



The Hi-Lites



The official publication of Milwaukee, WI Area Local APWU, AFL-CIO
(Proud Postal Press Association National Awards Winner)

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SEPTEMBER 2025

VOLUME 47 ISSUE 5

APWU LAUNCHES LOCAL CAMPAIGN TO CELEBRATE USPS 250TH ANNIVERSARY

As the Postal Service celebrates its 250th anniversary, the APWU is launching a national campaign to mobilize support for the public institution amid growing threats of privatization. The campaign encourages APWU members to work with local and state government bodies — including city councils, county commissions, mayoral offices, state legislatures and tribal governments — to pass proclamations recognizing the milestone and affirming support for the public Postal Service.

“The 250th anniversary gives us a great opportunity to build even more support for the public Postal Service in the face of billionaire-led efforts to privatize this national treasure,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “These efforts seek to remove the Postal Service from public ownership and turn it over to private companies for profit.”

The APWU sees the proclamations as a critical tool in building public support for the Postal Service, good union jobs, and community services at a time when the Postal Service is facing an “existential threat” from a presidential administration that is openly hostile to public services and a new postmaster general with ties to the private shipping corporation, FedEx.

With deep ties to every single community across the country, postal workers move mail to every home in America, no matter who you are or where you live. By partnering with the communities postal workers serve, the campaign will reinforce the need for a public, independent Postal Service while celebrating the achievements of the USPS for the last 250 years.

The APWU is providing members with sample proclamation language and encouraging them to meet with elected representatives to build support for local resolutions. The union also recommends mobilizing postal workers, customers, and community members to attend meetings and speak in favor of the proclamations. “Strong proclamations from government bodies of all sizes — from large cities to small towns — will help firm up the defense of the Post Office,” the statement said.

The USPS was established on July 26, 1775, when the Second Continental Congress appointed Benjamin Franklin as the first Postmaster General. Today, it remains one of the country’s largest employers and most trusted public institutions.

Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

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



**Glenn Griggs
President**

APWU Announces Dates For Retroactive Payments

“...first general wage increase of November 16, 2024, through August 22, 2025.”

The Postal Service has provided tentative dates for the additional negotiated pay provisions in the 2024-2027 National Agreement and the date of the retroactive payment for the pay increases due for the “stopgap” period of November 16, 2024, to August 22, 2025.

It was previously announced that the first general wage increases and cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) due under the agreement will be in effect starting August 23, 2025, which is Pay Period 19-2025 and will appear on paychecks dated September 12, 2025.

This included a 1.3% increase for all employees, \$395 COLA for career employees, and an additional 1% for PSEs who do not receive COLAs.

The following pay period, Pay Period 20-2025, which begins September 6, 2025, the second COLA under this contract of \$811 will go into effect and then appear on paychecks dated September 26, 2025.

Dates for the following other pay provisions have also been announced: Upgrade of Grade 3 to Grade 4 Pay Period 24-2025 (begins November 1, 2025).

Elimination of Step JJ for Grade 4 Pay Period 24-2025 (begins November 1, 2025).

Elimination Step GG for PSEs converted to Career under the 24-Month MOU Pay Period 24-2024 (begins November 1, 2025).

PSE new “steps” Pay Period 1-2026 (begins December 13, 2025).

For the above provisions, the Postal Service had until the start of Pay Period 3-2026 to implement these changes. These changes will be implemented four pay periods earlier than previously estimated. (PSE Steps will be implemented two pay periods earlier than previously estimated.)

Other pay structure implementation dates were set in negotiations.

These include:

Night Shift Differential Increase of 4.0% Pay Period 21-2025 (begins September 20, 2025)

Night Shift Differential Increase of 2.0% Pay Period 21-2026 (begins September 19, 2026)

Annual Leave Max Carryover Start of leaver year Pay Period 3-2026 (begins January 10, 2026)

Annual Leave Exchange Start of leaver year Pay Period 3-2026 (begins January 10, 2026)

New top step for Grades 4-7 of the post-2010 pay scales Pay Period 21-2026 (begins September 19, 2026).

Due to the substantial amount of programming to the payroll systems that need to be completed by our union family in the IT/AS sector of the APWU, along with the updating of all employees PS Form 50s, and other records, the retroactive payments are tentatively scheduled to be made on paychecks dated April 10, 2026.

As stated above, the retroactive pay period will be from the date of the first general wage increase of November 16, 2024, through August 22, 2025.

Any employee who has separated (retired, resigned, discharged, etc.) from the Postal Service and had work or paid leave during the retro period will also receive a retroactive check. It will be sent to their last office on record.

Retired employees will also have their records with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) updated by the Postal Service. Annuities will eventually be adjusted, but once the records are sent to OPM, it is up to OPM to adjust the annuity.

The APWU was the third contract settled in 2025 that requires retroactive payments.

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The APWU still believes that our retroactive pay can be completed sooner than April 10, 2026, and we have already begun to press the Postal Service on the issue. The APWU is especially pleased that some of the pay structure changes will be implemented sooner than expected, giving our members more money in their pockets after implementation.

RETIREES AND LETTERS OF DEMAND

It has been brought to my attention that some employees who have retired may be receiving invoices/letters of demand for negative annual leave and other debts at the time of their retirement. The retirees can file a grievance and the collections are to be stayed under the contract; however, if the Accounting office is not notified of the grievance the collection process will continue.

In order to stop collections an Employee Debt Modification Request must be filed by management online through the eIWS Online OLF. The Union and members do not have access to this form. If the form is not completed, Accounting will not be made aware to stop the collection and could possibly send the debt to outside agencies like the IRS for collection. The use of this form is for all debt related grievances, including for active employees who receive letters of demand and initiate grievances.

If you are retired and receive a letter of demand please call the Union Hall at 414-273-7878 within 14 days of receiving the letter so that it is timely and we can begin the process of filing a grievance and stopping collection.

Celebrate Labor Day With Labor Family

Labor Day is more than a long weekend — it is a reminder of the sacrifices and victories of working people over generations of struggle. Labor Day was first celebrated in 1882 by the Central Labor Union in New York City. Just a few years later, following national strikes and the tragic Pullman Strike of 1894, it became a federal holiday. The day honors the dignity of work, the strength of working-class solidarity, and the belief that every worker deserves fair pay, safe working conditions, and a voice on the job.

Labor Day is a time to reflect on the historic struggles for the eight-hour workday, child labor laws, and the right to organize — all hard-won by workers standing together. But it is also a celebration of today's workforce: postal workers, construction workers, nurses, electricians, teachers, farm workers, and more who keep our communities running.

As workers' rights are facing increasing attacks from the billionaires and current presidential administration, we encourage locals to connect with their AFL-CIO state federation, central labor council, or local community organizations to organize an action that will show privatizers, union busters, and any politician that wants to harm working people's rights, that we are fighting back.

This year, let's make Labor Day more than a holiday. We are taking to the streets to show that working people are united against the current administration's hostile policies and actions targeting our communities.

Visit aflcio.org to find your state federation or central labor council and reach out today to plug in to their work for Labor Day 2025.





Chris Czubakowski
Local Business Agent

Local Business Agent REPORT

"...Open Season for 2026 will run from November 9, 2025 to December 7, 2025."

FALL RETIREMENT CLASSES

The Milwaukee Area Local has scheduled retirement classes on Wednesday, October 22th, 2025 from 7p-9p and Saturday, October 25th, 2025 from 9a-11a. These classes will be held at the APWU Union Hall, 417 N. 3rd street, Milwaukee, WI. 53203.

Financial Advisors Greg Johnson and Brandon Littleton from Union Financial Inc. will cover FERS, CSRS, TSP and how to invest and manage your money in retirement.

Any current APWU or NPMHU member and their spouse/ partner are invited to attend. If interested in attending please contact the Union hall at 414 273 7838 to reserve your spot . Deaf/hard of hearing members should contact the Union hall two weeks prior to the classes so that we can request and interpreter.

These retirement classes have been held for many years and have helped countless members achieve financial success in retirement.

If you are looking forward to retirement, we are looking forward to you joining us.

HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS AND LWOP

I have recently been getting a lot of questions from members regarding LWOP and the payment of health insurance premiums when they return to work.

ELM 525.221 states, *"If an employee is in a non-pay status for an entire pay period or if available pay during a pay period does not cover the full amount of the employees share for the cost of the health benefits enrollment, the employee is responsible for payment of the amount that would have been withheld. Employees who consent to the enrollment's continuation for a period of time without such withholding from salary are consenting to the recovery of the full amount due."*

ELM 524.82 states in part: *"Employees' shares are withheld from their pay each pay period. If the amount of the salary for a pay period is not enough to cover the full withholding, no withholding (or Postal Service contribution) is made for that particular pay period. Employees who do not have health benefit premiums withheld as a result of insufficient pay or partial LWOP, however, will have their past-due premiums withheld from their next available pay. Deductions for retirement, FICA, and federal income tax have priority over health benefits withholdings."*

So, you may be asking, what does this all mean? It means that the threshold for deducting the health benefits from an employee's payroll check is 4 pay periods.

If you return to work before the 5th pay period the back premiums will be automatically deducted from your first payroll check(s). If you return to work after the 4th pay period the Eagan payroll system will automatically set up an invoice and letter of demand.

SAVE BIG MONEY THIS OPEN SEASON

The Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Open Season for 2026 will run from November 9, 2025 to December 7, 2025.

During this time, eligible federal employees, retirees, and their families can change their health insurance plan, enroll in or cancel their health insurance or make changes to their coverage, such as adding or dropping dependents.

The USPS will continue to pay 95% of the health care premium for career APWU bargaining unit members who elect the APWU consumer driven option and who have previously been enrolled in a PSHB plan for more than a year. The current premiums for APWU Consumer Driven Option are...

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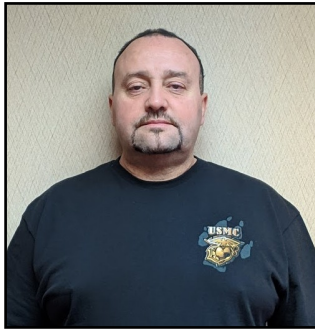
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Self is \$16.12 per PP, Self Plus One is \$35.05 per PP, Self Plus Family is \$38.23 per PP

Now, compare this to the premiums you may be paying to basic BlueCross/ Blue Shield;

Self is \$134.12 per PP, Self Plus One is \$280.99 per PP, Self Plus Family is \$317.62 per PP

A switch to APWU Health Plan consumer driven option from basic Blue Cross/Blue Shield would result in the following premium savings; Savings of \$3,068 per year for Self, Savings of \$6,394.44 per year for Self-One, Savings of \$7,264.14 per year for Self and Family. The APWU Health Plan is the best health plan in the PSHB and we would like to be your partner this Open Season. I encourage you to speak to other APWU members who have the APWU consumer driven health plan. I believe that you will find that most, if not all, are very satisfied with their health plan and the savings they receive. Please contact me at the union hall at 414-273-7838 for more information and for any help you need making these changes (or changes to FEDVIP) during open season.



Marvin Rivera
West Sectional Director

Just a reminder that PTF clerks and PSEs can apply for 50-mile canvass opportunities via e-Reassign.

Canvasses are open on the 1st and 15th each month and remain open for 10 days. Employees are to use their EIN password to login to eReassign.usps.com, then look for “My 50-Mile Canvass”.

If the offices are posted within 50 miles-radius of your current office, then you will be allowed to apply for that canvass. Once logged in the 50-mile canvass site you will be required to do the following:

1. Complete all fields that are identified with red asterisk.

2. If driving is a requirement, understand and accept the terms of the Driving Disqualification Table.

3. Acknowledge your current bid cluster (installation) is within 50 miles of the office in the canvass.

4. Select the offices(s) that you would like to apply for and hit the “agree” button.

5. Hit the display button to place the offices you selected in priority numerical order. All canvasses are awarded on career seniority date/non-career relative standing dates and preference numbers. If you need to withdraw from one or more offices that you selected in the canvass you can pick on the “withdraw request” button.

Each employee can only submit one 50-mile canvass request per posting period. Each APWU employee is

only eligible for acceptance via one canvass per 12-month period. eReassign transfers are still available to PTF clerks.

6. Complete the last field with the red asterisk.

7. Hit save- you have completed your first canvass. After you have saved and submitted your canvass you will receive an acknowledgment letter you can print for your records.

E-Reassign 50 Mile CANVASS Opportunities

“Each employee can only submit one 50-mile canvass request per posting period.”



Trump 2.0 Is A Disaster For Workers Don't Be Gaslit When He Says "Happy Labor Day!"

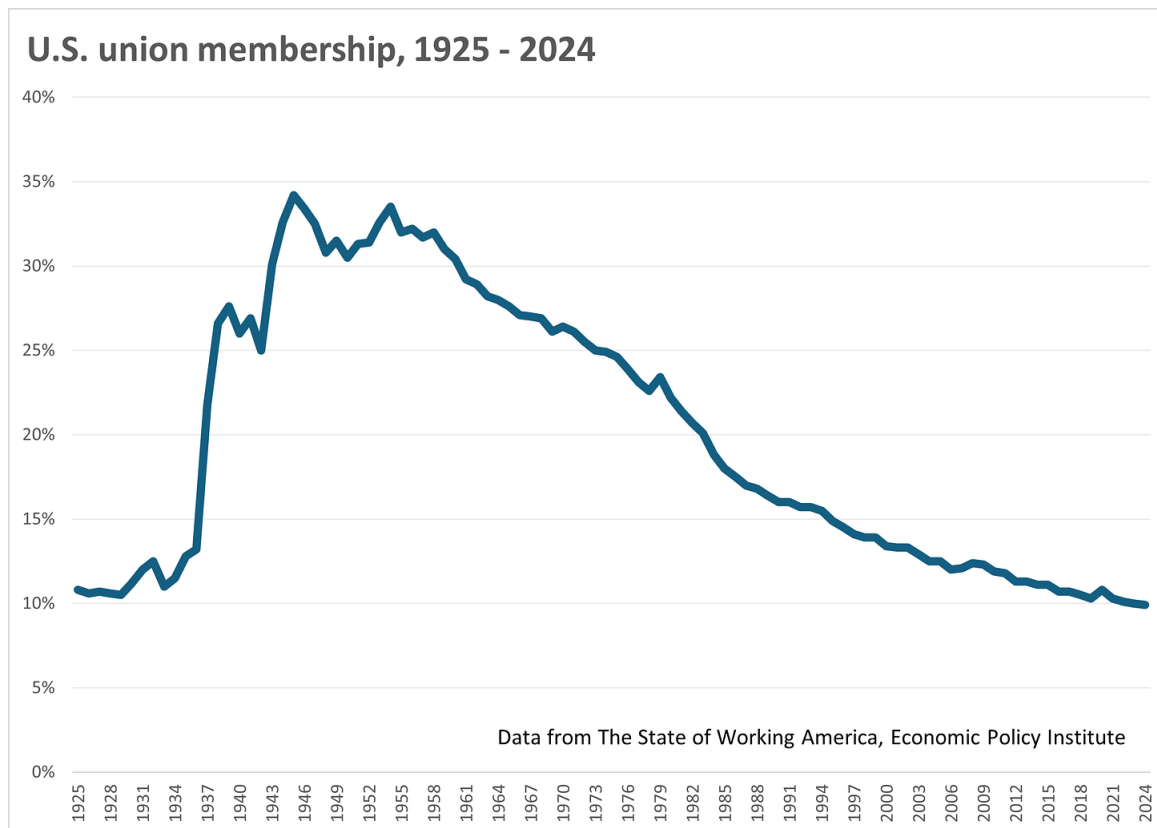
Paul Waldman

By the time you read this, the White House may have put out a statement in honor of Labor Day. It will no doubt offer some empty words of praise for the ingenuity and industriousness of the American worker, along with a much more lengthy and effusive tribute to President Trump, who in his infinite beneficence has delivered to those workers a utopia of prosperity and happiness.

Back in the real world, Trump is the most anti-labor president in modern American history. For decades, the Republican Party and its corporate backers have conducted a war on the American worker in general and on labor unions in particular. It has been systematic, multi-faceted, spectacularly well-funded, and extraordinarily successful. But even in a long line of anti-labor GOP presidents, Trump stands out. And while he may not succeed in completely destroying collective bargaining in America, he's poised to strike terrible blows against organized labor.

Where Unions Stand Today

When Trump talks about how great America was when a man with a factory job could give his family a middle-class life, the economic conditions he's describing were made possible by unions. In the 1950s, around a third of American workers were union members, and their power allowed them to insist on good wages and benefits, ensuring that the people who created business success shared in the profits. But since then, union membership has been on a steady decline.



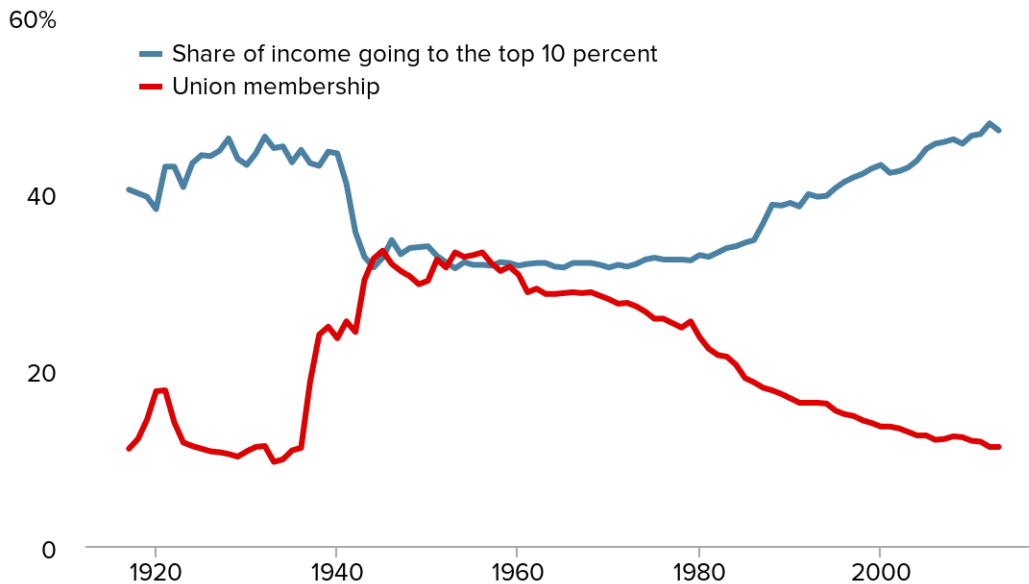
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Today, fewer than 10 percent of American workers belong to a union, but that anemic figure masks a stark public/private divide. Nearly a third of public sector workers — teachers, cops, firefighters, government workers of all kinds at the federal, state, and local level — belong to unions. But only six percent of private sector workers do. That's despite the fact that unions are extremely popular; in Gallup polls, over two thirds of Americans say they approve of labor unions, near an all-time high.

So it isn't that many more Americans wouldn't like to belong to unions if they could —they don't have the chance. That decline in union membership is no accident. A variety of factors contributed to it, but big business has waged an organized campaign to limit worker power, one that involved efforts to get business-friendly judges on the bench who would change labor law, battles against increasing the minimum wage, and decades of anti-union propaganda. Over time, inequality has closely tracked the rise and fall of unions. When more Americans bargained collectively, less of the nation's wealth was captured by those at the top, and when unions declined, inequality rose.

Union membership and share of income going to the top 10%



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Piketty and Saez (2013)

Economic Policy Institute

Trump is trying to destroy worker power everywhere

Trump believes that he has the right to exercise sweeping power over everything the federal government touches — including the people who work for it — no matter what the law or duly negotiated contracts might say. In March, he signed an executive order aimed at nullifying all collective bargaining agreements across a broad swath of agencies that touch on national security in any way, from the State Department to the TSA to the Department of Veterans Affairs to the Food and Drug Administration. Early last month, the VA announced that it was terminating union contracts for over 400,000 workers. But Trump isn't done. Just before Labor Day, he issued another executive order, this time revoking labor rights for more agencies supposedly on national security grounds, including the Patent and Trademark Office, the National Weather Service, and NASA.

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Trump 2.0.

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At this point we should stop and remember that the *whole point* of a contract is that it is legally binding on both signatories. If the boss can just terminate the agreement he signed with you whenever he feels like it, then you don't actually have one. And that's precisely what labor law is supposed to guard against — it says that workers have *rights* that have to be respected. Until they don't.

While a great many of America's unionized government workers work for state and local agencies, if Trump can eliminate union representation at the federal level, he will have gone a long way toward the goal of destroying the American labor movement. But he won't stop there. Trump is attempting to drain union power among private sector workers too. Shortly after taking office, he fired multiple members of independent panels, including the National Labor Relations Board, which adjudicates labor disputes. After legal challenges were filed, the Supreme Court used its shadow docket to decide that Trump probably has the authority to do so — meaning the panels aren't independent after all — so the fired officials can't return to work.

In the case of the NLRB, that meant the board lacks a quorum, and so can't make any rulings. It can't order companies to recognize unions that have won elections, or punish companies that violate worker rights. As of last week, the board is down to a single member, meaning it has essentially stopped functioning. Where earlier Republican presidents merely filled vacancies on the NLRB with anti-labor officials (often lawyers who specialized in helping corporations fight unionization), Trump wants to dismantle the NLRB entirely.

The president's corporate allies are pursuing the same end. Elon Musk has sued to have the entire structure of the NLRB — which was created during the New Deal — declared unconstitutional. Earlier this month, an appeals court found in his favor, leaving the agency's existence in doubt. That means that the principal process for workers to enforce labor law has disappeared. Now, if they've been abused, they'll have to undertake costly lawsuits that could drag on for years, only to wind up before a Supreme Court that is overwhelmingly hostile to workers.

The Tech Connection

When all those tech titans ponied up large contributions and assembled at Trump's inauguration — including Musk, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg, Sundar Pichai, and Tim Cook — it was more than a sign of their pragmatic desire to build good relations with the incoming administration.

One largely ignored aspect of the tech industry's turn to the right and alliance with Trump is that the leaders of Silicon Valley largely agree with him when it comes to organized labor. Trump doesn't have to persuade them on this issue, because they already loathe unions as much as he does. At one point, Facebook marketed its Workplace internal communication tool, a since-discontinued alternative to services like Slack, by telling employers they could control what was said there by censoring words like “unionize.” Google has employed union-busting consultants, and Amazon can fairly be called one of the most venomously anti-union companies in America.

Then there's Musk. He has long fought successfully against unionization of his workers; Tesla is the only major automaker whose workers have no union representation, even though the NLRB has repeatedly ruled against the company in cases where workers said they were being mistreated. During a conversation broadcast on X in August 2024, Trump praised Musk for firing striking workers — which, if Musk had actually done so, would absolutely be illegal.

Too many union members still like Trump

One of the paradoxes of this political era is that despite Trump's obvious antipathy toward workers' rights, he has retained substantial support among union members, even as Democrats continue to be endorsed by most unions (the hard-right police unions are an exception, as was the Teamsters under its useful idiot chief Sean O'Brien, who even spoke at the Republican convention).

According to the Pew Research Center, Kamala Harris beat Donald Trump among union members by 56-43 percent — better than losing, but far less than a Democrat ought to get among a population that should know where their interest

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lies. That Trump has support among the membership of certain unions is not a testament to his love for workers — it shows a profound failure on the part of those unions themselves. Why have they failed to communicate the many ways unions make life better not just for their own members but for all workers, and how important it is to support politicians who support them? How is it that they failed to convince their membership that Trump is out to screw them when the evidence is so clear?

The last few years have seen heroic organizing work undertaken against tremendous odds, as workers at companies like Starbucks, Amazon, and REI battled furious corporate opposition as they sought to achieve collective bargaining rights. But they are up against powerful foes, and operating without the support they need. As labor reporter Hamilton Nolan argues, most of the big unions seem more concerned with managing the decline of labor rather than revitalizing it by aggressively organizing to win new members. But perhaps this could be a moment of opportunity. Most Americans believe the decline of unions has been bad for workers and bad for the country. That decline need not be permanent, despite all the tools the enemies of labor have at their disposal. Trump will continue to wage war on workers, but it's not impossible that out of the wreckage he creates, a new understanding of what has been lost and a determination to undo the damage could emerge.

For that to happen, it will take what unions have always stood for, and exactly what Trump, his business allies, and conservatives in general want to crush: *solidarity*. It will take the understanding that our fates are tied together and we are each better off when we're all better off. It's a good thing to remember on Labor Day — and every other day.

* * *



Kenni Liggan
Customer Service

Labor Fest

"1000 local union members showed up and showed out!"

First of all, I would like to thank APWU steward Jyfena Brown for doing a AMAZING job organizing this year's Labor Fest for the Milwaukee area local.

Also, I would like to personally thank the members that showed up for this year's event. 1000 local union members showed up and showed out! We had an amazing time.

It just showed me how much the unions have done for this country and

how much unions are needed. After an amazing parade there was good food, great drinks and a great atmosphere. We were entertained with a wrestling match and a great car show. I was so happy to see all the unions that came together for this special event. Again, thank you for everyone that participated in this year's event.

Now on a more serious note,
I'd like to address the issue of
DISCIPLINE.

I've noticed more than enough times that members are getting issued discipline and not notifying your stewards. This has to stop. You have 14 days to get your disci-

pline that you were issued to your APWU steward or officer. Even though we have 14 days to file the grievance we need to get that discipline from you the member immediately! After you get it, the next order of business is to file a grievance. Your steward will put in a request for information.

We need to get statements, We may have to get TACs reports and other documents. That takes time, we have to do a full investigation, In order to represent you to the best of our ability. PLEASE do not wait until the last moment to give it to us, that only hurts your case and hinders our investigation.

Thank you !



John Miceli

It's not uncommon for a federal employee to feel that they can't afford to contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan, or to say they can't afford to increase their contributions.

However, nothing is more important to a comfortable retirement than a large TSP balance.

Most of us will have three sources of retirement income from our federal career:

First there is FERS, which has mandatory contributions of anywhere between 0.8% (regular FERS employee hired prior to 01/01/2013) and 4.9% (special category employee hired 01/01/2014 or more recently) of salary.

Second is Social Security which has mandatory contributions of 6.2% of salary up until the "tax cap" is reached. The tax cap is \$168,600 for 2024 and will increase to \$176,100 for 2025.

Third is the Thrift Savings Plan, but TSP contributions are completely voluntary. For those who choose to participate in the TSP, the elective deferral amount for 2024 is \$23,000, increasing to \$23,500 for 2025 with those 50 and over able to contribute

FERS & Social Security Are Big, But You Will Want A Fat TSP !

"At the end of 30 years"

an additional \$7,500, and those between 60 and 63 having the ability to make a \$11,250 catch-up payment.

What percentage of your pre-retirement salary would be replaced by the mandatory part of your retirement income (i.e., FERS and Social Security)?

If we assume a regular employee who works a 30-year career, somewhere between 55% and 60% of pre-retirement income would be replaced by these two sources. What percentage of your pre-retirement salary would a financial planner recommend you replace? 80%. With just FERS and Social Security, you are not going to get anywhere near the recommended replacement rate. You need your TSP!

With a few exceptions (like deep debt or abject poverty), no one should be contributing less than 5% of their salary to the Thrift Savings Plan. A 5% contribution rate ensures that, if you're FERS, you will be receiving 5% in agency contributions to your TSP account in addition to the 5% that you put in – you're doubling your money!

Comparison: 3, 5 and 10 Percent Contribution

Let's look at three new hires that start out making \$55,000 per year and receive annual raises of 1%.

They will work for the federal government for a period of 30 years. One of them contributes 3% of their salary; another contributes 5% and the third contributes 10%. They never increase their contribution rate. I assumed an annual rate of return of 5% per year. Each one of the TSP's basic funds have returned close to or more than 5% per year since their inception.

At the end of 30 years...

The employee who contributed 3% of their salary had \$293,080.

The employee who contributed 5% had \$418,687.

The employee who contributed 10% ended up with \$628,029.

That's quite a bit of money coming from modest bi-weekly contributions over a long period of time. It is likely that the employees who contributed 5% and 10% of their salary would be able to meet the financial planner's goal of replacing 80% of their pre-retirement income by taking monthly payments from their TSP accounts.

Who knew that Mick Jagger was talking about the TSP when he sang "Time is on my side"?

Imagine how much more they could have if they contributed more, worked more than 30 years, or earned a greater rate of return.



KeKe Conley-Burrell
Manual/Mechanization
Director

Time Limits, What Time Is It?

"The Union also may initiate a grievance at Step 1 within fourteen (14) days of the date the Union first became aware of ..."

We live by time limits and are held accountable for not meeting the time limits. Stewards will tell you that missing a time limit is not an option. Here are just a few of what the Union and Management must follow.

11.6 Schedule shall be posted as of the Tuesday preceding the service week in which the holiday falls.

14.2.C Filing a grievance at Step 2 of the grievance procedure within fourteen (14) days of notifying such employee's supervisor if no corrective action is taken during the employee's tour.

15.2.1 Step 1: (a) Any employee who feels aggrieved must discuss the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor within fourteen (14) days of the date on which the employee or the Union first learned or may reasonably have been expected to have learned of its cause.

The Union also may initiate a grievance at Step 1 within fourteen (14) days of the date the Union first became aware of (or reasonably should have become aware of) the facts giving rise to the grievance.

15.2. Step 1: (c) Management has five (5) days from the step 1 meeting to render a decision.

15.2. Step 1: (d) The Union has ten (10) days after receipt of the supervisor's decision to file a step 2. 15.2. Step 2: (c) Meet at step 2 no later than seven (7) days following receipt of the Step 2 appeal unless the parties agree upon a later date.

15.2. Step 2: (f) Where agreement is not reached the Employer's decision shall be furnished to the Union representative in writing, within ten (10) days after the Step 2 meeting unless the parties agree to extend the ten (10) day period.

15.2. Step 2: (h) Appeal an adverse Step 2 decision to Step 3 within fifteen (15) days after receipt of the Employer's decision. The Union may appeal an adverse Step 2 decision directly to arbitration for disciplinary grievances or contract, but these grievances will be appealed to the appropriate Grievance/ Arbitration Processing Center within thirty (30) days after the receipt of the Employer's Step 2 decision.

32.2.B: Highway contracts covered by Article 32, Section 2, the Union will be furnished the information enumerated in Paragraph C below. This information will be furnished at least sixty (60) days prior to the scheduled installation of the service. Within forty (40) days of be-

ing furnished such information, the Union may request a meeting to discuss a specific contract(s). Within forty-five (45) days of being furnished such information, the parties will exchange the basic cost analyses in order to facilitate discussions. The parties will meet on or before the sixtieth (60th) day. At no time will the subject highway contract(s) for which a meeting has been requested be awarded prior to the actual meeting.

39.1.J.3 The posting and awarding of temporary hold down bids shall not exceed 72 hours.

39.2.A.1 All vacant or newly established craft duty assignments shall be posted or reverted within 28 days.

39.2.C The notice shall remain posted for 10 calendar days, unless a different length for the posting period is established by local negotiation.

39.2.E.1 Within 10 days after the closing date for the posting (including December), the installation head shall post a notice stating the successful bidder and his seniority date.

39.2.E.2 The successful bidder must be placed in the new assignment within 21 days except in the month of December. The local agreement may set a shorter period. As always thanks you for your dedication, all your hard work and everything you do to protect our Union.



Larry Brown Jr
Vice President

Every year around this time, I sit down to write something about Labor Day for this month's article, and every year, I wonder if people really think about what this holiday means anymore. Is it the unofficial end of summer? Is it just another day off, if you're not forced in as a non-vol, or one last trip before school starts back? Labor Day is not about 1 last cookout or 1 final before school sale; it's about working people who fought by sacrificing, by marching and striking so that we could have the protections that we take for granted today.

This year, though, I can't stop thinking about **Project 2025**. If you haven't heard of it, it's a detailed plan, a roadmap so to speak, sitting at the table of the Trump administration right now, being used to dismantle labor protections, silence unions, and roll back decades of progress we have made as a country.

We're talking about eliminating public-sector unions, making it easier to decertify existing ones, letting states gut federal wage and hour laws, and stripping away enforcement of anti-discrimination protections.

Now, you might say, "Well, that's Washington politics. That's not here." But let me tell you, it connects

directly to what we do every single day at the Postal Service.

Think about attendance. Every day as a lead clerk, I see people forgetting their punches. Missed clock rings that need correcting in TACS. Cards left at home. People racking up LWOP like it's a vacation bank. We all know that for every 80 hours of LWOP, you lose annual leave. We all know it affects retirement, TSP contributions, and step increases. And yet I still get asked, "Why did my leave balance drop?" or "Why is my raise delayed?" Because you treated LWOP like the sweetest piece of candy.

(That's a call back to a former article as I was asked by someone to write an article on the negative effects of the use of LWOP and I told them that I already did. So go read that.)

It doesn't stop there. I see machines left unstaffed as all of our people are moved to other sections, areas trashed for the next tour, no one cares, sleeves all over the floor, no one cares. I see employees refusing to correct their partner when they're loading the machine wrong, running mail that shouldn't be run and then blaming management for everything. Management cannot make an employee have a work ethic. That's up to the employee to care about the people that take over when they end their tour. **It is 100% your job** to both learn the right way and to pass

Labor Day 2025... What Are We Really Celebrating?

*"...Congress looks at the Postal Service and says,
"80% of costs are the workers..."*

it on. Training isn't just what a supervisor gives you. Training is accountability among coworkers, but as my last article clearly expressed, we all know that accountability is lost.

Here's the thing, when Congress looks at the Postal Service and says, "80% of costs are the workers," they're not looking at management's missed opportunities, or the millions wasted on outside contracts.

(Quick example, the discounts they give outside mailers to put the mail into walk sequence because it is supposed to skip the machines and go straight to the carriers, but automation still ends up running the mail anyway so why the discount?)

They're looking at us. And when they see attendance problems, work areas left in chaos, and do I dare say "Grievances," it makes their case for them. It gives them the argument for privatization, for more automation, and for cutting the workforce and replacing it with robots and AI.

That's where **Project 2025** comes in. This plan is not hiding its intentions. It's openly calling for stripping away labor rights, weakening unions, and shifting work into private hands. They say, "We don't need as many postal workers, because the private sector and technology can handle it." If we keep showing them that we can't even handle our own attendance and accountability, then once again

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we're just proving their point. And here's the truth that nobody wants to hear: **IF ACCOUNTABILITY IS LOST, PROTECTIONS WILL BE LOST RIGHT ALONG WITH IT.** You cannot expect to keep the benefits of a strong union and federal job security if you act like showing up is optional! You cannot demand more staffing when half the current staff is calling in racking up LWOP.

Labor Day should not just be a holiday. It should be a reminder. A reminder that workers before us faced a lot worse just to get the protections that we now treat like they'll never disappear. A reminder that all those protections are not guaranteed, especially not when there's a movement like Project 2025 ready to erase them at the first sign of weakness.

Think I'm joking about the Project 2025 blueprint, let's see some of the things that have happened and compare them. Number 1 on Project 2025 list is the Restructuring of Presidential Power and Bureaucracy. A set of the first 180 days of executive orders for rapid deployment. Did that happen? How many executive orders were signed on Trumps first day in office? Centralizing authority by subordinating independent agencies like the DOJ, FBI, FCC, and FTC to the President. Do we not see the attack on Jerome Powell because Trump wants the interest rates lowered? Trump just attempted to fire Lisa Cook, a governor on the Federal Reserve Board, in August so that he can stack the board with people that will do his bidding. She is currently suing the administration. It didn't help that Adriana Kugler resigned in August instead of fighting against the regime. That resignation created a vacancy that Trump will fill. We don't need to speak of the firings at the NLRB, and the aggressive action against the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) which let to the government takeover of their headquarters and assets.

Number 2 in the Project 2025 blueprint is the plan to shut down the Department of Education. Did they attempt that? Didn't 1300 employees get laid off in March as part of a reduction in force aimed at downsizing the agency? These lay-offs were in addition to employees who accepted voluntary retirement packages. Then comes the elimination of federal civil rights enforcement in schools. Need I say DEI. Next is ending programs like head start, free school meals. Did we not see what is going to happen to SNAP benefits under the Big Beautiful Bill.

What do you think falls into category Number 3? See, we don't have to sit back and wonder what the plan is for the Postal Service and other government agencies because, as I am showing you, this blueprint is being followed to a T, even though everyone in the Trump administration says they never heard of it, even though most of them authored it and are sitting in positions right now to make sure it is carried out.

Number 3 is Deregulation and Privatization. Make broad efforts to dismantle regulatory agencies, slash environmental and labor protections and reduce health regulations. This is the reason economists are saying health care premiums could rise by as much as 70% next year. Do you know how much you would be paying for health insurance if the APWU didn't negotiate the Postal Service paying 95% of your health care costs? Yet, we had people saying VOTE NO to the contract we just ratified in which we lost nothing. And over 60% cared not to vote at all. Stop looking at the dollar amount and look at the entire benefits package, and pay attention to things that affect you and contribute to the outcomes instead of sitting back and doing nothing.

Number 3 also says, encouragement of privatizing government functions, limiting overtime rules and weakening unions. So, I've pointed out how everything else has been followed, do you think they're just going to skip over this. A Wells Fargo report was already leaked that showed their thoughts on how they would implement destroying and gutting the Post Office. Raising our prices by 140% would definitely help Fed X, and USPS claims the report. Our new Postmaster came from the board of Fed X. Do we not see the play? I wrote an article years ago explaining how we need to vote for our jobs. I caught flak from people who undoubtedly voted to put this regime back in office, and since this regime has been back in office you all have been asking me what can be done to make sure our jobs are kept. We'll first off it is convincing the people to actually gain knowledge on what they are voting for, because I'm seeing a lot of videos on the internet of people saying I regret my vote for DJT. A lot of people with close ties to immigrants voted for DJT, a lot of farmers all across the country voted for DJT, but when he started implementing his policies those same people are now being affected by them. Now, they regret their vote. When I tell you to vote for your job, it's so you are not sitting there

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jobless proclaiming how much you regret your vote now because you don't have a job. So, here's the bottom line. If we want to honor Labor Day, we have to honor labor itself. That means coming to work. That means doing your job with pride. That means respecting the role you chose to take when you signed on. Because once those protections are gone, they're gone. And if you think it can't happen, just remember, ten years from now, you might be one of the same people crying for a job you once walked away from. I don't know about you, but I'd like to retire from here! It's a reason why I stress coming to work sooooo much. All eyes are on us, don't give this regime any ammunition. Come to work and do your job to the best of your ability and take home a nice paycheck too.

I hope you enjoyed your holiday, but don't forget what it stands for. And don't hand your future over to those waiting to take it from you.

* * *



Jim Arneson
Maintenance Director

I hope you had a safe and fun summer. As September ends you may see a panic in your office if you are a custodian. The Service will normally jam as much overtime as possible to try and make its hours against Line H. While some Overtime Volunteers will love this, the Service also tends to bring in Non Volunteers. If you are a Non Volunteer the Service can bring you in for a Maximum of 56 hours a week. But this can only happen when ALL Overtime Volunteers are maximized.

This means that if you bring a Non Volunteer for an off day, ALL Overtime Volunteers must be brought in even if Penalty time happens. This includes off day Volunteers on their second day. If you're an OT Volunteer and you see a Non Volunteer working overtime, contact the Union. While it might be valid we must make sure they follow our local.

Overtime, Custodial & Travel (Don't Be Threatened)

"If you're an OT Volunteer and you see a Non Volunteer working overtime, contact the Union."

Another thing you may see is that they ask you to sign complete on a route you have not finished or even touched. Unless you complete the entire route, you should not mark it as complete. If the Service orders you to do it, politely refuse. It's falsifying documentation... illegal.

If they threaten you with discipline for refusing to mark complete on work you did not do. This is just that, a threat, but they must prove that their order was correct. We have had employees disciplined for marking complete on a route when the Service says they did not complete the route.

The completion of the routes and using the equipment and chemicals called for on the route are important. These chemicals and equipment is to be used per Custodial Team Clean. The times on the routes were created using these chemicals and equipment. If you have floor scrubbers or vacuums that are not working how can you complete a route that requires this equipment.

Lastly, if you are traveling between stations, make sure you clock over to travel. If your staffing package at your station does not have travel time in Table C the time you travel is not counted towards Line H.

Also when you are driving a vehicle as a custodian, you are entitled to higher level. So make sure you are accurate with your travel times. The Union advises that you take a postal vehicle when traveling. If you are forced to take your own vehicle, you are entitled to mileage that you traveled. If you are not being compensated for this please ask your supervisor to put you in for it. If they say you are not entitled to it please contact the Union.

I would also advise that you keep a record of your travels so you can back up what you did. Please drive safely, and always inspect your vehicle before and after you travel. Make sure it is in safe condition. If you notice something wrong with your vehicle before you travel, notify your supervisor immediately. Also write down what you see.

APWU AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

Our U.S. Postal Service Is Under Attack

Mail service to the American people is suffering. And a great public institution is threatened with privatization.



- On Jan. 5, 2015, overnight delivery of first-class mail was virtually eliminated.
- All mail throughout the country is being delayed. (This includes online purchases, local newspapers, organizational bulletins, letters, bill payments and invitations.)
- More than 150 mail processing facilities have closed since 2012, and approximately 70 more are targeted for closure or consolidation.
- Retail work is being sent to Staples, at more than 1,500 stores throughout the country.
- Door delivery is being eliminated in most new housing developments.
- Chronic understaffing frustrates customers and slows the mail.

PROTECT OUR NATIONAL TREASURE
A GRAND ALLIANCE
TO SAVE OUR PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE
www.AGrandAlliance.org

Want to Join the Fight to Protect Our National Treasure?

Postal patrons who want to help protect the public Postal Service can join a coalition of more than 75 national organizations that is taking a stand against efforts to dismantle and privatize the USPS. For more information, visit www.AGrandAlliance.org.

For more information, visit www.apwu.org



APWU Takes On Wall Street And Postal Privatizers US Mail Is Not For Sale

On July 24, hundreds of postal workers, labor allies, and members of the community took to the streets of New York City in a high-spirited rally to tell Wall Street bankers, billionaires, and anyone who wants to privatize our postal service that “The U.S. Mail Is Not for Sale!” Spurred by an outrageous proposal from Wells Fargo Equity Research, activists protested in front of the 7th Avenue Wells Fargo branch.

Wells Fargo’s memo to their investors, titled “USPS Privatization: A Framework,” outlined the money their billionaire clients could make in a sell-off of our public Postal Service.

Protest attendees handed out flyers to the public, chanted, and displayed signs warning against attempts at a private take-over of the Postal Service, while members of the union and the community, including small business owners, shared their stories about the importance of the public Postal Service.

To raise awareness about this privatization threat, APWU also created an ad to alert the public.

It is currently running on television and social media nationwide to postal customers across the country. “If you want to see higher parcel prices, closed post offices, and unreliable mail delivery, side with Wells Fargo,” APWU President Mark Dimondstein said. “If you want affordable, universal service no matter who you are or where you live.

Stand with us! Postal workers and the public are united in saying the ‘U.S. Mail is Not for Sale!’”



APWU Takes On Wall Street And Postal Privatizers US Mail Is Not For Sale

In its report to investors, Wells Fargo called the USPS “an obvious source of value.” They suggest that mail and parcel operations be split and that “Parcels could be carved out and sold or IPOed (placed on the stock market).” If Wells Fargo’s plans come to fruition, they predict prices would rise “by 30-140% across product lines” which would also benefit private shipping corporations like FedEx and UPS.

They want to sell off our cherished local post offices too. In the report, they propose selling off our Main Street post offices so that “value can be harvested” from real estate. All so they can get their hands on the more than \$80 billion in revenue the USPS generates each year.

That is why postal workers and community members said, “enough is enough!” Postal workers bind our nation together. More than 600,000 postal workers serve our communities around the clock to accept, sort, transport and deliver ballots, financial correspondence, medications, letters, and care packages from loved ones, connecting our communities together. On July 26, the Postal Service will celebrate its 250th anniversary, and we want to make sure it lasts another 250 and beyond to serve the public, as intended in the U.S. Constitution.

“We rallied in New York to take the message straight to Wall Street, and to alert members and the public across the country of the threat to our public Postal Service. APWU members and postal customers are united in our fight to defend and expand our national treasure,” said Dimondstein. “A big salute to the local and national leaders in the New York area for their organizing, and to the members and supporters who came out to make this event a success as the struggle continues.”



Rain at 4am (Then War)

Jim Hightower : Americans Who Tell The Truth

Some people use a recording of rain's soothing white noise to put themselves to sleep. I like to be woken up by the real thing. My house is surrounded by old red oaks and on a warm, quiet night—the windows wide—a sudden downpour startles me happily awake, the oak leaves twitching and twittering like a million sparrows bathing in a puddle. That gentle sound is a blessing, life affirming, consoling. People ask me often where I find hope. I certainly don't find hope in the behavior of most of the world's governments, especially my own. But the sound of rain, that promise, that's different.

This past Sunday, the rain came at 4 am. After several hot, dry days, my first thought upon waking was for the young frail lettuces in the garden—how grateful they would be. And the newly transplanted tomato plants would revive from their afternoon wilt. As native people say, "Water is life."

But then, lying in the dark, I remembered the news late Saturday night: Trump had sent bombs and missiles raining into Iran. He announced proudly that the targets were obliterated. My rain-induced, life-affirming thoughts were also obliterated. While I was feeling blessed by the rain, Iranian bodies were being ripped to shreds. It's a war crime for a country to attack another without being attacked first. Iran had not threatened us. It's against our Constitution for a president to launch a war without a validating vote by Congress. There was no such vote.

Trump's justification was that Iran was close to assembling a nuclear bomb. Our own intelligence agency assessment was that this was not true. Starting a war without the support of Congress is an act of a dictator. Trump's "intelligence" was the assurance of Iran's intentions by Israel's Netanyahu, who had begun bombing Iran several days earlier. Perhaps the only world leader more dishonest than Trump is Netanyahu. He had been trying to enlist the United States in a war against Iran for many years.

The Americans Who Tell the Truth project began in response to the U.S. government lying about the urgent need to attack Iraq in 2003 because Iraq was—supposedly—preparing weapons of mass destruction to attack us. Not true. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis were killed, cities and cultural treasures destroyed. Thousands of American soldiers were killed and wounded. This was a war crime, a crime against humanity. No one was ever held accountable. The United States does not hold itself to account for its war crimes.

In 2015 President Obama had worked out an international agreement, diplomatically, to limit Iran's enrichment of uranium to well below weapons grade. That agreement was called the The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). It was working. Trump tore it up during his first term. Instead of using diplomacy to restructure the treaty, he chose bombs. On TV I watched Trump and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth exult over their power to destroy. They were like a couple of sociopathic two year olds gleefully demolishing towers of blocks—their egos inflated by each "spectacular" explosion. They did everything but pull down their pants and brag about the size of their missiles.

What was exposed, though, was not manliness; rather, their moral and spiritual puniness. They are as arrogant as they are cruel, as corrupt as they are unqualified to be world leaders. Diplomatic solutions are humane and persist; violence breeds violence. (Violence is also hugely profitable to the weapons makers.)

Meanwhile, it was still raining—the blessed, gentle rain. Not like the climate-change-induced torrents in many places; those flood-ravaging, water-is-death rains. As Trump and Netanyahu and Putin celebrate their ever-bigger detonations, it's the environmental war that must concern us most deeply, the war waged against the Earth, the war of exploitation and profit being fanned by the same "leaders" who mock diplomacy. They mock science, too, and deny climate change. Those men who gloat over their bunker buster bombs, gloat over their power to destroy nature the same way they destroy Gaza or Ukraine.

Violence against nature breeds violence against humans. And, as we know, nature bats last.

Online Videos For Kids Rife With Junk Food Messaging

APWU Health Plan

Kids watching YouTube videos are being hammered with messages promoting junk food like candy, sugary drinks, fast food and sweet or salty snacks, a new study says. About 75% of 6- to 8-year-olds and 36% of 3- to 5-year-olds were fed promotions for junk food while watching YouTube or YouTube Kids videos they chose on their own mobile devices, researchers reported in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

“More than half of food brands in these videos came from companies that participate in the Children’s Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative, a U.S. food industry self-regulatory program,” said senior investigator Jennifer Harris, a senior research advisor at the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health at the University of Connecticut.

“Despite these companies’ pledges to only advertise healthier choices to children, child-influencers frequently promoted their brands, including candy, sugary drinks and sweet and salty snacks,” she said in a news release. For the study, researchers observed 101 kids as they watched YouTube videos in their homes for 30 minutes.

About 73% of food brand appearances promoted junk food, while only 3% of food-related messages highlighted healthy options, results show. Most of this messaging occurred as part of brand appearances embedded within video content that purposely blurred food promotion with entertainment.

More than 60% of food brand appearances were embedded in the video content, with only 23% showing up during video previews and 17% in advertisements, researchers said. Lifestyle videos contributed 77% of these appearances, and 71% showed an influencer or another character either consuming or preparing to consume the product, researchers said.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has called on companies and influencers to halt these common stealth marketing practices, particularly in videos aimed at young children, researchers noted. “Very young children are being bombarded with unhealthy product promotion on YouTube and YouTube Kids, frequently embedded in their favorite videos as props or part of the storyline which disguises persuasive intent,” said lead researcher Frances Fleming-Milici, director of marketing initiatives at the Rudd Center.

“As children as young as age 3 spend more and more time on these platforms, policies must be enacted to protect them from this stealth marketing of products that harm their health,” she added in a news release.

Google bans food and beverage advertising on YouTube Kids and during “made-for-kids” videos, researchers said.

But more than a third of 3- to 8-year-olds watching YouTube Kids viewed food brands embedded in videos and thumbnail images, researchers said. In addition, none of the videos embedded with a food or beverage brand disclosed that a food company had sponsored the content, as required by the FTC, researchers said.



MEETING NOTICE
Monday, 7:00 pm
September 24, 2025

Proud Postal Workers Union
The Hi-Lites
P.O. BOX 1995, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1995

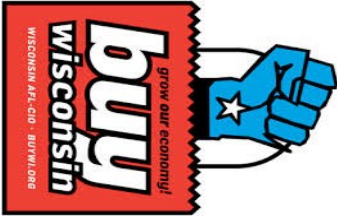
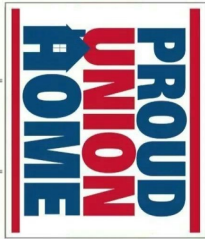
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



2025 GMM Meetings

January 27 - 6pm
March 26 - 7pm
May 30 - 7am
July 21 - 6pm
September 24 - 7pm
November 21 - 7am

Time Dated



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