that is to be commended. That being stated, APWU members who supported Donald Trump and Ron Johnson did so at

## The Struggle Continues

*“...unionists have always been on the right side of that history.”*

their own peril and have needlessly placed their jobs, wages, and benefits at great risk. If privatization commences, they cannot say they weren’t warned! However, regardless of political views, and regardless of vote, we will all need to be fully united and mobilized against these future threats to the Postal Service.

It is also important that those of us who came up short to not fall into despair or give up...instead we need to ORGANIZE!!! Remember, the arc of history always bends toward justice and progressive activists, civil rights groups and unionists have always been on the right side of that history.

The beauty of this country we love is the fact that our Constitution allows for us to argue for and enact change every two and four years. If you’re unhappy about the election outcome but are unwilling to get involved with anything you may be part of the problem. So Brothers and Sisters, let’s take some time to process and decompress...then let’s get refocused and get back to work.

There is much to do. Solidarity to all the hardworking and unwavering unionists who are willing to spill their blood, sweat and tears for working people even though some of them, who have been misin-

formed by design, continue to vote against their own economic interests and resent us.

In the end, one of the architects of this second gilded age won the election by railing against fellow architects of the second gilded age (co-opting the union message– minus the hate, bigotry and exclusion) only to end up surrounding himself (in the White House) by architects of the second gilded age.

In the end, for Unionists, it’s not what you got it’s what you give.

The Struggle Continues!!!

**Wounded Warrior Leave**

On November 5, 2015, President Obama signed the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015. The Act grants up to 104 hours of paid leave to all newly hired federal employees who are veterans with at least a 30 percent service-connected disability rating.

These veterans are entitled to use the additional leave during their first year of federal employment in order to receive medical care for their service-connected disabilities without having to suffer loss or reduction of pay.

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The Act states that federal employees hired on or after Nov 5, 2016, will be eligible to take advantage of this benefit from their first day of employment. Any leave that remains unused by the end of the initial 12-month period will be forfeited – carry over is not permitted.

**The USPS, however, has decided to EXTEND THIS BENEFIT TO ALL CURRENT EMPLOYEES on the rolls as of November 4th, 2016 who meet the Act’s eligibility requirements of having a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 30% or more will now be eligible for 104 hours of Wounded Warrior Leave during the 12 month period beginning on November 6th, 2016. Any employee who used leave for a condition covered by the Act prior to this notice may request to have the subject leave converted to Wounded Warrior Leave.**

In closing, I would like to wish all my fellow Veterans a Happy Veterans Day. Members of the military, our veterans and their families all have made tremendous sacrifice for our country.

Military service is truly a bond that can never be broken.



**VETERANS DAY**

Veterans Day originated as “Armistice Day” on Nov. 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and Nov. 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938. Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.



**Jim Arneson**  
**Maintenance Director**

## Things To Know And Do When Converted To Career Custodian

*“There are time limits for signing up for these benefit plans.”*

*This last month has been a busy month for the Union. We have been meeting for local negotiations two days a week for the last month. As this is my first time. I found it interesting to see how the process is supposed to go and how it actually does.*

The Union put forward a numerous proposals and management responded with numerous proposals. Sometimes when they are craft specific there will be a subcommittee for those proposals.

Unfortunately, at this time I cannot go over specific proposals as that is against the rules. Some of them merely clean up the contract while others will have major impacts on our members and are just too extreme. So, we shall see what the outcome is and prepare to fight if it goes to impasse.

Recently I went out to Brookfield to observe the measuring of the facility for the MS-47. It appears that management is pushing forward with this system at the larger Associate Offices. This new system cuts hours. That is the reason it is being implemented at the larger offices. Thus, it is more important than ever that custodians at these offices punch into the right operations when doing non cus-

todial duties (ie. running mail to another station, going out to assist carriers with their vehicles, running express mail, changing locks).

These duties are not in the MS-47 and thus are not automatically counted in the system. We must make sure that we protect our jobs and are in the right operation for these non custodial tasks. If you have any problems or issues when trying to do this please contact the Union.

Finally, I want to share an abridged version of a recent hunting incident that happened to the child of one of our members. The member's child had gone hunting for wild pigs with a group of friends and a guide. The hunt went past dusk and one of the hunters started to walk back to where they had left the ATVs.

This hunter heard a shot and was slammed to the ground. He had been shot in the hip and was injured severely. Luckily this hunter had both a radio and cell phone and was able to contact his group.

After the group got to him, one of the members admitted that he had shot at what he thought was a wild pig. But because it was past dusk he wasn't able to really see what it was, nor what was beyond his target. For this member's child it was a very

traumatic event that took months to recover from. So when you go out to do your part in helping to maintain a healthy game population, please keep safety at the front of your mind. It only takes a pull of a finger to change someone's life forever. I want to see you all come back from a hunt safe.

**Good luck with your hunt  
and keep safe out there.**

**Hunting Safety**

- Tell someone where you will be hunting.
- Avoid outings alone. If you go alone, be careful and hunt in familiar areas.
- Check the weather forecast before going into the woods.
- Dress properly and be prepared for the worst possible conditions. Protect against hypothermia.
- Identify your target before shooting.
- Check hunting equipment before and after each outing, and maintain it properly. Familiarize yourself with its operation before using it in the field.

**Always wear blaze orange to be highly visible to other hunters.**



**Greg Becker**  
South Sectional Director

*Frequently, I talk to PTF Clerks who work at small offices that I represent. Some of the questions I get are, "Can they send me to another office or how can I get more hours?"*

Of course, the answer to both questions depends on the facts and circumstances provided. But, there is no doubt that the struggle for PTF's usually involves the amount of hours they get each week. Do you get enough hours to pay the bills and support your family at the end of the month versus do you get enough time to spend with your children and spouse after frequently being sent to other offices. This is the dilemma that many PTF Clerks have to navigate during their career.

Many of us experienced that same thing because we started out as PTF Clerks in offices, big and small. This was the way we were hired. We all knew that we had to serve our time (usually one to three years) until we would "make" regular with a fixed schedule of 40 hours a week for the rest of our career. Then the USPS and APWU agreed to a new category of new hires called PSE's.

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

## Creating Desirable Duty Assignments

*"The new negotiated language means nothing if it is not enforced."*

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

In our latest contract, the parties negotiated a new "pecking order" for the assignments "out of the installation" by PTF Clerks. I have given reports on this topic in recent meeting reports. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) could greatly add to the hours worked by PTF Clerks who want more hours and reduce the hours of PTF Clerks who would like less hours.

The text of this MOU is from the National Agreement: RE: Assignment of PTF Hub Clerks that reads:

*This provision covers PTF Clerk craft employees who may be required to work in installations other than their home office (installation). PTF's shall be scheduled for work outside their home office (installation) in accordance with the following:*

*1. Within thirty days of the effective date of the 2015 National Agreement, PTF's shall notify their postmaster in writing their preference not to work in offices in other installations. PTF's unavailable for the entire thirty day period due to leave shall provide their written preference within thirty days of returning to work.*

*2. Newly converted or assigned PTF's shall, within two weeks of the effective date of the conversion or*

*assignment, notify their postmaster in writing their preference NOT to work in offices in other installations.*

*3. If a PTF wants to change his or her preference to NOT work in offices in other installations the employee must provide a two week notice to his or her postmaster in writing.*

*4. If a PTF wants to rescind his or her preference to not work in offices in other installations, he or she must provide written notification of his or her rescission. The change will be effective no later than seven days from the date of notice.*

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

*6. The Pecking order for assignment will be:*

- ◆ *PTF's who have not indicated a preference to only work within their installation,*
- ◆ *Available and qualified PSE's,*
- ◆ *PTF's that have preferenced not to work in offices in other installations.*

I recommend that you always keep a copy of your letter to the Postmaster and get it date stamped if possible. If you are a PTF and you believe that management is not following the wording of this MOU, contact me.

This new negotiated language means nothing if it is not enforced. I can be reached at 414-530-3449.

## **Bernie Sanders: Where the Democrats Go From Here**

Millions of Americans registered a protest vote on Tuesday, expressing their fierce opposition to an economic and political system that puts wealthy and corporate interests over their own. I strongly supported Hillary Clinton, campaigned hard on her behalf, and believed she was the right choice on Election Day. But Donald J. Trump won the White House because his campaign rhetoric successfully tapped into a very real and justified anger, an anger that many traditional Democrats feel.

I am saddened, but not surprised, by the outcome. It is no shock to me that millions of people who voted for Mr. Trump did so because they are sick and tired of the economic, political and media status quo. Working families watch as politicians get campaign financial support from billionaires and corporate interests — and then ignore the needs of ordinary Americans. Over the last 30 years, too many Americans were sold out by their corporate bosses. They work longer hours for lower wages as they see decent paying jobs go to China, Mexico or some other low-wage country. They are tired of having chief executives make 300 times what they do, while 52 percent of all new income goes to the top 1 percent. Many of their once beautiful rural towns have depopulated, their downtown stores are shuttered, and their kids are leaving home because there are no jobs — all while corporations suck the wealth out of their communities and stuff them into offshore accounts.

Working Americans can't afford decent, quality child care for their children. They can't send their kids to college, and they have nothing in the bank as they head into retirement. In many parts of the country they can't find affordable housing, and they find the cost of health insurance much too high. Too many families exist in despair as drugs, alcohol and suicide cut life short for a growing number of people. President-elect Trump is right:

### *The American people want change.*

But what kind of change will he be offering them? Will he have the courage to stand up to the most powerful people in this country who are responsible for the economic pain that so many working families feel, or will he turn the anger of the majority against minorities, immigrants, the poor and the helpless?

Will he have the courage to stand up to Wall Street, work to break up the “too big to fail” financial institutions and demand that big banks invest in small businesses and create jobs in rural America and inner cities? Or, will he appoint another Wall Street banker to run the Treasury Department and continue business as usual? Will he, as he promised during the campaign, really take on the pharmaceutical industry and lower the price of prescription drugs? I am deeply distressed to hear stories of Americans being intimidated and harassed in the wake of Mr. Trump's victory, and I hear the cries of families who are living in fear of being torn apart. We have come too far as a country in combating discrimination. We are not going back.



Rest assured, there is no compromise on racism, bigotry, xenophobia and sexism. We will fight it in all its forms, whenever and wherever it re-emerges. I will keep an open mind to see what ideas Mr. Trump offers and when and how we can work together. Having lost the nationwide popular vote, however, he would do well to heed the views of progressives. If the president-elect is serious about pursuing policies that improve the lives of working families, I'm going to present some very real opportunities for him to earn my support.

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Let's rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and create millions of well-paying jobs. Let's raise the minimum wage to a living wage, help students afford to go to college, provide paid family and medical leave and expand Social Security. Let's reform an economic system that enables billionaires like Mr. Trump not to pay a nickel in federal income taxes. And most important, let's end the ability of wealthy campaign contributors to buy elections. In the coming days, I will also provide a series of reforms to reinvigorate the Democratic Party.

I believe strongly that the party must break loose from its corporate establishment ties and, once again, become a grass-roots party of working people, the elderly and the poor. We must open the doors of the party to welcome in the idealism and energy of young people and all Americans who are fighting for economic, social, racial and environmental justice. We must have the courage to take on the greed and power of Wall Street, the drug companies, the insurance companies and the fossil fuel industry.

When my presidential campaign came to an end, I pledged to my supporters that the political revolution would continue. And now, more than ever, that must happen. We are the wealthiest nation in the history of the world. When we stand together and don't let demagogues divide us up by race, gender or national origin, there is nothing we cannot accomplish. We must go forward, not backward.

\* \* \*

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American Postal Workers Union  
P.O. Box 17254  
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## The Grim Future Of Labor Under Trump

by: Nolan Hamilton

As our nation slowly awakens from its Trump-induced coma, we begin to contemplate what the next four years will mean for our most important issues. For workers, and anyone who cares about inequality, the prospects are terrifying.

It is standard to insert the caveat here that Donald Trump is a somewhat unpredictable man and that it is impossible to say with certainty what he will do. But with a Republican Congress and the outlines of Trump's cabinet and team of advisors being revealed, what we are in store for is becoming clearer by the day. A useful rule of thumb for non-Republicans is that all of the problems you worried about a week ago are still here; it's just that the prospect for solving them has gotten dramatically worse.

Reports from inside and outside the new administration have coalesced into a sort of conventional wisdom about Trump's economic plans: he will pour money into infrastructure and defense spending, slash corporate tax rates and taxes on the rich, deregulate banks, and dismantle Obamacare. This is just for starters. Add in at least one and as many as three new conservative Supreme Court justices and you have the recipe for things to be very bad for the poor and working class for a very long time.

The two real existential issues facing our country are climate change and inequality. Forecasting the near future for climate change is easy: it will get worse. Trump has tapped a climate change denier to oversee the EPA and has vowed to exit the Paris climate agreement. The news is very straightforwardly bad. The same is true about inequality—though there is some prospect for salvation, with the right strategy.

The divide between the rich and the poor in America has been rising since the Reagan era. The Obama administration had some modest success against it. Now, we are set to return to Reagan era economic policies. Trump's debt-fueled spending and enormous tax cuts may help the middle class a tiny bit, but it will help the rich a whole lot more. The wealth gap is going to grow. Inequality, for all the lip service we have been paying it for the past five years, is about to get worse.

There are only two real ways to fight this inequality. We can ask the government to fight it—that option is out—or, we can increase the power of regular workers and enable them to get a fairer share of this nation's income. (The share of total income going to labor has been declining for decades.) How, in a hostile political environment, can workers do such a thing? Organized labor. Only a large injection of members into unions will be strong enough to counteract what is about to happen.

Unfortunately, the labor movement has been losing this battle for a very long time. Union membership in America is down to about 11% of the working population—and that is going to get worse. This year, after the death of Antonio Scalia, the Supreme Court tied on the *Friedrichs* case, which had the effect of staving off a massive decline in public union membership. Under the Trump Supreme Court, the issue is sure to come back, and this time public unions will lose. Currently, more than one in three public sector workers are in unions, making up about half of all the union members in America. If the public sector union membership rates were to fall to match the rate in the private sector (less than 7%), it would mean the loss of millions of union members and a devastating blow to organized labor's status as a political force in this country.

In the new world of Trump, strong unions serve two vital functions. They serve as a counterbalance to rising economic inequality, by getting higher wages and more bargaining power for workers; and, more broadly, they are one of the most important bastions of progressive political power in our electoral system. Without the power of organized labor, inequality gets worse and the right wing gets its way more often.

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At a time like this, when a million different anti-Trump factions are scrambling to come up with plan to oppose this looming dark future, organized labor is a natural base for the movement. We are all different, but we are all workers. *Politically*, strong unions are important. *Economically*, strong unions are important. And without a drastic improvement in organized labor's strategy, unions are guaranteed to get much weaker in the near future.

Capital letters can be crude and offensive to the eye, but this deserves all of the emphasis we can give it:

***UNIONS MUST ORGANIZE MILLIONS OF NEW WORKERS VERY SOON OR EVERYTHING POLITICAL AND ECONOMICALLY WILL GET WORSE. UNIONS MUST MAKE ORGANIZING MORE UNION MEMBERS THE VERY HIGHEST PRIORITY. NOW.***

"The labor movement" is not a thing with intrinsic value; it is a thing that has the instrumental value of being the single best way to ensure that America continues to have a middle class. Labor unions just spent well over \$100 million on the presidential election. What did they get in return for that money? Nothing. How many workers could have been organized for that money? Many.

I can easily imagine the following scenario: terrified by Trump, labor unions double down on their electoral politics spending over the next four years. As a result, fewer resources are dedicated to organizing, so union membership continues to decline. Then public unions lose in the Supreme Court, and membership declines even further. We are left with a drastically weakened labor movement that serves only a tiny fraction of workers and is too small to make a meaningful difference in the anti-Trump crusades.

It is hard for unions to recruit millions of new members when nobody knows who they are. As someone who reads news for a living, I can definitively say that organized labor is simply not part of the mainstream conversation in America. It is perceived as an outlier, as a special interest, rather than as the first thing that comes to mind after someone thinks "my job sucks." That needs to change.

If I were to address our nation's union leaders, I would get on my knees and implore them to *try new things*. To seek out and listen to the younger, internet-savvy activists who actually know how to reach people in our modern age; to acknowledge that they must turn around the downward trend of union membership, for the good of workers and the country at large; and to accept the fact that whatever unions have been doing for the past three decades has failed. The membership numbers prove it. PLEASE TRY NEW THINGS.



Right now, more than half of America is scared of what the future holds and extremely energized to fight. Four years from now, the labor movement will either be resurgent with the energy and power of thousands of newly organized members; or it will be a depleted shell, left behind as people searching for answers look elsewhere. Labor leaders must swallow their pride and open their doors and embrace any idea that will help make unions the indispensable part of the national conversation that they deserve to be.

***Think big or get left behind.***

## **Contractual Retroactive Payment Payout Second Annual Wage Increase Coming Soon.**

APWU News Article 10/31/2016

### **Retroactive Pay**

The interest arbitration award dated July 8, 2016 that established the terms for the 2015-2018 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), ordered a retroactive pay increase effective Nov. 14, 2015. USPS started paying the new rates ordered by the arbitration award on Aug. 6, 2016. The retroactive pay for all APWU represented employees for the period from Nov. 16, 2015 through Aug. 5, 2016 will be paid in pay period 23 (Oct. 29-Nov. 11) and reflected in the November 18, 2016 paycheck.

The rate changes for all paid hours (including annual and sick leave, Sunday premium, overtime, etc.) will be reflected in the retroactive payments. Actual payments will vary based on pay grade and step as well as the number and type of hours worked. Retirees and other separated employees who worked any hours after Nov. 13 will receive retroactive payments. The retro payment will be mailed to the installation head of the duty station from which employees retired or separated.

### **Upcoming Annual Wage Increase**

In addition, the second general wage increase under the 2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement (Union Contract) is effective Nov. 26, 2016. This wage increase will be reflected in the paycheck workers will receive on Dec. 18, 2016. Career employees will receive a pay raise of 1.3%. Postal Support Employees (PSEs) will receive a pay increase of 2.3% (PSEs do not receive a cost-of-living adjustments and for that reason were awarded an additional 1% in their annual wage increases). The next career employee COLA increase is due in early March, 2017.



## **Retiree Spotlight**

My Name is Lenny Szwiec. I retired in April of 2005. I caught and released this 38inch, 16 pound Northern on a Waukesha County lake in October of this year. Besides fishing, I have my own singing/entertainment show. I do an average of 6 shows a month.

I have to say... Retirement Is Good !



## **Paltry COLA Will Leave Postal, Federal Retirees Worse Off APWU Working with Allies to Address Unintended Consequences**

APWU News Article 10/20/2016

The APWU has joined with 74 other organizations to urge Congress to correct an outrageous disparity, Retirees Department Director Nancy Olumekor reports. Unless the legislature takes action, a miniscule 0.3 percent 2017 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for millions of retirees will result in a substantial *reduction* in the annuities of hundreds of thousands of postal and federal employees who are enrolled in Medicare.

The decrease is the result of the so-called “hold harmless” provision of Social Security law, explains Richard Thissen, president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE):

*“Under the hold harmless provision of the Social Security Act, the dollar increase in Medicare Part B premiums is limited to the dollar increase in an individual’s Social Security benefit. With such a low COLA for Social Security benefits, about 70 percent of beneficiaries will be held harmless, meaning their Medicare Part B premiums will increase, on a dollar-to-dollar basis, only in proportion to the increase in their Social Security checks. The baseline premium for current beneficiaries held harmless is \$104.90/month.*”

“However, the remaining 30 percent of Part B beneficiaries who are not held harmless, including federal retirees who are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and who do not receive Social Security benefits, will shoulder the bulk of the cost of the 2017 premium increase. As projected by the Medicare Trustees, these individuals will see their premiums rise significantly. Without the effect of the hold harmless provision, there would be little to no increase in the standard Medicare premium.” Thissen went on to say, “It is grossly unfair that those who pay their premiums from something other than Social Security must pay more in premiums. There is no reason why two people with the same income should pay different Medicare premiums based on whether the money is coming from a Social Security check or a federal annuity.”

The APWU has joined with NARFE and other allies to urge Congress to correct the discrepancy. In a Sept. 27 letter to House and Senate leaders, the organizations wrote:

“As it did in 2015, Congress should make it a priority to shield people with Medicare from the unintended consequences resulting from the application of the hold harmless provision. No beneficiary should be forced to pay more than they otherwise would simply because some beneficiaries are afforded critical protections against reductions in their Social Security checks. We urge Congress to act accordingly and swiftly following the announcement of the 2017 COLA. The longer Congress delays, the more uncertainty for our nation’s retirees, people with disabilities, and their families who are counting on you.”

In addition to the disparity facing postal and federal retirees, the tiny increase doesn’t reflect the increase in costs most retirees face. The COLA formula itself, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners, CPI-W, “clearly does not reflect how seniors spend their money, particularly in light of recent Medicare premium increases,” Thissen noted. “The current measure, the CPI-W, fails to accurately reflect changes in consumer prices experienced by seniors, particularly those related to health care.”



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# LABOR'S LADEL



## Fall Harvest Fresh Apple Cake

Recipe submitted by: Wendy Newton

### Ingredients for Honey Glaze

1 cup confectioners' sugar  
2 tablespoons honey  
2 tablespoons milk

### Ingredients for Cake

3 cups diced Granny Smith apples (2 to 3 apples)  
1 cup lightly toasted chopped walnut or pecans  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
3 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 cups sugar  
1 1/4 cups vegetable oil  
3 eggs

### Directions for Honey Glaze

1. Add all of the ingredients into a small bowl and stir into a smooth texture. Set aside.

### Directions for Cake

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly grease a bundt pan or tube pan.  
2. In a bowl, mix together the apples, walnuts, vanilla and cinnamon. Set aside.

3. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda and salt.

4. Using an electric mixture beat the sugar, oil and eggs in a large bowl. Add in the dry ingredients and beat until completely combined. (This batter is a stiff batter so you will have to finish mixing by hand).

5. Fold in the apple mixture

6. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 1 hour and 30 minutes or until a tester inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean.

7. Allow the cake to fully cool in the pan, about 1 hour, and then turn out onto a plate.

8. Drizzle the apple cake with some of the honey glaze.

9. Serve and enjoy!!!





































